COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES USED BY TOURIST GUIDE AT MOUNT BATUR

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the communication strategies employed by local guides at Mount Batur and to examine the obstacles they confront while engaging with international tourists. The research used a qualitative descriptive design. Data was gathered through field observations, audio recordings of guide-tourist interactions, and interviews with native guides. According to the findings, local guides used seven sorts of communication tactics based on Dörnyei's theory: circumlocution, approximation, use of all-purpose terms, non-linguistic signals (gestures), literal translation, code-switching, and request for aid. According to the findings, guides emphasize "meaning" and "communicative success" over "grammatical correctness" in order to maintain safety and offer information in a high-traffic tourism setting. Furthermore, the study highlighted various obstacles that the guides had, including a limited English vocabulary, linguistic anxiety while dealing with native speakers, and trouble comprehending a variety of foreign accents. These findings indicate that, while the guides are pragmatically competent, they require specialized English training to improve their professional communication abilities.

Keywords : *Communication Strategies, Local Guides, Mount Batur, Tourism Communication.*

INTRODUCTION

Language has a big role in communication among people. When language is used in such a situation, it can be known that language is the key of communication containing messages. The important idea is that the recipient gets the correct detail of what the speaker intends to inform (Brown et al., 2000). In Grace's journal (2013), mention the use of language in order to communicate and to connect with other people. Nevertheless, the act of communicating may pose linguistic and social barriers which can hinder communication. Windle and Warren (1999), also acknowledge the existence of three essential components of communication: verbal (the words we choose), nonverbal (how we say the words) and paraverbal (our body language). They state that they are needed in order to send clear and concise messages and to receive and correctly understand messages sent to us.

According to Dörnyei & Lee Scott (1997), the definition of communication strategy is a method of managing problems in second language communication that helps foreign/second language learners construct difficult meanings. debut communication strategy as problem-solving technique related language to language-related issues that speakers are aware of during communication. In short, communication strategies are considered useful for interlocutors who do not have specific language difficulties. Communication strategy is a manifestation of strategic competence, one of the five components of communicative competence. In communication strategies has typically highlighted three functions of strategy use from three different perspectives: Psycholinguistic perspective, Interactional perspective, and communication / maintain perspective.

Actually, there are many tourist attractions in Bali that are frequently visited by foreign tourists. One of them is special mountain tours and hikes. That place is Mount Batur located in Kintamani. This place is a volcano in Batur Village which has Lake Batur, Hot Springs, and much more, making it attractive and liked by foreign tourists. In addition, the accommodations are very affordable and enjoyable for gathering with family, one of the reasons why this place is visited by many people from around the world. Some visit it just to enjoy the sunrise with beautiful views, while others intend to go on vacation.

Foreign tourists are generally accompanied by local tour guides from Indonesia, whose duty is to provide information about Mount Batur, including its history, natural conditions, and available tourist activities. During these interactions, it is inevitable that some unfamiliar terms or terminology will arise for both tourists and guides, particularly those related to geology, local culture, and hiking activities. Differences in language background and levels of English proficiency often led to communication challenges. Therefore, applying effective communication strategies is crucial for tour guides to overcome language barriers and ensure that messages are conveyed clearly throughout the communication process.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design, which integrates qualitative methodologies to systematically explore and describe phenomena within their natural context. This approach prioritizes detailed, narrative-rich data collection and analysis to capture the complexity and meaning of participants' experiences or social processes. Descriptive qualitative is a research method that utilizes qualitative data and is described descriptively. Descriptive qualitative research

is often used to analyze events, phenomena, or social conditions. This study used qualitative research because this study describes the phenomenon of the use of communication strategies used in interaction between guides with tourist at Mount Batur in Batur Village, Bangli regency. This study used observation and interview to find the communication strategies used and to know the reason why the guides used communication in their interaction with the foreigner.

This research was carried out in the Mount Batur area to investigate, which is located at Batur village, Bangli regency. Besides, to analyze Mount Batur, which has an:

A. Altitude of 1,717 meters above sea level, is in the geographical position of 8o 14.30' South latitude and 115 o 22.30' East longitude
B. Included in the Kintamani District, Bangli Regency.

The Batur caldera is the remnant of a very large volcano. Part of the mountain's body collapsed due to a violent eruption, forming a very large crater called a caldera. The formation of the caldera occurred twice. It is not surprising that today we can see the vast expanse of this giant crater. In the next process, on the east - southeast side of the caldera floor a semicircular lake formed like a crescent moon known as Lake Batur. According to K. Kusumadinata (1979) in Basic Data of Indonesian Volcanoes, the length of this lake is approximately 7.5 km, the maximum width is 2.5 km, the circumference is 22 km, and the area is 16 km2. Where the first recorded eruption occurred in 1804. Then the last eruption of Mount Batur occurred 24 years ago precisely in 2000.

The object of the study was will be communication strategies used as a guide at Mount Batur. In the area, guide management is carried out by a group known as P3GB (Perhimpunan Pramuwisata Pendakian Gunung Batur). The group has members ranging from 200 to 300 people, although many are still unregistered. The guides who are members of this group come from various educational backgrounds, ranging from no schooling to university degrees. Communication strategies are used by the guide to overcome language difficulties faced. The use of communication strategies makes the communication between the guide and the visitors run well. They are criteria as a guide.

This study communication strategies used with a couple of key objectives. Primarily, it seeks to pinpoint and clarify the various ways tour guides interact with international visitors at Mount Batur. Secondly, it aims to delve into the reasons behind the guides' selection of these particular communication techniques. By examining both the 'what' and the 'why' of their methods, this research intends to provide a comprehensive view of how local guides successfully bridge language and cultural divides to connect with tourists.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study were focused to find out communication strategies used by the local guides and the reason why the touris guides used that communication strategies in their interaction with foreigners at Mount Batur. There were five local guides as the subjects of this study. The data were collected by using audio recording which had been transcribed. The transcribed data were all the conversations in the interaction between the local guides and foreigners. The data were analysed qualitatively. From the data analysis, the findings of the study could be stated as follows.

Communication Strategies Used in the Interaction between The Tourist Guides and Foreigners at Mount Batur

The first purpose of this research is to find out the communication strategies used in the interaction between the tourist guides and foreigners at Mount Batur. Referring to the theoretical review there are twelve types of communication strategies introduced by the experts, including message abandonment, topic avoidance, circumlocution, approximation, use of all-purpose words, word coinage, non-linguistic means, literal translation, foreignizing, code switching, appeal for help, stalling for time-gaining strategies. Based on the data analysis, there are some communication strategies used by the local guides in their interaction with foreigners at Mount Batur. Those communication strategies could be seen as follows.

1. Message Abandonment
   This strategy involves starting a message but leaving it incomplete due to language difficulties, often stopping mid-sentence.
2. Topic Avoidance
   This strategy involves avoiding certain topics, concepts, or areas entirely due to limited language ability, often by changing the subject.
3. Circumlocution
   This strategy involves describing or exemplifying the target word or concept instead of using the exact term.
4. Approximation
   This strategy involves using a similar or related word that approximates the intended meaning.
5. Use of All-Purpose Words
   This strategy involves using vague, general words like “thing,” “stuff,” or “do” to fill lexical gaps.
6. Word Coinage
   This strategy involves inventing new words or adapting existing ones from the native language to fit the target language.
7. Non-Linguistic Means
   This strategy involves using gestures, body language, or mime instead of words.
8. Literal Translation
   This strategy involves directly translating idioms or structures from the native language, even if it doesn’t fit the target language.
9. Foreignizing
   This strategy involves using a native language word but adapting its pronunciation or form to sound like the target language.
10. Code Switching
    This strategy involves switching between languages mid-sentence or inserting words from the native language.
11. Appeal for Help
    This strategy involves directly asking the interlocutor for assistance, such as the right word or confirmation.
12. Stalling or Time-Gaining Strategies
    This strategy involves using fillers, hesitations, or pauses to buy time for thinking or recalling words.

The reason why the local guides use communication strategies in their interaction with the foreigners at Mount Batur.

From the observations, local guides used five different communication strategies when interacting with foreign tourists. The purpose of this study was to understand the reasons behind the guides' choice of strategies. These strategies were used in verbal communication for various reasons.

Language Proficiency

Studies conducted by Putra during (2021–2023) primarily focus on language use, communication performance, and strategic competence among Indonesian local tour guides in international tourism settings. Putra argues that tour guiding is a language-dependent profession in which English proficiency becomes a fundamental requirement for ensuring effective interaction with foreign tourists.

Language Anxiety

According to Horwitz (1995) as cited in Bijani and Sedaghat (2016), language anxiety is defined as nervousness, discomfort, or worry experienced by language learners when speaking in the target language. This is consistent with the findings from interviews with local guides, who expressed similar concerns.

Motivation

Dörnyei (1994, 2001) argues that highly motivated learners are more willing to take communicative risks, which leads them to actively engage in conversations even when their linguistic knowledge is limited. This motivational drive increases their reliance on communication strategies— such as approximation, circumlocution, and code-switching—to maintain interaction and achieve communicative goals. The interview findings from the local guides reflect this pattern, as guides with higher motivation tend to initiate conversation, persevere through language difficulties, and employ strategic behaviors to ensure that communication with visitors continues effectively.

Discussion

Communication Strategies Used by Local Guides in Interactions with Foreign Tourists

According to the study's findings, tour guides at Mount Batur relied on five primary communication strategies: avoidance, achievement/compensatory measures, stalling tactics, self-monitoring, and interactional strategies. They adopted these strategies as practical approaches to navigate their language difficulties, thereby aiming to communicate effectively with international tourists.

Finally, guides incorporated interactional strategies to actively involve tourists in the conversational exchange. They would seek clarification, confirm comprehension, or solicit assistance from tourists when encountering unfamiliar terms. By collaborating with tourists, guides collectively resolved communication challenges. This finding aligns with Faerch and Kasper's (1983) perspective that interactional strategies transform communication into a shared responsibility.

In conclusion, the communication strategies employed by local guides at Mount Batur effectively showcased their remarkable ability to adapt to linguistic constraints. Rather than allowing language barriers to impede their interactions, these guides skillfully utilized these techniques to ensure that they could communicate effectively and meaningfully with tourists.

Several factors influenced the communication strategies employed by local guides. These strategies were shaped by their language proficiency, the level of anxiety they experienced, and their overall motivation.

Reasons for Using Communication Strategies

In situations where guides had limited language skills, they frequently resorted to various tactics to convey their message or to give themselves time to formulate a response. When faced with difficulties in recalling vocabulary or grammatical structures, they would often use gestures, incorporate Indonesian words, or employ similar expressions. Pauses in speech were also a common technique, allowing them time to organize their thoughts.

Despite these challenges, guides demonstrated a strong desire to communicate with tourists. Highly motivated guides persisted in speaking, even if they stumbled over words, rather than ending the conversation. This drive encouraged them to adopt strategies to maintain the flow of conversation and to self-correct. They might seek clarification or rectify their errors as they spoke. Dörnyei (2001) highlighted that motivated language learners tend to be more willing to take risks during communication, which, in turn, facilitates more language practice and improvement.

To summarize, communication strategies were crucial for local guides to navigate language barriers, reduce anxiety, and sustain conversations with tourists.

By utilizing techniques such as topic avoidance, compensatory strategies, pacing their speech, self-monitoring, and maintaining conversational flow, guides could effectively achieve their objectives and enhance their performance.

Implication

The Mount Batur-focused research on local guides' communication methods offers insights that are pertinent to real-world applications, training initiatives, and future research directions. The study's conclusions underscore that local guides frequently face communication hurdles when interacting with international visitors, with language skills, nervousness, and enthusiasm being key factors. Tourism entities and destination management organizations should recognize the significance of effective communication in enhancing tourist satisfaction and the overall experience. Implementing structured language training programs, specifically tailored for the tourism sector, could potentially elevate service quality and heighten tourist contentment at Mount Batur. The research suggests that employing strategies such as language switching, approximations, descriptive language, and gestures aren't indicators of deficiency. Rather, they serve as pragmatic and effective tools for maintaining conversational flow. Local guides should embrace these strategies as legitimate communication techniques while simultaneously striving to improve their English proficiency. Further, the findings propose that guides demonstrating high levels of motivation tend to engage more actively with tourists, even in the presence of language barriers. This highlights that a positive attitude towards language learning can often compensate for existing language skill gaps.

This study opens the door for further research. Future studies could investigate the effectiveness of various communication strategies from the tourists' perspective. This would involve examining which strategies most significantly contribute to tourist satisfaction and comprehension. Longitudinal studies that track changes in guides' language skills and strategy usage over time would offer insights into how strategic competence evolves with experience. In addition, comparative studies examining communication strategies across different Indonesian tourist destinations would reveal whether the patterns observed at Mount Batur are unique to that area or representative of wider trends in tourism communication. Comprehending these implications can aid in enhancing both the quality of tourism services and the professional advancement of local guides in Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and discussion presented in the previous chapter, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the communication strategies used by tourist guides at Mount Batur:

The local guides at Mount Batur employ various types of communication strategies to overcome linguistic barriers during interactions with foreign tourists. According to the observation results, the twelve strategies proposed by Dörnyei (1995) were identified, including avoidance, message abandonment, circumlocution, approximation, word coinage, use of all-purpose words, non-linguistic means, literal translation, foreignizing, code-switching, appeal for help, and stalling/time-gaining strategies. These strategies serve as practical tools that allow guides to maintain the flow of conversation despite their limited English proficiency.

The implementation of these strategies is driven by three primary factors: language proficiency, language anxiety, and motivation. Limited vocabulary often forces guides to use gestures or Indonesian terms (code-switching) to ensure the message is conveyed. Furthermore, language anxiety—such as the fear of making mistakes—leads guides to use stalling tactics to gain thinking time. However, a strong motivation to learn and provide good service encourages them to remain engaged in the conversation and take communicative risks rather than stopping the interaction.

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