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Need analysis of English language usage for Tourism university students

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ABSTRACT

There are 5 fundamental competencies that need to be acquired by all labors in tourism industry, one of them is communication. As an international language, English is still be chosen as a tool for communicating, negotiating, and interacting between laborers as well as customers or tourists. Thus, the development of English communication needs to be seemed as a mandatory thing for any tourism student, just before he/she is being involved in the real tourism sector. Need analysis is required. This is a Need Analysis study that generally employs a quantitative approach. A questionnaire was used to collect data in which the questionnaire was divided into two categories, 8 questions were formed as a checklist where 14 others were formed as 5 rating Linkert-scale questions. Mean and Standard Deviation were employed to calculate the need of English skills by tourism students. Whereas, Standard Deviation (SD) was employed to calculate the distribution of the scores gained by the respondents. Frequency (f) and percentage (%) were used to calculate the functions and problems of English usage by students in the tourism sector. The result shows that all language skills in English are needed for tourism students. Yet, in order to achieve the goal of providing an excellent service to tourists, it will need a well-prepared program and syllabus that may employ the internet as a source of information since the internet was the most popular reading source for tourism students.

1. Introduction

As an international language, English has been used globally by many countries all over the world. Babble Magazine in 2017 mentioned that more than 5 billion people use English and it increases significantly every year (Lyons, 2017). The data also shockingly shows that more than 80% of English users are not native speakers. The data recorded that, totally there were 360 million English native speakers. It makes English as the most studied language in the world by now.

Not only in the educational sector, as an International language, English should be studied and mastered by laborers who work in the tourism sector as well (Prachanant, 2012). Prachanant (2012)

also mentioned that in the tourism sector, English is used as a medium to communicate, negotiate, and interact between laborers as well as customers or tourists. English as a tool of communication becomes an important aspect for gaining customer's satisfaction, essentially for foreign customers in this global era (Kostiæ-Bobanoviæ & Gržiniæ, 2011).

In this global era, the tourism sector becomes a highly promising commodity. In Thailand for example, the tourism sector contributed as the second greatest income for the country comparing to other sectors in 2011 by gaining more than 100.000 million Baht. Moreover, it also could create more than 145.000 jobs in the same year (Prachanant, 2012).

In Indonesia, the tourism sector was also equally developed. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) recorded that Indonesia stood as the ninth highest developing country in tourism sector as what has been published in Kompas on March 23, 2019 (Gewati, 2019). Indonesia in 2018 was able to gain 17 Billion US Dollars or equal to 2.3 Trillion Rupiah foreign exchange. It was because the number of foreign visitors who came to Indonesia was significantly increasing year by year as can be shown in figure 1.
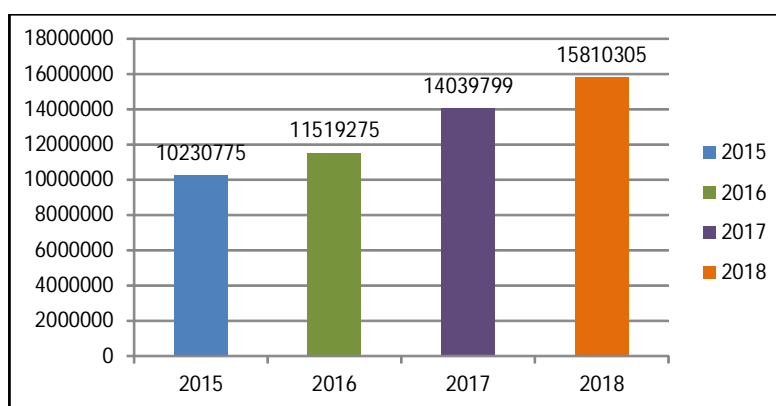

Figure 1. Number of Foreign Visitors to Indonesia in 2015 – 2018
Source of Data (Statistik, 2019)

Furthermore, on January – March 2019, BPS noted that there have been approximately 3.815.283 foreign visitors who came to Indonesia. The data shows that there is a meaningful increasing number of 4.28% comparing to the same period in 2018. In 2020, the government of Indonesia targeted to have 20 Million foreign visitors (Indonesia Investments, 2016).

The increasing level of tourism sector in Indonesia, especially the level of foreign tourists visiting Indonesia can be a blessing, but on the other hand, it can also be a disaster if the services provided during their visit and stay are not optimal. At least, there are 5 fundamental competencies that need to be acquired by all laborers in the tourism industry, they are Personality, Communication, Attitude, Technical know-how, and to name a few (Prabhu & Wani, 2015). Communication becomes a mandatory skill that needs to be mastered by any tourism labors. Thus, of course, English mastery as a tool of communication should be the main focus nowadays.

In recent 20 years, Communication and Technology have been evolved and guided the way English is taught, from English for Academic Purposes to English for Specific Purposes (one of them is in Tourism Industry). It is basically aimed to have a focus and applicable English in the real world/ tourism industry. However, in many cases, English teaching in many institutions was not based on the need analysis of English usage in the tourism sector (Kostiæ-Bobanoviæ & Gržiniæ, 2011). Thus, again, the goal of English teaching will not right on the target and also applicable.

Another effect of English teaching which is not based on need analysis is a low level of English proficiency. In 2018, research held by English First showed that Indonesia stood on the 51st of English Proficiency from 88 countries all over the world. In Asia, Indonesia stood on the 13th of English Proficiency from 21 countries (English First, 2018a). As a comparison, Vietnam stood the 41st of 88 countries all over the world. Generally, the English Proficiency score of Asians was 53.6 points. However, the English Proficiency score of Indonesian was 52.15 points.

As what has been explained by the Senior Director of Research and Academic Partnership of Education First that a low score of English Proficiency of a country indicates that the country still on the step of "consuming". It cannot negotiate, mediate, or even compete globally (Moriand, 2017). Accordingly, this study wants to understand the need of English in tourism industry, especially for tourism students. By finding the need, the researcher wants to help teachers getting insight of how to create a teaching program and syllabus that may later be used to improve their ability in using English as a tool of communication in the tourism industry.

2. Method

This is a Need Analysis study which generally employs a quantitative approach. Thus, questionnaire was used as a main data collecting instrument. The questionnaire was adopted from Prachanant's (2012) study. Totally, there are 22 questions used in this study. The total of questions were divided into two categories, 8 questions were formed as checklist where 14 others were formed as 5 rating Linkert-scale questions. The formed of 5 rating Linkert-scale questions were based on the criteria as presented in table 1.

Table 1. Linkert Scale Criterion

Scale	Mean Range	Need Level
5	4.50 – 5.00	The Highest Need
4	3.50 – 4.49	High Need
3	2.50 – 3.49	Moderate Need
2	1.50 – 2.49	Low Need
1	1.00 – 1.49	The Lowest Need

In order to minimize misunderstanding when interpreting the questionnaire, it was delivered using Indonesian. Then it was distributed to tourism students in Malang by using Purposive Random Sampling since October 2020 to November 2020, since the result of this research will not be used as a generalization (Latief, 2016). During this pandemic, it was distributed online using Google Form.

Data gained from this questionnaire were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Mean and Standard Deviation were employed to calculate the need of English Skill by tourism students. The higher mean score gained by the students, the higher skill is needed by any students in tourism industry. On the contrary, the lower mean score gained by the students, the lower skill is needed by any students in tourism industry. Whereas, Standard Deviation (SD) was employed to calculate the distribution of the scores gained by the respondents. Frequency (f) and percentage (%) were used to calculate the functions and problem of English usage by students in tourism sector.

3.   Result and Discussion

English has been used globally by many countries in this world as a bridge language or commonly known as *Lingua Franca* (Amalia, n.d.). Babbel Magazine recorded that there were 1.5 Million people from all over the world used English in 2017. And, it was significantly increasing year by year (Lyons, 2017).
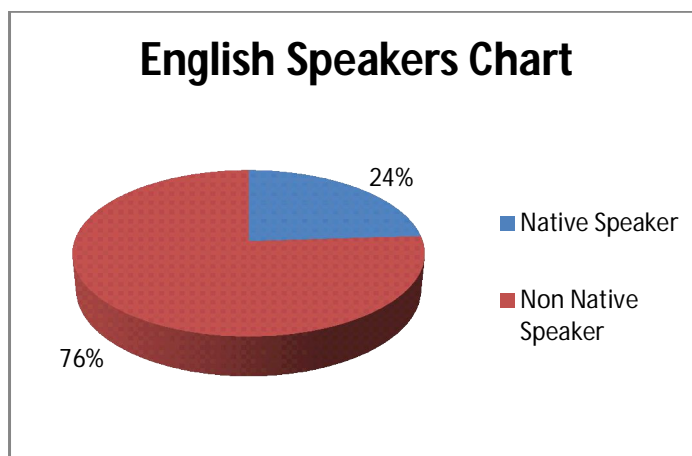

Figure 2. English speakers chart
Source: Lyons (2017)

Although, English has many speakers all over the world, yet the data on figure 2 shows that more than 70% of English speakers are not native speakers. The data also reveals that English becomes the most studied language in this world (Lyons, 2017). In Indonesia for example, Lauder (2008) said that English was firstly taught in colonialism era, precisely in 1914 (Yusny, 2013). He also mentioned that English was the first language which was used for international communication, information and technology access, Indonesian development as well as education.

Data got from this research shows that there were 47.3% of total respondent has learnt English for more than 9 years as can be seen on figure 3. The total period of learning English for more than 9 years should be an indicator that a person has developed-skills to be applied. On the other word, he/she should be able to use English for his/her daily conversations for example.
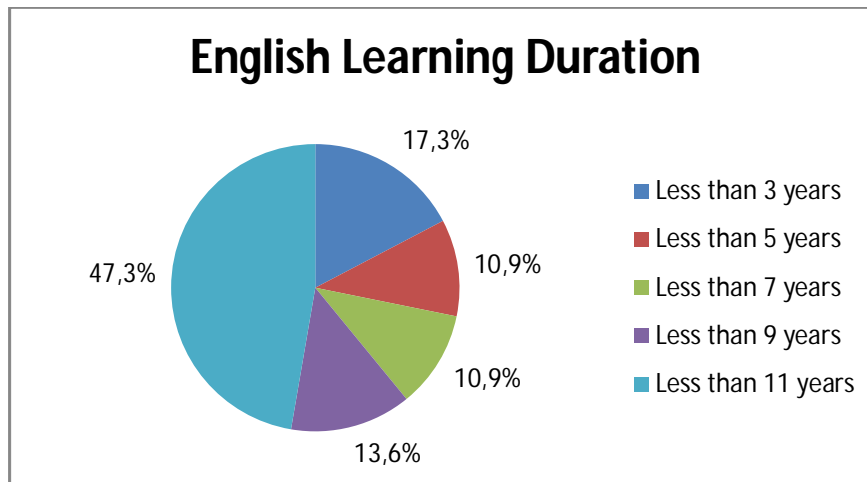
Figure 3. English Learning Duration
Source: Processed Data

Data gained by English First in 2018 was shocking. In 2018 they found that Indonesia stood at the 51st of 88 countries of English Proficiency and it was categorized as a "Low Proficiency" country (English First, 2018b). There were more embarrassing issue that in 2019, Indonesia stood as 61st of 100 countries all over the world. It was lower comparing to the previous year (English First, 2019).

The low level of proficiency gained by English First in the two previous years must be a trigger to us in terms of developing English skill by now especially for tourism sector. It is because The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) noted that Indonesia stood as the 9th highest developing country as what have been mention on Kompas 23 March 2019 (Gewati, 2019). Central Bureau of Statistic in Indonesia (*Badan Pusat Statistik*) recorded that during January – March 2019, there were more than 3 Million foreign tourist came to Indonesia (Statistik, 2019). It was one of the reasons of why Indonesia enabled to have more than 17 Million dollars or equal to 2.3 Trillion Rupiahs of foreign exchange.

The increasing number of foreign tourist come to Indonesia should be followed by the development of human resources in tourism sector. Communication is the one of 5 basic skills that need to be mastered by any tourism labor in Indonesia (Prabhu & Wani, 2015). Of course, English as a tool of communication should be a main focus. A tourism labor must be able to speak English in order to provide a more satisfying travel experience to foreign tourists who come to visit (Erazo et al., 2019). In order to achieve the target, it needs to have a well-prepared program for any tourism student before he/she is involved in the real tourism sector.

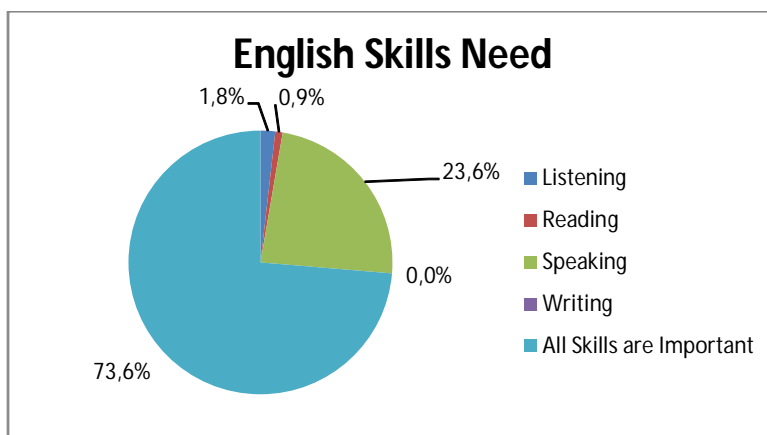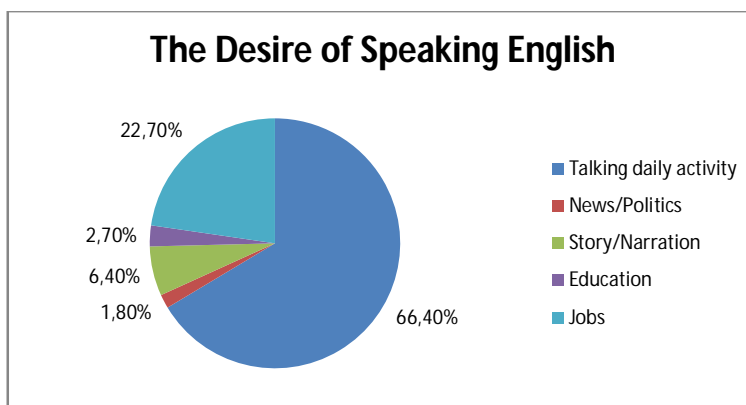### *English language skills for Tourism Students*

Figure 4. English Skills Needed for Tourism Students
Source: Processed Data

As shown on figure 4, most of the respondents believe that all English skills including: Listening, Reading, Speaking, as well as Writing are important to be mastered by 73,6%. The second most needed skills for tourism students are Speaking by 23,6%. The third is Listening by 1,8%, the fourth is reading by 0,9% and the last is writing by 0%.

There are similarities between data gained by the researcher and data found by Prachanant (2012) which stood speaking as the second most needed skills in tourism industry. There is one of the best ways in improving speaking skill nowadays such as communication with either business partners or friends from abroad. Students can be able to take some exchange programs which may be available to have opportunities in improving their English communication skill (Kostiæ-Bobanoviæ & Gržiniæ, 2011). Data gained from this research also found that the most respondents tend to tell their daily activity when they are asked to have public speaking *(as shown on figure 5)*.

Graphic 5. The Desire of Speaking English
Source: Processed Data

Prabhu and Wani (2015) suggested that students need to be motivated to improve their communication skill by giving some programmed activities. There are some common mistakes that may be created by most Indonesian students when they are speaking such as: mispronunciation, grammatical errors, and vocabularies errors (Putra & Salikin, 2020)

While, we cannot deny the fact that shows all English skills are needed for the development of tourism students. Data found from this research shows that 69,1% students used English only for educational purposes such as submitting and sending their works as shown on figure 6. It also reveals that students tend to use English only at school during their studying time.
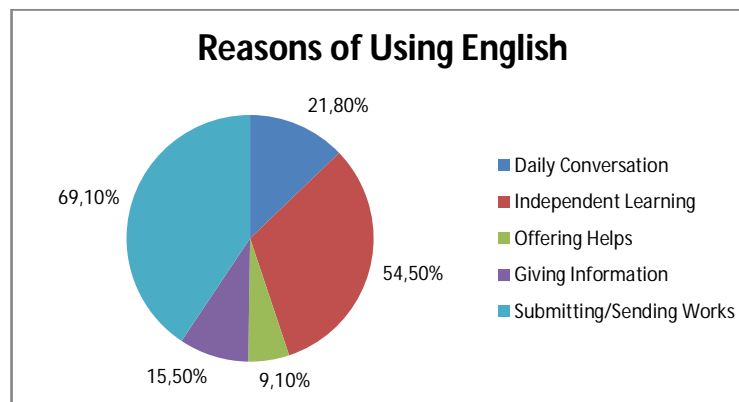

Figure 6. Reasons of Using English
Source: Processed Data

If it is well-programmed, the common mistakes that may be created by non-native English users such as using inappropriate words and expressions when speaking, having inadequate vocabularies when reading, as well as lacking grammar knowledge when writing can be minimized (Prachanant, 2012).

Students' Perception of Their English

When students were asked to rate their English Proficiency, they tended to have moderate perception of English skill by 2,78 as shown on table 2. The moderate perception of their English skill may be caused by the time they spend for improve their ability in English. A research conducted by Prabhu and Wani in 2015 found that students might only spend between 15 – 30 minutes in a day to improve their English ability while only few students that spent 60 minutes more in a day (Prabhu & Wani, 2015).

Table 2. Students Perception of Their English

	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
penialaian bahasa	110	306,75	2,7886	,64537
Valid N (listwise)	110			

Students' Desire and Anxiety in Learning English

Table 3 presents students' desire and anxiety in learning English. Table 3 shows that high motivation in learning English by 4,4582. They tend to have low level of anxiety to learn English by 1,4018. It is a positive chance that may reflect a possibility to create well-prepared programs.

Table 3. Students Perception of Their English

Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
keinginan belajar	110	490,40	4,4582	,47956
Valid N (listwise)	110			
ketakutan belajar	110	154,20	1,4018	,31882
Valid N (listwise)	110			

An internet-based program may be employed as an effective way in teaching English nowadays. Since, internet has been built as a media to communicate especially in English. It also shares an easily accessible information (Kostiæ-Bobanoviæ & Gržiniæ, 2011). Data found from this research supports that 58,2% students were preferred to find articles that may be available on the internet rather than other sources as what can be drawn on figure 7. While, books still become the second most interesting sources when they are willing to read by 27,3%.
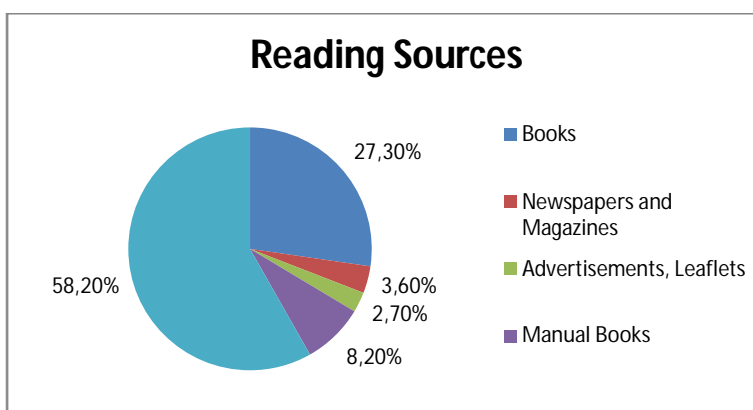

Figure 7. Reading Sources
Source: Processed Data

Although, reading is not the skill they want to master (see Figure 4), it is complex process that may train various knowledge and skill such as visual, auditory/phonological, movement, and articulating (Parlindungan et al., 2020)

## 4.	Conclusion and Suggestion

This study has already revealed that all language skills in English are needed for tourism students. Students also need much time and effort in learning English if they want to have a well-developed English skill. Whereas, as tool of communication, speaking needs to be developed by a purpose of providing an excellent service when they are already entered the real tourism industry. In order to achieve the goal, it needs a well-prepared program and syllabus that may employ internet as a source of information. Hopefully, a baseline input of contents, designs, and the involvement of such stakeholders: students, teachers, schools/institutions, and companies will take apart in preparing the program and syllabus.

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