

## Venders' English Speaking Ability in Tourism Object in Bali: A Survey Study

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### Abstract

Bali is known as a tourist destination which is always filled with tourists, both domestic and foreigners. Besides being famous for its culture, the beach is one of the main attractions for tourists. Berawa Beach is one that is always crowded with foreign tourists because it has large waves which are great for surfing and also to enjoy the beautiful sunset. This phenomenon provides opportunities for local people as a source of income by becoming food and beverage sellers around Berawa beach. This encourages local people to use English when they transact with foreign tourists. Practically, the English language used by traders is practical English with transactional functions. This study aims to describe the ability of English use by food and beverage traders in Berawa Beach, Tibubeneng village, North Kuta District, Badung Regency in terms of the speaking aspect. In order to determine the traders speaking ability, the researcher uses scoring rubric descriptions that contain several aspects such as, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary. Data is collected through several instruments such as interviews, direct observation, and field notes. The results of this study can be used as input for stakeholders of Tibubeneng Village to determine the steps in improving the English language skills of food and beverage traders who ultimately can contribute positively to Badung Regency in advancing the tourism industry while introducing various kinds of local culinary.

**Keywords:** English; speaking skill; language function.

Bali as one of the most attractive tourism destination has always been visited by large number of tourists each year. It varies from domestic tourists to travelers worldwide. According to Indonesia Central Bureau of Statistics in 2018, there are up to 6.070.000 tourists from other countries visiting Bali.

Considering this great potential, English has become the basic needs for Balinese

people to communicate with foreigners. Based on the researcher's preliminary observation in Berawa beach, Tibubeneng village, Bali, English is widely used by the street vendors in this tourism destination. This location is chosen based on several considerations. First, it is located in a relatively accessible location so that the tourists are more likely to come. Secondly, with various activities that

can be conducted here such as enjoying sunset, surfing, and Barong dance attraction make the communication even more intensively done by the tourists and the local. As the researcher observed, interactions occurs most between the venders and foreigners.

Specifically, the communication is done to negotiate prices to purchase the venders' products like foods and drinks. Therefore, English is a language that the venders should master. On the other hand, the venders' background is not basically from active English speakers yet not having a formal degree related to English. This causes them to communicate in simple language pattern. From the preliminary observation the researcher finds out that vocabulary is one of the speaking aspect that the venders lack of. That forces them to use non-verbal communication such as body language like pointing at the products. Moreover, they sometimes need to write the price on top of sands.

Another aspect that becomes the focus of this study is the venders' fluency. According to Yang (2014), fluency plays a key role due to its significance to make communication coherence and cohesive. Based on the researcher's preliminary investigation, the venders are not that fluent indicated by the occurrence of interjection during the communication in a phrase or sentences. In addition, grammar becomes the key to understand the speaker's intention. The ignorance of the use of proper grammar by the venders also complicates them to speak smoothly.

Based on the aforementioned problems, the researcher intended to investigate the language used by the street venders in Berawa beach, Bali. The researcher also identifies further regarding their ability and difficulties in speaking. The analysis will be underlined by looking at the following aspects, namely fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

One of the most important aspects for English speakers to master is speaking

(Nunan, 1991). During the beginning of its emergence as a discipline, the approach and method to teach speaking focus much on the academic situation such as conference and research (Nazara, 2011). By its development, the needs to master speaking increase.

These days, speaking ability in English is needed for more occasions. In fact, 85% of the speaking ability is used for jobs and business (Crystal, 1997), preferably to get better job. Additionally, the essence of speaking is to smoothen communication either transactional or interpersonal. As stated by Graves (2008), the aims to learn foreign language are varied, but the main purpose is still the same which is to communicate, improve the life prospect, and widen the ability to use language either literally or figuratively. Richards & Renandya (2002) add that the majority of English learners expect that learning the language will improve their proficiency. The tendency to prioritize the speaking ability is also due to it needs more control compared to other abilities (Burnkart, 1998).

Speaking ability can be categorized into two, transactional and interpersonal communication. Generally, these two categories functions as means to interact, yet the focus of interaction is different. Transactional communication focuses on accurate information changes, and has a clear purpose. It also focuses on what to say and what should be received (Nazara, 2011). Further, its significance in interactional communication focuses on social function. In this regard, the content of the speech is not the emphasis, it emphasizes on how to build relation among individuals.

There are four main aspects to consider in assessing someone's ability in speaking. Those aspects are grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Pronunciation refers to how speakers produce group of words clearly. In line with that, pronunciation does not focus on isolating voice word by word. On the contrary, it stresses on pronouncing words as one unit so that the listener can understand

it more easily (Gilbert, 2008). Specifically, pronunciation covers other important aspects, namely stress, intonation, volume, and rhythm (Julio & Contreas, 2018).

It is necessary to say that grammar, or known as language pattern is important to organize sentences properly. Williams (2008) stated that grammar is a formal discipline about language structure and description on how they are arranged in a meaningful construction. In other words, grammar works to fulfill the coherence of spoken text. Vocabulary, by definition, is every item, fraction, word groups that have its own meaning (Lessard-Clouston, 2013). Additionally, vocabulary works significantly in spoken and written language. Receptive vocabulary refers to words that we can recognize through the process of reading and listening, whereas productive vocabulary refers to the words that we use to transfer information (Lehr, Osborn, & Hiebert, 2004). In short, Vocabulary is a lexicon that needs to be transferred to students for the sake of communication.

Lastly, fluency is closely related to how to express the language in oral communication without any obstacles. Generally, the English learners will use interjection to avoid grammar mistakes, sentence reformulation, and information anticipation (Pollard, 2008).

Regarding to its use, language plays an important role since it is the means of communication and interaction among humans. Languages are diverse and varied. This diversity of languages occurs not only because of the non-homogeneous speakers, but also the social interaction that they carry out are quite diverse.

Some empirical studies of the ability to speak in English have also been carried out by several researchers. Liao (2009) examines English language skills among students. He found that speaking in English was greatly influenced by several factors, namely less innovative teaching methods, a focus on language only on accuracy, not fluency, and a lack of opportunities to speak in English. In line with Liao (2009), Khan & Ali (2010) investigated students' speaking abilities in English. Khan and Ali used a total of 40 students to become the subjects of their research. The results of their research showed the ability of the subject to be at the basic level. They also emphasize the importance of an appropriate environment to explore their language skills. Fauzan (2016) added in his research that regular training really helps fluency in speaking in English.

## Method

This research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach. This qualitative study was used to analyze the use of English by food and beverage traders in Berawa Beach, Tibubeneng Village, North Kuta District, Badung Regency. The type of data used in this study is qualitative data. Qualitative data was obtained through observation and interviews with 25 respondents who were traders around the Berawa beach. In this study the data sought were the one regarding the use of English by food and beverage traders on Berawa beach. The choice of subject is based on several criteria, including: 1) the subject is a genuine trader from the swamp beach, 2) often communicates with foreign tourists, 3)

**Table 1.** Assessment Criteria

Aspects	Range				
	Very Poor	Poor	Moderate	Good	Very Good
Fluency					
Grammar					
Pronunciation	0-20	21-40	41-60	61-80	81-100
Vocabulary					

willingness to participate in this study.

The data source in this study consists of two types, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained through observations and interviews, while secondary data is obtained through the results of library studies, factual internet supporting data, statistical data from Tibubeneng Village, and several related agencies.

In addition to using the previously mentioned instruments, the researcher also made a speaking ability assessment criterion which will be used to analyze the extent to which the traders speak in Berawa Beach. The assessment criteria can be explained in Table 1.

The data collection was done through several stages. First, after determining the research subjects, the researcher arranged the schedule to meet the research subjects. At the specified time, the researcher spread the questionnaire to be filled out by the respondents. The use of questionnaires at this

stage was to find out which speech functions were more dominantly used by the traders in Berawa Beach, Tibubeneng Village, North Kuta. On the other hand, the interview served to support the data that had been obtained through the distribution of questionnaires. Interviews used were semi structured interview considering the questions that arise were very dependent on the contents of the questionnaire that had been filled.

Data collection was then followed by field observations. In this respect, the researcher observed the way food and beverage sellers communicate with tourists using English. Observation was also accompanied by assessing the ability of peddlers in using English in accordance with aspects that have been described in the previous chapter, namely grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency. The speaking ability rubric can be seen as follows.

Data analysis in this study was conducted using the theory of Interactive

**Table 2.** Rubric for Scoring Speaking

Aspect of Speaking	Descriptor	Score
Vocabulary	The subject has various types of vocabulary, well delivered, and suitable to the context	4
	The subject has many options on the vocabulary, good delivery, and mostly suitable to the context	3
	The subject has a fair option on the words choice, fair delivery, and not really suitable to the context	2
	The subject does not have options, poor delivery, and not suitable to the context	1
Grammar	The subject's range enhances communication	4
	The subject's range supports communication	3
	The subject's range almost support communication	2
	The subject's low range make communication difficult	1
Pronunciation	The subject's delivery enhances communication	4
	The subject's delivery supports communication	3
	The subject's delivery almost support communication	2
	The subject's poor delivery makes communication difficult	1
Fluency	The subject's ease of speech enhances communication	4
	The subject's ease of speech support communication	3
	The subject's ease of speech almost support communication	2

Model of Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono Sugiyono (2013, p.247). Data analysis consisted of three stages, namely a) data collection, b) data reduction, c) data presentation, and d) drawing conclusions. In the data collection stage, data is collected through observation and interview activities. After the data is collected, the data is reduced according to the data needed. After the data has been reduced, the results are presented as the results of the study.

**Results and Discussion**

The findings in this study were divided into two focus, the first was the speaking ability of food and beverage traders in Berawa Beach, Tibubeneng Village, Kuta Utara District, and secondly to the extent to which the function of English was used by them.

In general, judging from the four aspects of speaking, the majority of food and beverage traders on Berawa Beach have moderate English language skills to communicate with foreign tourists. Data on speaking ability of food and beverage traders can be seen as follows.

The table above shows the ability to speak in English in each aspect. Data were obtained from 25 people selected as the subject of the study. The number above is the calculated average of the scores of each subject in each aspect. It can be seen that the majority of traders struggle with fluency, and grammar. Whereas the vocabulary and pronunciation aspects can be said to be the most prominent aspect of the ability of food and beverage traders on Berawa beach even though it cannot

**Table 3.** Average Score of the Traders' Speaking Ability

Aspect	Score	Category
Fluency	60	Moderate
Grammar	60	Moderate
Pronunciation	66	Good
Vocabulary	65	Good

**Table 4.** Distribution of Speaking Ability

Subject	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Score	56	56	68	68	68	50	62	68	56
Subject	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Score	62	68	50	62	50	56	68	56	68
Subject	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	0	0
Score	68	68	68	68	56	68	68	0	0

be said to be very good either.

Individually, the subjects who have abilities below the average are quite numerous. Distribution of the subjects' speaking ability can be seen as follows.

From the table above, it can be seen that 9 subjects are still in the "poor" category while the other 16 are in the "moderate" category. This means that in general, the speaking skills of food and beverage traders in Berawa Beach are in the "moderate" category. From the table above it can also be concluded that there are no food and beverage traders who can speak English very well.

The researchers also explored further regarding the speaking abilities of traders through interviews. From the results of interviews, it is known that traders do not learn English formally, they mostly dare to jump in to interact with tourists and learn directly. The development of information technology media today also helps them in learning. Some of the traders interviewed said that they also learned to speak in English through television channel and internet.

In addition, interviews and observations to the traders also show that the focus of the conversation is centered on phrases, and words, not on grammar. The subjects argue that insofar as the interlocutor understands their intentions, other aspects could be ignored. In addition, speaking conditions only occur in a number of contexts, such as the context of trading transactions, providing directions, and offering. The limited context discussed also determines the repertoire or vocabulary

which is also limited to that. This explains the findings of researchers where the average trader has an adequate vocabulary with good pronunciation, but ignores grammar which leads to fluency problem.

The researcher also investigated and described the language function used by the traders in Berawa beach. As explained in the previous chapter, there are two main functions of communication, namely transactional and interactional conversations (Nazara, 2011). The findings show that conversation functions are dominated by transactional conversations. On the other hand, interactional functions are still found in conversations carried out by food and beverage traders, but their nature is only to open and close communication.

Transactional conversations occur when bargaining is carried out with the intention of selling goods. The example is provided as follows

Seller : How may assist you?  
 Tourist : I want some drinks and snacks. What drink and snacks do you have?  
 Seller : Oh, many. for the drink I have ice water, orange juice, ice tea and for the food I have  
 Tourist : French fries and grilled sausage

The conversation above shows a seller starting a transactional conversation by offering assistance to prospective buyer. Tourist responds by conveying their intentions to the seller. The seller also responds that he has several types of products to offer to buyers. As a unity, it can be seen that conversation coherence is built by both parties, indicated by the delivery and responses between the two parties

Another sample of conversation is provided as follows:

Tourist : How much is the coconut  
 Seller : Coconut..... twenty for one.  
 Tourist : Can I get cheaper?  
 Seller : No, sorry sir, fix price

The communication above shows the transactional process or negotiation. In the context presented, the tourist negotiates prices with the seller, and the seller is able to respond to the buyer's wishes by saying that the price is no longer negotiable. In this context, coherence is built through the negotiation process.

Unlike transactional communication, interactional communication occurs in relatively few numbers. The function of interaction has the understanding that the language is tasked to guarantee and strengthen the resilience and continuity of communication and social interaction. It mostly occurs when opening and closing conversations.

From the findings above, fluency and grammar are two of the most difficult aspects to be mastered by food and beverage traders in Berawa beach. According to some previous studies, both of these aspects have indeed become obstacles to sharpen speaking skills in English. According to Arnold (2000), when someone speaks, they go through the process of constructing ideas in a collection of words, then expressing their perspective, feeling, and purpose, so the listener captures the purpose of the conversation. This process is complicated considering the speaker not only produces potentially meaningless words, but also formulates the intent as a whole.

Achieving certain level of fluency in language is the motivation of every English speaker (Richards and Renandya, 2002). However, the fact that achieving language fluency is not easy. This is because the speaker is not only required to use correct grammar, but also how to apply it spontaneously. The difficulty of achieving fluency in language as shown above are in line with the findings presented by Hinkel (2005) who reveals that communication problems occur because they find words that they do not understand, formulations that they are unable to apply, and their inability to express their intentions.

Besides, the inability of food and beverage traders in fulfilling the aspects of speaking is also due to communicative

competence. As a speaker of English, communicative competences are needed that include not only linguistic abilities, but also conversation skills that help speakers to deliver the content. Johnson (1995) claims that English as a second language requires communicative competence to participate in every experience that is built.

As for solving the problems found previously, it should be realized also that the performance of speaking is also influenced by several other factors such as the condition of the speaker, affective factors, listening ability, topical knowledge, and feedback (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

In terms of the performance, English speakers apply their abilities under different conditions. Nation & Newton (2009) found that performance is greatly influenced the ability to speak in English. The conditions referred to are time limits, planning, speaking standards, and the amount of exposure.

Further, affective factor also determines the success or failure of someone speaking in English (Oxford, 1990). Krashen (1982) said that affective factors were confirmed as factors that strongly supported fluency. The affective factors in question are: motivation, confidence, and learning anxiety. Additionally, speaking ability also cannot be developed if an English speaker does not develop his listening abilities. Shumin (1997) in Richards and Renandya (2002) and Doff (1998) state that listening ability cannot be separated from speaking ability. In fact, when someone speaks, he will play two roles at once, as a speaker, and as a listener. Being able to listen means understanding the core of the discussion.

Nevertheless, knowledge of the topic is also an important factor to be able to speak. Topical knowledge is defined as knowledge of the structure of language in long-term memory (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). In other words, topical knowledge is the knowledge possessed by the speaker regarding the relevant information expressed. The information obtained enables speakers to bring up the

context of the new conversation context.

Likewise, feedback is a form of evaluation of the performance of the speaker. Harmer (1991) states that feedback depends on performance and reactions that arise afterwards. For example, when someone tries to revise the way of speaking in English, if done in high frequency, it will actually damage the talking points and lead to reluctance to speak in English (Baker & Westrup, 2003).

Overall, it can be concluded that the speaking ability of food and beverage traders in Berawa Beach, tends to be in less category. The aspects that still need to be addressed are fluency and grammar, while the other two aspects can be categorized as moderate. Regarding the function of language, the majority of languages spoken are transactional where the focus of the discussion is the sale and purchase of goods and services. On the other hand, interactional conversations occur when both parties open and close the conversation.

## Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the use of English by food and beverage traders in Berawa Beach, Tibubeneng Village, District of North Kuta Regency varies greatly. There are four aspects assessed by researchers to see the ability of food and beverage traders to speak in English, namely fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Of the four aspects, fluency and grammar are relatively weak aspects compared to the other two. Meanwhile, the vocabulary and pronunciation aspects are in a fairly good category.

Of the two main functions of speaking, namely transactional and interactional, the transactional function more dominantly used by food and beverage traders in Berawa Beach. Transactional use is more dominant because the majority of talks occur for buying and selling transactions of goods and services. On the other hand, interactional functions occur to open and close the conversation.

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