

Conference Paper

The Implementation of English for Tour Guide Program in Trenggalek

Dwi Wahyuningtyas^{1*}, Ria Arista Asih², Alyaa' Chiquita Fairuzara A. R.³, Fredik Yuniur Heuvelman³

¹Law Department, Faculty of Law, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" Jawa Timur, Surabaya 60294, Indonesia

²Master of Pedagogy, Postgraduate Directorate, Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Malang 65144, Indonesia

³Tourism Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" Jawa Timur, Surabaya 60294, Indonesia

*Corresponding author:

E-mail:

dwi.wahyuningtyas.ih@upnjatim.ac.id

ABSTRACT

East Java has some famous and potential tourist places, one of which is in Trenggalek. Trenggalek is rich in natural resources such as beaches, mountains, and forests to name a few. Therefore, Trenggalek claimed to have big potential in East Java tourism in 2022. In 2021, the government of Trenggalek already set the target to build and develop 100 tourist villages by 2024. In 2022, 35 tourist villages have been built all around Trenggalek. Skilled tour guides are strongly required to promote Trenggalek as a promising and potential tourism destination in East Java. These tour guides have to master and comprehend English as an international language. Tour guides who can use and speak English well can gain more foreign tourists and make Trenggalek not only famous in East Java and Indonesia but also in wider scopes. Therefore, a PIKAT team of UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur held a community service program, "English for Tour Guide" in Dongko, Trenggalek, East Java. The team has run this program since July; split into two sessions; offline and online session. The offline session was held in July, at Taman Watu Kandang, Pandean, Dongko, and Trenggalek, and continued with an online session in August via Zoom. Both the offline and online programs were successfully held. The participants joined the program enthusiastically and actively. This community service was supported by the Department of Tourism and Culture of Trenggalek. In the future, the team expects to widen the scope of this community service program.

Keywords: English, implementation, Trenggalek

Introduction

East Java is one of the many provinces in Indonesia which has very rich tourism potential, one of which is village tourism potential. A tourism village is defined as a rural area dedicated to the development of tourism potential along with aspects that support the existence of the tourist village such as customs, traditions, traditional houses, culture, and so on (Soetarso & Mulyadin, 2013). East Java is recorded as having 114 tourist villages, 35 of which are being prepared in Trenggalek Regency. Besides being famous for the beauty of marine tourism and its mountains, this city which is located in the southern part of East Java also has potential in the field of rural tourism, or tourist villages. This tourism village development project was developed and managed by the government of Trenggalek Regency very seriously.

Trenggalek is located in the Southern part of East Java. However, due to its location in the southern part of East Java, tourists from other regions often skip Trenggalek as their travel destination. The government, people, and all parties that are interested in developing tourism in Trenggalek should find a way how to solve it and make Trenggalek considered a must-visited

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travel destination, not only in East Java but also Indonesia. Therefore, the related parties should maximize the promotion of the aspects of natural resources. Trenggalek's geographical features consist of beautiful landscapes, such as beaches, rice fields, mountains, waterfalls, natural caves, and beautiful sceneries. These natural tourist attractions Trenggalek can offer declare this regency as one of the regencies in East Java that has the most promising natural tourist attractions. Out of some tourism potentials Trenggalek has, tourist villages are one of the natural-based tourist attractions that Trenggalek should prioritize and pay attention to (trenggalekkab.go.id., 2022).

The existence of a tourist village in Trenggalek certainly requires support from various elements, in addition to natural resources, adequate human resources are also needed, one of which is the party serving as a tour guide or tour guide. Tour guides are officers whose job is to guide tourists at tourist destinations. They are tasked with explaining the information contained in the tourist object being visited, such as information on ancient and historical objects in museums and cultural tourism objects. Meanwhile, Yoeti (2000) defines a tour guide as a party that accompanies tourists to visit and witness attractions at paid attractions. Therefore, besides serving at the tourist information centers, tour guides can also usually accompany tourists that visit tourist attractions if necessary and required. McDonnell (2001) also mentions that the role of a tour guide or tour guide is needed as a party that provides information for tourists who need it. This opinion was also confirmed by Mukti (2005) who stated that a tour guide is an important element in tourism.

As a guide who directs, guide, and gives instructions to tourists, tour guides are required to have several expertise or skills that can support their performance as well as broad and qualified insights (Mukti, 2005). Some of the skills needed by the tour guide include communication skills, public speaking, and of course skills in foreign languages, especially English as an international language. Therefore, it is necessary to have an English for Tourism program, or English for the tourism industry for tour guides. To optimize regional income from the existence of tourist villages, including income from foreign tourists, a tour guide who is fluent in English is required. Because it is possible, foreign tourists who come to visit Trenggalek also see the potential and beauty of the tourist village so they are interested in visiting it. Therefore, tour guides are also required to be proficient in English. Local tourists who want to learn to use English at tourist attractions will also benefit from the presence of a tour guide who is proficient in English. For this reason, tour guides from 35 tourist villages in Trenggalek Regency need to take part in the English for Tourism program.

Material and Methods

Preparation

In this phase, the team of the community service program held an online discussion and sharing session via Zoom with the Department of Tourism and Culture, Trenggalek Regency. The team received suggestions and inputs from the stakeholders, Pokdarwis of Pandean Tourist Village, and tour guides in Trenggalek who attended the agenda. Also, the community service team fixed the schedule of the program that will be held in Pandean Village, Dongko Sib district Trenggalek. The team also finalized the English module that will be used to give English training to the tour guides. The module itself consists of four chapters or units in which every unit has some topics and skills; vocabulary, reading, speaking, and writing. Considering the initial ability of the tour guides to speak English, the team arranged and composed the module on English for Tour Guides. After some consultations with fellow English book writers, the module is ready to use and share with the tour guides that joined this program. The module was published in two forms; an e-module and the printed one.

Implementation

The community service team finally held the program on July 7, 2022. The program took place at Taman Watu Kandang, Pandean Village, Dongko Sub-district, Trenggalek. The program entitled

“Program English for Tourism untuk Pemberdayaan Tour Guide di Desa Wisata Kabupaten Trenggalek” could run successfully. Attended by around 40 participants, the program had been running from 08.00 a.m. to 04.00 p.m. Not only the tour guides in Trenggalek who attended the program, but also some tourism ambassadors (Kakang – Mbakyu) of Trenggalek, members of Pokdarwis Pandean Tourist Village, and also some representatives from the Department of Tourism and Culture of Trenggalek. The involvement of the tourism ambassadors aims to stimulate and motivate the tour guides in Trenggalek to learn and practice English. These ambassadors can also learn and practice English together with the tour guides and the team community service. The team split the participants into four small groups. Every group has one team member who acts as a facilitator. The facilitator had to make the learning as fun as possible so that the participants weren't afraid of making mistakes in using English. The participants were also allowed to speak both Bahasa Indonesia and English, as long as they were still committed to speaking English. The team targeted the training will continue in the following years so that the tour guides stay motivated to learn and practice English.

Evaluation

The evaluation was held after the program. Using the WhatsApp group, the community service team monitored the progress of the tour guides as the participants in this program. The tour guides could freely ask about their difficulties in practicing English, mainly speaking and writing skills that become the focus of this program. In addition, through evaluation, the community service team also evaluated what should be improved from the program, as a similar program is planned to take place next year with different participants.

Results and Discussion



Figure 1. The opening of English for tour guide program

This program was mainly focused on training tour guides in English so that the tour guides in tourist villages in Trenggalek can know and practice how to use English well, and know some tourism-related terms in English. The head division of tourism destination of the Department of Tourism and Culture of Trenggalek opened the program. After that, the community service team members continued to split the participants into four groups led by one facilitator who was also a member of the community service team. Each facilitator who was responsible for one group then asked the group to have a discussion session, which was divided into two sessions; before and afternoon.

The enthusiasm of the participants was high. They joined the materials, discussions, and sharing sessions enthusiastically. Most of them never joined English for Tour Guide Training before. This experience was still very new to them. Most of them were also still confident to speak English. Their vocabulary is still limited. They were also afraid that their pronunciation was wrong. The facilitators consisted of a lecturer from UPN Veteran Jawa Timur, an English instructor from Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, and two students from the Tourism Department of UPN Veteran Jawa Timur.



Figure 2. The enthusiasm of the participants

This training took place at Watu Kandang Park, a tourist destination in Pandean Village, Dongko District. This program was initiated by the PIKAT scheme community service team led by a lecturer at the Faculty of Law UPN “Veteran”, Jawa Timur, and consists of the Head of UMM American Corner, and two UPN “Veteran” Jawa Timur students, and assisted by a language instructor from the Language Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang.

The participants came from several tourist villages in Trenggalek, such as Masaran Tourism Village, Karangturi Village, Ngulungwetan Village, Munjungan Tourism Village, Nglebeng Tourism Village, Pandean Tourism Village, Sumberbening Tourism Village, Wonoanti Tourism Village, Gandusari Tourism Village, Tourism Village Tegaren, Gading Tourism Village, Wonocoyo Tourism Village, Pogalan Tourism Village, Depok Tourism Village, Suruh Tourism Village, and Kakang Mbakyu Trenggalek. Some villages, such as Munjungan and Pogalan Village were located around a 2-hour trip from the location of this program, but the participants still enthusiastically joined the program. That made the community service committed to doing and giving the best from this program.

The participants seemed excited about participating in the training, which was more focused on discussion and practice sessions. Some of them even traveled up to 2 hours to attend this training. Participants were divided into four groups; each group had a facilitator who helped the participants and led the discussion. The facilitator in charge is the community service team itself. The Head of the Tourism Destinations Division of the Tourism and Culture Office, Trenggalek Regency, who also attended and opened the event, hoped that the event could continue and have a positive impact on tourism actors, especially tour guides for tourist villages in Trenggalek Regency. A similar expectation was expressed by the head of community service, who revealed that the training event was the beginning of a series of service and research activities targeted to continue in the following year.

In addition to interactive materials that put more emphasis on practice, participants were also treated to a variety of traditional rural foods and drinks such as *apem* cakes, *lemper* and *beras kencur*, as well as *sayur labu siam*, *bothok ikan laut*, *sayur asem*, *tempe* and *dan bakwan jagung* for the lunch menu. Participants seemed enthusiastic about participating in the panel and actively voiced their opinions and questions. Many participants came from tourist villages which were quite far from Pandean Tourism Village. For example, from tourist villages in the sub-districts of Bendungan, Munjungan, Tugu, or Durenan. Some of the participants who attended traveled the distance between 1 to 2 hours.

The participants also actively participated in every session and activity. That was what made the Community Service Team excited to provide material and discussion to the end. Even though the two-part sessions, namely the morning session (10.00-12.00) and the afternoon session (13.00-15.30), were quite long, the participants' enthusiasm did not subside until the end of the event. The materials distributed to the participants included adventure tours, culinary tours, various games, role-plays, as well as guide tips and tricks in English. This event will be followed by an online session to discuss advanced material, which is scheduled for August 2022. In addition to materials and modules, participants will also receive a seminar kit to support training activities.

Before closing the offline training at Taman Watu Kandang, there was a sharing and feedback session. Some participants expressed their gratitude to join the training. They believed that a similar program should be held in the future, so that not only the tour guides but also some other parties that take part in developing tourism in Trenggalek can take part and learn English. They also expressed their gratitude to all the parties involved in holding the training. The same expectation was also uttered by the Head of the Tourism Destinations Division of the Tourism and Culture Office, Trenggalek Regency who hoped that the team would arrange another training shortly.

In addition to useful knowledge and the English for Tour Guide module, participants would also receive a souvenir from the UMM American Corner and an e-certificate as a sign that the participant has participated in the training program. It is hoped that in the future, similar programs will be held on an ongoing basis so that the benefits will not only be felt by the tour guides, but also by other parties in Trenggalek.

Conclusion

From the program that has been implemented, it can be concluded that the program was successfully implemented. The participants consisted of tour guides in tourist villages in Trenggalek, members of Pokdarwis in tourist villages in Trenggalek, and the representatives from the Department of Tourism and Culture of Trenggalek enthusiastically joined the program and were actively involved in the discussion and sharing sessions of the program. This was the first English for Tour Guide program that was held in Trenggalek. This program was expected to support the target of 100 tour villages in Trenggalek by 2024. In addition, the program was set to continue in the future with a wider scope audience and range of participants.

Despite the success of the program, some points need to be highlighted during the activity; the English language level and educational and job background. These aspects need to be considered to map the skill levels of the English language of the tour guides so that the team can provide suitable materials and training for them. This community service program was considered successful and is expected to continue in the future. The next is the time allotment. The training should be more intensively given. Therefore, the team should arrange a specific schedule that can be joined by participants and suit the team members' schedules.

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