

Navigating The World Of Tourism: A Literature Review Of English Language Proficiency's Influence

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Abstract. *This research article provides a comprehensive literature review examining the key role of English proficiency in the tourism sector. Using a literature review method, the researchers summarize the results of 20 articles from renowned journals, providing a comprehensive analysis of the impact of English language skills on the tourism industry. The analysis spans a large body of literature and examines how English proficiency affects various aspects of tourism, including tourist satisfaction, destination preferences, employment prospects, and global destination competitiveness. There are three themes that the researchers found from the analysis of the journals, first Language as a Medium of Tourism Communication, English Specific Purpose of Tourism, Cross-Cultural Comprehension and Cultural Awareness, and Online Advertising and Promotion. The researchers shed light on the various ways in which language skills shape tourism dynamics. This analysis shows that a good command of the English language is a crucial factor for both tourists' experiences and the success of tourism businesses. It shows how language skills have a significant impact on communication, improving tourist enjoyment and promoting greater economic profitability in the tourism sector. This research highlights the importance of English proficiency in the global tourism landscape and illuminates the dynamic interaction between language and the tourism experience.*

Keywords: *Tourism; English Language Proficiency; Literature Review.*

INTRODUCTION

In the ever-expanding global tourism industry, effective communication is essential. The ability to communicate clearly and comprehensively is an integral part of the tourism experience, facilitating communication between tourists, service providers and local authorities. In this context, the role of English as a lingua franca in tourism cannot be underestimated. Che Hassan & Ong Lok Tik, (2019) stated that English is considered a practical language and is mainly used for communication between tourists and tour staff. As a truly global language, English plays a key role in overcoming language barriers and enabling seamless communication between individuals with different linguistic backgrounds. Students in tourism and hospitality need English skills for professional communication (Junita & Nurdiana, 2019).

Learning foreign languages, especially English, is a constant challenge for students in Indonesia. Abrar et al., (2018) argue that despite years of learning English, many students cannot communicate in the target language, especially in all four languages. Indonesian

students often struggle to achieve language proficiency. This problem is due to many factors, including limited exposure to authentic English environments, a lack of professional language teachers, and education that often does not value language skills. Additionally, (Sintadewi, Artini, & Febryan, 2020) stated one of the issues with learning English is that most students believe English is challenging. Additionally, many students dislike English classes because they struggle to understand the material, which negatively affects their low English learning achievement. Therefore, it is difficult for many students to acquire advanced foreign language skills (Sari & Aminatun, 2021). It affects their ability to participate in international tourism and business. Removing these barriers to language learning is critical to ensuring Indonesian students can experience modern world languages.

Since English serves as a common language for communication amongst travelers, tour guides, hotel employees, and other service providers, its use as a global language in tourism is of great interest. According to Pustaka (2021), the English language is used in many facets of human existence, including education, technology, travel, health, and economy, demonstrating how integrated it is into modern society. English language proficiency improves communication efficacy, which in turn improves client happiness and the overall travel experience. This study explores at how English helps people communicate, which influences the level of service that the tourism industry provides.

Additionally, the economic effects of English language competency in tourism are examined in this study. Travelers frequently choose locations where they feel comfortable conversing in the language, which could result in higher tourism income for areas where English is a second language. Additionally, those with strong English language proficiency working in the tourism industry may be able to access greater employment prospects and higher compensation, which will support local economic development. Ahmad, Hussan, & Malik, (2018) said that the level of English proficiency that job seekers possess has a significant impact on the labor market since it influences the level of competitiveness among workers.

Apart from the language and economic aspects, the study places significant emphasis on cultural exchange. Proficiency in English communication facilitates travelers' deeper engagement with local cultures, so promoting mutual understanding and respect. (Widiastuti, Astawa, Mantra, & Susanti, 2021) stated that English is used in the tourism industry for both international marketing and workplace communication. It allows for deeper connections and experiences by bridging the gap between visitors and local populations. The goal of the study is to investigate how language ability affects these cultural aspects of travel as well as any possible advantages in terms of empathy and cross-cultural communication. The process of

developing English language proficiency in the tourism industry is dynamic and ever-changing, impacted by various factors including education, exposure to English-speaking environments, and training.

The purpose of this study is to examine the complex relationship that exists between English language proficiency and the travel and tourism sector. Although the success of the tourism industry has been linked to English proficiency, a thorough literature review is required to examine the complex aspects of this relationship. This study intends to explore the sociocultural and economic ramifications of English language competency in the context of tourism in addition to its linguistic components.

METHOD

The method of this study is literature review. Sulastri & Saptiany, (2023) said that the review of the literature provides and examines at earlier research. Particularly, it has emerged as an officially acknowledged type of review-based research across numerous disciplines (Callahan, 2014; Kraus & Dasí-rodíguez, 2020). Reviews of the literature help readers understand a particular subject and field while also highlighting knowledge gaps that require further investigation (Zillmer & Díaz-Medina, 2018). The following keywords were used in our integrated literature review database search: English for tourism, English for specific purposes of tourism, The influence of English to tourism, English class in tourism' student. Later, to make sure we hadn't overlooked any pertinent papers, we manually searched every issue of the journal published between 2019 to 2023. English in tourism-related topics were covered in both empirical and non-empirical articles. The researchers examined 20 journals with publications in both domestic and international journals. A thematic analysis of the papers was conducted employing the field of tourism English.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language as a Medium of Tourism Communication

The tourism industry depends on efficient communication. Despite the fact that they may not speak the same language, foreign visitors frequently use English to communicate. Studies have repeatedly shown that in the context of tourism, English functions as a lingua franca, promoting communication between visitors and locals as well as between tour guides and service providers. Research has shown that fluency in English among tourism industry professionals improves visitors' experiences by facilitating problem-solving, rapport-building, and straightforward communication.

A study conducted by Erazo, Ramírez, Encalada, Holguin, & Zou, (2019) investigated the English language requirements and usage in "El Oro," Ecuador's tourism and hostelry sectors. The researchers also examine the effects of selecting workers who speak English well and the importance of English proficiency in the travel industry. In order to gather information from 15 participants, the researchers used semi-structured interviews, testimony capitalization, and focus groups. The researcher confirmed that to deliver excellent customer service, employees in the tourism and hotel industries must possess a high level of English proficiency. The participants shared their insights from working as tour guides, travel agents, hotel employees, and bartenders. The information gathered revealed the impact of English proficiency in the travel and tourism industry. A further research by Nomnian, Trupp, Niyomthong, Tangcharoensathaporn, & Charoenkongka, (2020) investigates the perceived needs and difficulties that local communities in Thailand's second-tier provinces of Chiang Rai and Buriram have when it comes to the English language for tourism. The results demonstrate that English serves as a medium for global communication as well as a source of power, enabling proficient language users to assume significant roles as interpreters, tour guides, and translators.

English Specific Purpose of Tourism

When English is used for tourism, it frequently falls under the umbrella of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), a language that is specially designed to fulfill the demands of a particular industry or domain. English is used in the tourism industry for a number of specialized functions that help to promote communication between travelers and service providers. English Specific Purpose of Tourism here means that the English language also influence the student' English needs from tourism and hospitality department. In relation to the English communication needs of tourism students, a study by Giri, (2023) investigates the English communication needs. The results showed that the most important communication abilities for visitor meetings and for interacting with tourists are speaking and listening. The main research conclusions from Chumphong & Chuai-in (2020) also showed that, among the skills used by employees, listening was most frequently used, followed by speaking, reading, and writing. Employees in the tourist industry regularly used their English listening skills to answer questions from clients and provide details about hotels and tour packages. It also in line with the research by Widianingtyas, Silalahi, & Aolia (2023) that their participants which tourism student want the ESP for Hospitality teachers aim to use the CLT and PBL teaching approaches to give priority to the vocabulary comprehension, speaking fluency, and listening skills of their students.

Additionally, a research examined by Lertchalermtipakoon, Wongsunbun, & Kawinkoonlasate, (2021) Grammar structures and English language proficiency were the areas where students said they needed the most help in their studies of tourism. Differently, a study done by Prihandoko, Tembang, Marpaung, & Rahman, (2019) said that the Speaking English in Merauke city Indonesia is not as important as it once was because foreign visitors to Merauke may be escorted by tour guides or interpreters. The researchers investigate the English language proficiency required in the tourism industry. The results demonstrate how important it is to be proficient in all four English language skills in order to work in the tourism industry. Writing abilities are essential, particularly for the Immigration Service as it pertains to registering visitors' data.

According to Lin & Jarvie (2019), educators should adapt their roles to better reflect the reality of globalization and include more intercultural communication practice, particularly in the teaching of English language to students. Che Hassan, Lowe, Ong, & Ding (2022) suggested using four communicative activities—role-playing, problem-solving, storytelling, and group projects—in English for tourism classes to help students improve their language skills and get ready for careers in the industry. Cloudia Ho, (2020) examine how implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom affects the development of undergraduates' communicative competence in Tourism English. The study's result suggested that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) helps students learn English more easily, boosts their self-esteem, and improves their ability to communicate in English when traveling. While (Chang, 2020) examined how the Flipped Classroom (FC) method affects students' acquisition of English for tourism. The overall result is that the FC activities had a favorable impact on the improvement of problem-solving abilities, group efficacy, and course satisfaction.

Furthermore, (Le, 2021) uses a lot of data in order to evaluate and process information. They also support the growth of tourism English in English instruction. Big data is the term used to describe the collection of data, which includes data that, in a time of peace, can be managed, extracted, and processed without the use of tools or software. Big data technology can enhance not only expressiveness but also the quality of explanations and tour guides. It can assist students in adjusting to their roles, integrating into society, and developing their own worth. Large data indicates that tourism English industry-university-research cooperation can significantly enhance students' all-around ability.

Cross-Cultural Comprehension and Cultural Awareness

Traveling involves more than just seeing new places; it also involves interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Research in this area have looked into how English might help tourism industry professionals become more culturally aware. They demonstrate how having a solid command of the English language allows professionals to interact politely and respectfully with travelers from different cultural backgrounds, resulting in a more authentic and richer travel experience.

Study that presented the cross-cultural comprehension carried out by Elfiondri, Zaitul, & Rina (2021). The purpose of their study was to investigate the Mentawai tradition and locally-based tourism English that foreign tourists interact with, as well as the role that cultural interaction plays as a mediator between visitor engagement and intention to return. Based on both tangible and intangible cultural elements, the study discovered that visitors interact culturally with a variety of Mentawai traditions. Use of words, phrases, and expressions that are culturally specific in tourism English promotes cross-cultural communication. Specific usage expressions serve foreign tourists by being used for greeting, offering, and other purposes. Intercultural contact positively influences the intention to revisit. It mediates the intention of visitors to revisit and engage. Cultural interaction that allows visitors to interact with customs as they are exhibited in locally based tourism Because English acts as a mediator between visitor engagement and intention to return, Mentawai customs and tourism The intention of tourists to return to Mentawai tourism destinations is positively influenced by English. The development of customs and English usage is crucial for Mentawai cultural tourism.

Furthermore, research conducted by Stainton (2018) said that tourism English is an ESP in the tourism industry. It serves as a communication tool for all aspects of cultural tourism activities. Tourism English is required for all tourism-related communication activities, including those involving tour guides, operators, lodging, and other travel-related industries. English is utilized throughout the activities to manage all aspects of transportation, accommodations, and other travel-related sectors, as well as to explain culture, customs, and other intangible cultural heritages. Tourism English is required for all tourism communication activities, including tour guides' explanations of customs, culture, and other intangible cultural heritages, and tour operators' management of all aspects of transportation, lodging, and other travel-related industries. The English language is required by the tourism industry as a communication medium in all areas of cultural tourism activities.

The previous study by Chen & Rahman (2018) also explained that cultural tourists interact with the attractions on a cultural level due to their engagement. Tourists' intention to return is influenced by their level of satisfaction with the cultural interaction. In turn, the experience of the tourists will influence their intentions. There is a correlation between behavior intention and tourists' intention to return to a cultural tourism destination. Groups of people who spend several days or more in a specific cultural tourism destination and interact with people from a different culture are referred to as engaging in cultural contact. When travelers visit a destination known for its cultural tourism, they can truly experience the authenticity of the travel experience by interacting with the local elements (Prentice, 2001). A thorough understanding of the local way of life produces a genuine, unforgettable experience (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). According to Prentice (2001), the more engaged cultural tourists are, the deeper the cultural contact, and the more serious cultural tourists are about what they see and experience in a destination for cultural tourism.

Online Advertising and Promotion

The way that travel-related businesses advertise and promote their services has changed in the digital age. Having a strong online presence is crucial to drawing in clients from across the globe. According to research, knowing English allows tourism professionals to produce and share content that appeals to people all over the world. English is a vital skill for companies looking to grow and serve a global customer base because language is important in social media marketing, website content, and blog posts.

The researches that presented the influence of English in a advertising sector carried out by (Gazzola & Mazzacani, 2019; Silva & Palihakkara, 2020; Kiškytė 2023). The objectives of their study were same that they investigated the impact of foreign language proficiency on employability. Recent studies revealed that, in addition to so-called hard skills listed in job advertisements, language proficiency has grown in importance as a value-add attribute that aids companies in achieving and fulfilling their corporate objectives in the globalized world. The purpose of this study of Kiskyte (2023) is to evaluate the value of language proficiency for employability. The study's goals are to ascertain the value of foreign languages, the most in-demand languages, and how these vary by nation and profession. The study's findings demonstrated that the ability to communicate in foreign languages has evolved into a requirement for all positions in the Baltic States' industries under investigation. A candidate with highly proficient foreign language skills, advanced thought and communication expression, and the ability to present ideas, comments, and thoughts clearly and efficiently is sought after by the labor market in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

A further study by Ahmad et al., (2018) examined the value of learning English in Pakistan by comparing the costs and benefits from an economic standpoint. The study concludes that the English language benefited from a privileged position in the sociopolitical structure of the newly formed Pakistani state as a result of the colonial legacy. The English language's historical entrenchment produced a set of values that guaranteed its dominance in sociopolitical spheres. Differentiated earnings, costs, and benefits were determined by values in these domains for Pakistan's sociopolitical strata. These domains were structured historically in a way that allowed English to maintain its privileged position in the face of opposition. The English language is expected to continue dominating both locally and globally in the near future based on its current rate of growth.

Additionally, the research by (Widiastuti et al., 2021) opined that many additional efforts have been made to guarantee that young people seeking employment can communicate in English. As the global market grows, it goes without saying that high-quality products and human resources with strong English proficiency are prerequisites for success. The analysis's findings indicate that English is crucial to the growth of the travel and tourism sector. Employees with strong English communication skills can help tourism businesses grow, particularly by expanding their sales programs and offering more effective services. This study suggests that employers in the tourism industry should regularly provide their staff with English language instruction through educational programs. English is used in the tourism industry for both international marketing and workplace communication. English language proficiency is crucial for being able to communicate globally when it comes to international marketing. It could become more difficult to compete in the global market if an individual cannot communicate in English well. Indonesia has the human resources to compete and survive in this fast-paced world, but they also face challenges. A crucial component of winning the worldwide competition is human resources. Professionals in the country face off against foreign workers, resulting in intense economic competition.

CONCLUSION

The literature review emphasizes how important the English language is to the tourism industry in many ways. Being able to communicate in English is essential for advancing professionally, knowing the English language needs of tourism and hospitality students, reaching a wider audience with marketing, encouraging cultural awareness, and gaining access to international resources. Researchers and industry professionals agree that there is a mutually beneficial relationship between tourism and the English language as the tourism sector grows

and diversifies. If professionals, businesses, and students want to succeed in the fast-paced, cutthroat tourism industry, they must have a thorough understanding of this relationship.

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