

## **A SOCIOLINGUISTICS ROLE IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR TOUR GUIDE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The developments in the tourism sector has caused the increase of tourism education and training massively in Bali. This has also developed the remarkable advancements in other fields, such as linguistics, sociology and IT. In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the development of tourism, it is important to consider the contribution of other research areas of research in linguistics and sociolinguistics. The study of the language of tourism has emerged as an ESP. This study aims to analyze the sociolinguistics phenomena in the implementation of teaching English for tour guides. The study employed qualitative method with case study approach. The results of the study show that sociolinguistics has a contribution in language learning. Sociolinguistics as a scientific discipline that studies language in relation to the community factor can provide students with good foundation they need to learn English for tour guides.

**Keywords:** Tourism; ESP; Sociolinguistics

### **I. Introduction**

Tourism as a modern variety of the traditional pilgrimage, a perspective that focuses on the deeper structural significance of modern tourism and identifies it with pilgrimages in traditional societies. Tourism as an expression of basic cultural themes, an approach which emphasises the deeper cultural meaning of tourism as perceived by tourists themselves. Tourism as a form of neocolonialism, which deals with the role of tourism in creating dependencies between tourism-generating, "metropolitan" countries and tourism-receiving, "peripheral" nations that replicate colonial or "imperialist" forms of domination and structural underdevelopment. Tourism has been linked with the linguistic research carried out in the fields of applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and critical discourse analysis (Laba, 2012, Laba 2018, Laba and

Chrisma, 2021). Language studies were more driven towards sociological issues and theories and followed a sociological bend, tourism studies also turned to sociology for the clarification of some fundamental concepts which kept the industry growing. Language in tourism is a hugely global and massively multilingual phenomenon, and is ripe with the opportunity to engage with others in different contexts and different languages (cf. Ramnani, 2012:37).

The study of the relationship between tourism and sociology started and has been developed according to the development of the industry. The turning point of the sociology-driven research on tourism and on the language of tourism was represented by the outstanding works of Dann (1996), followed by Thurlow and Jaworsky (2003), Cappelli (2006), Fox (2006b), Phipps (2006), Brice (2007), Jaworsky, Thurlow, Ylanne-McEwen and Lawson (2007) and others.

In 1988 Goeldner admitted that tourism education was still emerging as a discipline, while Airey (1988) offered four approaches to the origin of tourism education in the UK: a first approach that locates the beginnings of tourism education in the early 1900s when the first courses trained chefs and waiters, a second approach which attributed its beginnings to the 1950s when courses for ticket agents and travel agency staff were initiated, a third approach according to which tourism education emerged in the 1960s as a distinct domain for hotel management courses, and a fourth approach which suggests that tourism education has been always part of geography or economic studies.

Cooper (1996) opines that there were three ways in which the study of tourism has matured into an academic discipline: (1) sector-based courses have developed and influenced tourism education and training, (2) tourism courses have developed as fertilizers to other business studies by providing them with a vocational orientation- in this particular case tourism training has become an industry application, (3) tourism has grown from other traditional and standing disciplines, such as geography, sociology, and linguistics which have expanded their concern over tourism. The growth of tourism and its interdisciplinary character has called for a more consistent, responsible and thorough curriculum design and organization of training activities, e.g. English for Tour Guide is indeed a compulsory subject for 3th semester students of management study program at Universitas Dhyana Pura.

Ratminingsih, Suardana dan Martin (2018) argued that language plays an important role in order to conduct communication in general and hospitality service in particular. It is believed that communication skill is greatly an important element of hospitality industry, both oral and written skill. Good tour guides have to be knowledgeable and resourceful, and they have to know how to communicate efficiently and effectively. They further remarked that tour guides have

tasks to recognize the social environment, arrange transportation, interpret, handle problems, insulate travellers from difficulties and make the environment safe for tourists because they act as 'intermediaries' between tourists and the 'unknown' environment. In addition to this, tour guides have important roles in tourism. They are responsible for leading and interpreting in the context of environment. However, the reality often shows that many tour guides have inadequate proficiency in English, but they are brave enough to conduct guiding. This phenomenon commonly happens in developing countries like in Indonesia.

From understanding the broad picture which tourism education became part of, we shall move on to the language of tourism and show its staged development. It should be noted that before acquiring the status of ESP, the language of tourism emerged in the vicinity of tourism and business studies. The role of sociolinguistics plays a significant part in the development of language teaching in tourism studies. Sociolinguistics aims to provide the student with the chance to practice the language in the context of sociological insights of tourism in management study program, especially in all activities linked to what they need in terms of language for survival (cf. Tomlinson 2013).

Many linguists turned their attention to the study of other specialized languages as part of the endeavours to serve ESP (English for Specific Purposes) and EFL (English as a foreign language) teaching and learning needs. In this context, sociolinguistics became more inclined to research the language of tourism and sociology. The need to provide the tourists and the professionals with teaching methods and materials that could teach them the efficient or proficient use of English. Thus, tourism became an object of scholarly concern in this thriving context. The compulsory subject on English for tour guide adopted a communicative, topic-based and student-centred approach, while seeking to develop all the four skills involved in the use of tourism-related English. This course provided professional information in a friendly and interactive way aiming to improve the students' familiarity with the professional areas of work.

Dann (1996) postulates that 'once a linguistic paradigm for tourism is accepted, it follows that the type of language it employs will vary according to the object of promotion and the corresponding needs which it attempts to fulfill. Laba (2012) states that linguistic features used in communication should not be judged simply by right or wrong, but it must be based on "valid" or not. He further remarked that social interactions happening in tourism industry, whether at a travel agency or in tourist objects, are the experiences of language use that form the phenomenological basis for linguistic consciousness.

Further significant works on sociolinguistics belong to Weinreich (Languages in Contact, 1953), an account of bilingualism, and Einar Haugen, whose two volumes were an account of the

social history of the Norwegian language spoken in America (1953). To these works, Joos (1962) added discussions on the dimensions of style. Chomsky's contribution to linguistics and sociolinguistics in the 1960s by 'abstracting language away from everyday contexts ironically led to the distillation of a core area of sociolinguistics, opposed to his conception of language' (Mesthrie, R., Swann, J et al., 2000:4). Chomsky shifted thus attention on an 'idealized competence' and noted: 'Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors...' (1963:3). Having examined previous studies and the background of the study, the research question of this study is, what is the significant role of sociolinguistics in teaching English for tour guide?

### **1.1. Literature Review**

This article is written to examine the sociolinguistics role that occur in the implementation of teaching English for tour guide. This article is not the first article discusses the sociolinguistic role in teaching English for tour guide which closely related to tourism studies. Several articles of similar themes have previously been written. Among other are the engagement of the discussion of the language of tourism and its related sociological aspects.

First, we should take a closer look at the sociological insights into tourism. A remarkable work in this direction is David Cohen's book *The Sociology of Tourism: Approaches, Issues and Findings* (1984: 373), which, in the 'Introduction', asserts that 'The sociology of tourism is an emergent speciality concerned with the study of touristic motivations, roles, relationships, and institutions and of their impact on tourists and on the societies who receive them'. The author provides a brief survey of early contributions to the sociology of tourism, admitting that they were in German (cf Homberg 1978:36-37). Cohen notes the following stages in the development of sociological insights into tourism. The first stage is represented by early investigations written in German classic article and leading to the first full-length sociological work on the subject. A second stage was marked by Ogilvie's book on tourism, the first social scientific treatise on the subject in English. Tourism as commercialized hospitality with focus on the visitor component of the tourist's role. Tourism as democratized travel, with emphasis placed on the traveler component of the tourist role, where the tourist is viewed as a kind of traveler marked by some distinct analytical traits.

In his research on tourism and the language of tourism, Dann (1989) examined the 'tourist as a child' posture and how it is checked by the industry through its 'language of social

control (in brochures, travelogs, advertisements, couriers, guides, etc)'. The researchers who adopted the interactional approach found that transactional analysis can be applied to many kinds of relationships that involve participants who are involved both directly and indirectly in the tourism industry. The practice has been taken up by airlines and hotels which use the transactional approach to train their staff.

Other researchers have investigated the dynamics of role negotiation in touristic encounters, in particular the asymmetric one-to-one relationships. The interactionist perspective has also been applied to the content of tourist interviews. The interactionist perspective also permitted referencing back to 'presentation of self in everyday life'. Dann & Cohen (1996:311) suggest that 'Yet, there is a great deal in Goffman which has been underutilized by tourism researchers'.

All these developments stay proof of the vastness of the issues that tourism works with or is related with, its multimodal and inter- or multidisciplinary character, while language has always been its medium. Indeed, the work began by Dann & Cohen (1996). In 2010, Thurlow and Jaworsky admitted that 'tourism as the world's single largest international trade and as a truly global cultural industry (Urry, 2002), is a major site (a social, cultural and economic domain) for the banal enactment of globalization. Tourism is a deeply "semiotic industry" committed to the production, commodification and representation of culture and cultural difference; language is clearly an essential resource in this cultural production' (2010:227). Dann argues that the language of tourism is a 'code' whose praxis has the value of language for a group

## **II. Methods**

Qualitative research method with case study approach was used for this study because this study aims to learn further and in depth the sociolinguistics role in teaching English for tour guide in education and training institution. Students of Semester 3 of management study program were chosen as subject of study and Universitas Dhyana Pura was chosen as the location of the study because it implemented a subject of English for tour guide as an integral part of legal institutionalized curricula. Based on the interview and participated observation results, the writer found that this study program implemented a learning method that contains the elements of sociolinguistics phenomea.

The qualitative exploratory method is used as a basic foundation and work approach as well as a main element in certain social science research (Miles and Huberman, 1992: 1). In this connection, qualitative methods have been used as the basis of reference in this study.

Qualitative analysis is carried out specifically from the collected data through interviews and observations. Descriptive qualitative methods are used in this study in order to describe and explain the true nature of the data. The data analysis in this study was carried out inductively to find multiple realities as contained in the data.

### **III. Findings and Discussion**

Sociolinguistics is a discipline that combine sociology (objective and scientific study of humans in community to learn how humans adapt to and socialize with their community) and linguistics. Hence sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary science that studies language and its use in the community. Sociolinguistics is a sub-discipline of linguistics that makes language its object of study. This section explains the analysis process for each set of data. The data were constructed in different formats such as text and other narrative features. The meanings were extrapolated based on the subjective interpretation of the researcher, critical analysis of previous studies and the guidance of the research questions. Each text and picture was coded in different word documents and was decomposed into meaning units.

The adoption of sociolinguistics by the tourism-based disciplines such as tourism management, marketing or branding, hospitality, etc., represents a proof of the transdisciplinarity of tourism as a field of this study. In addition, according to Fox, 'the adoption of sociolinguistics as an accredited theory (or a set of theories) by the scholars in tourism and the tendency to work with other disciplines would dispel its "undisciplined" character. Fox (2008) argues that 'sociolinguistics can provide a researcher with an objective insight into the language – tourism relationship', explaining that 'more precisely, it offers a theoretical frame for the systemic and critical analysis of the use of language in tourism from a variety of perspectives'.

On the other hand, the language of tourism acquired a distinctive status and became a means of investigating other areas of concern to tourism, such areas as destination marketing, management, branding, hospitality, advertising, sociology of tourism. In this respect, according to Fox (2008:13-14), English in tourism 'has been highlighted as a factor of the process of "language brokerage", as a means of promoting a global lifestyle (Thurlow and Jaworski 2003), as a key element of tourist destination branding (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride /eds./ 2002), as enabling individuals to experience their identity through tourism (Palmer 2005), as shaping a tourist destination (Cappelli 2006), as a key factor of tourists' perceptions (Phipps 2006), as a carrier of a destination's "sovereign subjectivity" (Bryce 2007). Fox (2008) assumes that the growth of transdisciplinarity in any field of study, including tourism is a new type of knowledge which involves a variety of mechanisms of creating/communicating knowledge, participants

from numerous disciplinary backgrounds, and a great diversity of sites in which knowledge is produced. Fox also resumes the benefits of the transdisciplinary character of tourism and the contribution sociolinguistics can bring to its growth.

The adoption of sociolinguistics as supportive to the theory of tourism will constitute a decisive move towards a new paradigm of tourism research which will lead to the generation of new types of knowledge and, in turn, enable new insights into the increasingly complex relationship between language and tourism. Fox (2008) further suggests that ‘a sociolinguistic understanding’ of, for example, a tourist destination’s public discourse enables researchers, and practicing managers too, to recognise a tourist destination’s public discourse as much more than just feeding information cum promotion to the consumer’.

Linguists agree that sociolinguistics can contribute a theoretical multi-perspective frame to the analysis of the language used in tourism, which is what other scholars have tried to demonstrate as well. Teaching English for tour guide is an ESP in the context of ESL or EFL aims to be used in particular purposes and to enable learners to function adequately in a target situation. It is the language used in tour guide situation. Students will learn language based on their needs.

Students who want to be a tour guide should be able to conduct their tasks successfully. Tour guides should possess good competence in English to communicate with their guests, especially related to the context where they use English with them. Contextual teaching and learning is able to enhance the learners to understand concept while practicing to speak with one another in the context of English used in tourism industry related to sociology. When students learn something based on social context, this will give meaning to the content. Hence, learning English for tour guide is meaningful when it is learned in the real life social context and for this sociolinguistics plays its role in teaching the practicality of the language learned. The result of observation shows that the teaching of English for tour guide is more meaningful when sociolinguistics in term of exemplifying the context of teaching English for tour guide.

Considering the findings interview with students, it is clearly shown that they were eager to learn English for tour guide when the teaching is contextualized in social circumstances. These social circumstances include emphasizing the teaching on English vocabulary used in conversation during tour with social context such as giving directions, describing interesting places, encountering accidents on a trip and handling complaints. Students were also more focus on words, grammar, and pronunciation (speaking) when learning English for tour guide in the classroom. This indicated that learning language with sociolinguistics can help the students able

to distinguish where, whom, when they speak because English for tour guide is taught in the association with the materials to social contexts.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Tourism has become a global phenomenon in the post-modern society, owing much of its development to its relationship with language. Over the last two decades, the use of language in tourism has attracted interest from many other tourism related fields and has drawn in considerable sociolinguistic research. For these tourism-related areas of scholarly concern the study of the language of tourism turned into an active and useful contributor to their study (Fox, 2008). The adoption of sociolinguistics as supportive to the theory of tourism will constitute a decisive move towards a new paradigm of tourism research which will lead to the generation of new types of knowledge. Teaching English for tour guide is an ESP in the context of ESL or EFL aims to be used in particular purposes and to enable learners to function adequately in a target situation. Students learn something based on social context, this will give meaning to the content. Learning English for tour guide is meaningful when it is learned in the real life social context and for this sociolinguistics plays its role in teaching the practicality of the language learned

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