
Developing Local-Based English for Tourism Materials for Religious and Cultural Tour Guide Program Students: A Needs Analysis

Muthia Farida

IAHN Tampung Penyang
Palangka Raya

muthiafarida@iahntp.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Teaching ESP requires a thorough and systematic way in developing the materials because the purpose is to help students develop their English competence in specific disciplines. What was found in the teaching of English for Tourism in the Religious and Cultural Tour Guide Program in Tampung Penyang State Hindu Institute (IAHN) of Palangka Raya was the absence of proper materials for the students. This study is a small part of Research and Development (RnD) project for an English for Tourism book of this faculty. It involved the stakeholder and the practitioner in the local tourism industry as the informants in giving insights to local-based material development. Employing a qualitative approach, the in-depth interviews were conducted. The results of this study finally offer some recommendation for English for Tourism materials: 1) speaking and writing as the top priorities of required English skills, 2) language functions included: self-introduction, negotiating, handling tourists at an airport, making an itinerary, writing and replaying an email, and describing tourist destination or place, 3) vocabulary related to tourism industry and especially tour guiding, 4) cross-cultural understanding, and 5) local tourist destinations.

Keywords: English for Tourism, ESP, material development, needs analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, the development of higher education curriculum in Indonesia emphasizes achievement or results. This has been officially launched by the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education (2018) so that universities are able to develop their curriculum based on an outcome-based education (OBE) approach. Outcome-Based Education (OBE) is an educational process that focuses on the success of specific concrete achievements (Kemenristekdikti, 2019). In this case, universities are

required to be able to provide a clear initial picture of the important abilities that students can do when they graduate. Furthermore, starting from this graduate profile, ideally a university should organize a structured curriculum to ensure the learning process occurs with the aim of helping students have the specific abilities that they must possess when they graduate. It can be concluded that the preparation of the OBE curriculum is based on the needs of graduates while working.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) are chosen to be taught at university level as it can facilitate students to learn English on the basis of their academic background or field of study. Hyland (2007) explicates that ESP should address the communicative needs and practices of certain professional or occupational groups. Thus, it is taught for the purpose of a profession so it focuses on learning vocabulary and certain technical language skills. It is also worth noting that one of the learning principles is learners should get exposed to a rich, meaningful, and comprehensible input of language in use (Tomlinson, 2011: 7). In other words, in developing materials for ESP teachers have to take into account of what topics and skills to be taught for students and in dealing with their future occupation.

In the Cultural and Religious Tour Guide Study Program in IAHN Tampung Penyang Palangka Raya, the curriculum states that one of the CPL (Graduate Learning Outcomes) in the aspect of special skills is that graduates are able to master the foreign language of tourism (English for Tourism). In other words, the ability of English for Tourism is an ability that must be possessed by graduates of this Study Program. Besides, there is a mandate from the faculty to emphasize local-based materials to these Tour Guide Program students as they are expected to have the comprehensive knowledge about their local tourism and culture in Central Kalimantan.

In reality, the material taught was still not in accordance with English for Tourism. Both the topics/themes, language competencies, and vocabulary taught had not fully focused on the tourism sector. In this course only, students have the opportunity to learn English according to their professional needs. According to the author's analysis in the field, there were several factors that cause this issue. First, the teachers have

limited knowledge and experience in teaching ESP, especially English for Tourism. Second, the materials were only adopted from the Internet and have no clear needs analysis in the material compilation. They did not have English for Tourism book, either commercial ones or compiled by the Study Program. Even textbooks that are accessible on the Internet cannot be fully adopted because of the different abilities and characters of students.

Previous researchers have reported their material development for ESP. For example, Hidayat's (2018) work has reported the needs analysis for airline staff program while Hakim and Riyani's (2021) was for English in Law. Oktarina, Inderawati, and Petrus (2022) recently carried out a needs analysis for reading materials at vocational high school. In particular, a number of recent studies working on needs analysis of English for Tourism materials are overviewed. A needs analysis was conducted by Oktarin, Syahril, and Harahap (2019) to vocational high school students in Bengkulu. Kirana, Evenddy, and Utomo (2018) focused their study on designing a model of writing material for English Department students. Another needs analysis was conducted by Kaharuddin, Hikmawati, and Arafah (2019) to Hospitality teachers, students, and employees. Meanwhile, Puspitasari (2018) chose to conduct needs analysis to stakeholders in developing English for Tourism materials. Unfortunately, there is a lacuna of scientific work on local-based English for Tourism material development, especially in relation to culture and tourism in Central Kalimantan.

Therefore, this present study attempts to fill the absence of local-based English for Tourism materials for this Cultural and Religious Tour Guide Program by conducting material development that starts with a needs analysis. The analysis is involved a practitioner and a stakeholder in order to gain some insights about the topics of materials based on their experiences in the real field. It is expected that their recommendations can be used as the materials to be taught for the students of this Program.

2. METHOD

This present needs analysis is an initial step of an RnD project for a developing local-based English for Tourism book. A qualitative approach was employed to this study. The purpose is to gain deeper information about the topics of materials of English for Tourism that students might need in the real field. Two informants were interviewed. The first was a stakeholder, Mr. B, who owns travel agency and is an experienced tour guide in Central Kalimantan. As a CEO of a travel agency, his rich experiences in managing his travel agency, including managing tour guides he hires, working with many tourists, and arranging tour programs would be provide meaningful insight for the analysis for the analysis. The second informant is a professional local tour guide, Mr. Y. He is a certified member of Himpunan Pramuwisata Indonesia (the Indonesia's Tour Guide Association) based in Palangka Raya. He has worked as a tour guide for areas of Central Kalimantan and South Kalimantan. He has many experiences in guiding tourists from Indonesia as well as overseas. Both are considered to know about tourism industry in Central Kalimantan even Indonesia very well. Therefore, their inputs and insights about the topics of materials for English for Tourism would be worthwhile.

In-depth interviews were carried out to both informants. The interviews were done virtually using Zoom application because both informants were outside of Palangka Raya and quite busy to attend face-to-face interview . The interviews were recorded and then transcribed.

The analysis of data were done qualitatively. First, the transcripts were read thoroughly to make sure that the information were complete and understandable. Next, the irrelevant data were reduced. The rest data were read again and then categorized based on some themes and sub-themes. After that, a list of categorization was made to help display and describe the data. Finally, some conclusions were drawn.

Data validation was done through member-checking. After data categorization was finished, the researcher made some lists of data to both informants. They were asked to re-check whether the obtained data were in line with their inputs from the

interview. One informant gave a few additions to the existing data. After both informants agreed with the existing data, then the researcher continued to the further data analysis step.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Importance of English Competence in the Tourism Industry

The initial question given to both informants in the interview was how important of having English competence in the tourism industry. This is to gain their insights about the role of English in tourism sector based on their real experiences as practitioners.

In the interview, Mr. B explained that tourism can be meant simply as global visit. He said that means tourism is about to be ready for welcoming people from all around the world. Therefore, the main duty of tourism industry workers is being able to give quality service to both local and international tourists. It is, thus, significant that the tourism industry workers to master foreign language, especially English as an international language.

Meanwhile, Mr Y gave a more explanation in the perspective of a tour guide. He firstly defined that a tour guide basically serves a nation's ambassador whose responsibility is to give good service to tourists, including those from overseas. He argued that this is in line with the Government Regulation Number 10 Year 2009 about Tourism. Therefore, there is an emphasis for tour guides to master English because tourism is a global and expanded sector. He further mentioned that this regulation has also been supported by the Indonesian Tour Guide Association. This is expressed in the following excerpt.

Y: Dalam HPI yang telah diatur dalam AD/ART, disebutkan bahwa salah satu tanggung jawab seorang pramuwisata adalah menguasai minimal satu bahasa asing. [it is already stated in the Memorandum of Association/Articles of Association of HPI that one of the responsibility of a tour guide is to master at least one foreign language.]

Finally, he gave his point of view about why this is important as it will ease a tour guide to communicate with tourists from various backgrounds.

Based on the findings, it is clearly concluded that both informants are very well-known with the role of English for tourism industry workers and why they need to master English. Their opinions are consistent with the the Government Regulation Number 10 Year 2009 about Tourism and the regulation in the association of Indonesian tour guides, meaning that mastering English is a necessity to those working in the tourism industry. In a nutshell, English for Tourism indeed must be provided for the Tourism students in order to prepare them to get inside the industry successfully.

3.2 The Materials of English for Tourism

The next information to gain from the informants was regarding the materials for English for Tourism. In this part, there were three themes categorized based on the findings; the English skills, the language functions, the knowledge about tourism, and the local-based materials.

When asked about what English skill was essential to learn by tourism students, basically both informants believed all English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are important for students to master. However, Mr. B mentioned that writing would be the most important skill. He personally believed that tourism students should learn English writing as it is closely related to particular tasks that they might handle, such as writing and replying email or messages from/to tourists, making tour brochures, tour programs, and so on. For him, this skill needed a careful learning process and training. Unlike Mr B, Mr. Y pointed out that speaking would be a powerful skill for students. He believed so because he related it to the role of a tour guide that always need to build communication with tourists and other tourism industry workers when managing a tour. Therefore, he thought speaking skill must be mastered due to the role of a tour guide. In this case, the researcher did not think it was something contrastive but rather as a consideration that these two skills are basically equally very important for students. Thus, on the basis of the analysis, speaking and writing would be given the same major portion besides listening and reading in the English for Tourism material.

Dealing with the determination on which English skills to be the priority in English for Tourism, mostly previous reports stated that speaking skill is a first priority (Hidayat, 2018; Puspitasari, 2018; Kaharuddin, Hikmawati, and Arafah, 2019; Hakim and Riyani, 2021). Meanwhile the second to the least priorities were varied from listening, reading and writing skills. Speaking is considered to be the most required skill in the teaching of English for Tourism due to the fact that people who work at the tourism service industry have larger opportunities to apply the target language mostly in daily and routine activities (Zahedpisheh, Bakar, and Safari, 2017), and it is in the form of speaking activities.

Furthermore, both informants have given their inputs on the essential language functions and knowledge about tourism that should exist in the teaching of English for Tourism. In this case, Mr. B only recommended two things: how to write/reply a business email in formal and describing a tourist destination or place. Meanwhile, Mr. Y suggested a number of language functions. They are self-introduction, negotiating, and designing an itinerary, and handling tourists in airport. In terms of knowledge about tourism, both informants agreed that students need to know technical terms regarding tour guiding, tourist destinations and other general terms in tourism industry. Besides, both similarly mentioned about the importance of learning about cross-cultural understanding as students might have opportunities to meet new people from a variety of backgrounds.

In determining language functions to be focused on in English for Tourism material, previous researchers have shown various analysis results (Kirana, Evenddy, and Utomo, 2018; Puspitasari, 2018; Kaharuddin, Hikmawati, and Arafah, 2019). Since it is based on the needs analysis which is basically contextual and specific, one might have different perspective what language functions should be included. As explained by Zahedpisheh, Bakar, and Safari (2017), it is the teachers' responsibility specify which aspects of ESP learning will be focused on to suit the learners' expectations and needs successfully. Therefore, when it comes to a discussion on material development for ESP, the results of needs analyses from researchers might be various.

Last, regarding the local-based material to be incorporated in the English for Tourism materials, the present study focused on a number of local tourist destinations that should be addressed within the materials. Both informants suggested a number of well-known natural tourist spots in Central Kalimantan, such as Tanjung Putting National Park, Sebangau National Park, and Kereng Bengkirai Pier. Besides, some cultural tourist spots are strongly recommended, such as the Dayaknese death ritual *Tiwah*, *cultural sites of Sandung* and *Bukit Tengkilung*.

All in all, some recommendations are highlighted. First, speaking and writing would be the English skills that would give more portion in teaching English for Tourism besides listening and reading. Second, a number of language functions should be taught, such as self-introduction, negotiating, handling customers, making an itinerary, writing and replaying an email, and describing tourist destination or place. Third, material about vocabulary related to tourism and tour guiding must be provided. Next, cross-cultural understanding is also strongly suggested to be discussed within the materials. Last, a number of local tourist destination can be put as the topics of materials.

4. CONCLUSION

This present study is a report of needs analysis done to a stakeholder and a practitioner in the tourism industry as an initial part of RnD of English for Tourism book in the Cultural and Religious Tour Guide Program, Central Kalimantan. The results of analysis has revealed several suggestions. Regarding English skills, speaking and writing would become the two priorities to be taught besides listening and reading. Then, some language functions should exist in the materials are self-introduction, negotiating, handling customers, making an itinerary, writing and replaying an email, and describing tourist destination or place. Next, materials should also include vocabulary related to tourism industry and especially tour guiding. It is also recommended to incorporate the discussion about cross-cultural understanding. And finally, some local tourist destinations must be added as the topics of materials.

A suggestion for further study is offered. It is necessary to invite other practitioners or stakeholder from other tourism sectors such as from culinary and hospitality industry to give their insights in order to enrich the required materials.

REFERENCES

- Hakim, R.A. & Riyani, N. (2021). The need analysis for english in the law faculty of usn kolaka. *Jurnal Education And Development*, 9(2), 111-113. <https://doi.org/10.37081/ed.v9i2.2475>
- Hidayat, R. (2018). A needs analysis in learning English for airline staff program. *English Education Journal*, 9(4), 589-613.
- Hyland, K. (2007). *English for specific purposes*. Springer International Handbooks of Education.
- Kaharuddin, Hikmawati, and Burhanuddin Arafah, (2019), "Needs Analysis on English for Vocational Purpose for Students of Hospitality Department" in The Second Annual International Conference on Language and Literature, KnE Social Sciences, pages 344–387. DOI 10.18502/kss.v3i19.4869
- Kementerian Risen, Teknologi, dan Pendidikan Tinggi. (2019). *Desain pembelajaran dan penyusunan rps pendidikan tinggi blended learning*. Kemenristekdikti
- Kirana, S.L., Evenddy, S.S. and Utomo, D.W. (2018). Designing a model of writing material of english for tourism subject by using communicative approach at english department untirta. *Proceeding of Annual International Seminar on English Language Teaching*. 473-487.
- Oktarin, R., Syahrial & Harahap, A. (2019). Needs analysis of esp for tourism study program at smkn 7 (senior vocational school) kota bengkulu. *Journal of English Education and Teaching*, 3(1), 14–28. <https://doi.org/10.33369/jeet.3.1.14-2>
- Oktarina, Y., Inderawati, R & Petrus I. (2022). Needs analysis of Palembang-tourist destination recount text reading materials in the 21st century online learning. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 10(2), 381-392. <https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v10i2.6239>
- Puspitasari, I. (2018). Developing English for tourism materials trough stakeholders' needs analysis. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 7(1), 147-156. doi: 10.25134/erjee.v7i1.1534.
- Tomlinson, B. (2011). *Material developments in english language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Zahedpisheh, N., Bakar, Z.B.A., & Saffari, N. (2017). English for tourism and hospitality purposes. *English Language Teaching*, 10(9), 86-94. <http://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n9p86>