



English Skill of Traditional Transportation Drivers in Malioboro Indonesia

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English skills are very important for traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro, Indonesia. This research analyzes the latest facts about the English skills of traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro, barriers to mastering English, and their impact. The subject of this research is the traditional driver transportation (pedicab and andong) in the tourist area of Malioboro. The data collection techniques are interviews, observation, and documentation. The data analysis technique used in this research is data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of this study indicate that: (1) the English skill of traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro is still low (2) The inhibiting factors in mastering English are low economy, old age, limited time, low literacy, low education, no training Free English from the government (3) The impact of the inability to communicate in English well is difficulty in making agreement on service rates and less than optimal service delivery.

Keywords: English skill, tourism, English for tourism, traditional transportation

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INTRODUCTION

English speaking skills of traditional transport drivers in Malioboro Indonesia demand the attention of teachers or researchers. That's because the driver's English-speaking skill is very important to communicate with foreign tourists. English is a global language that is mostly used for world communication, so tourism will benefit from using English as the main language of communication (Rao, 2019). Mastering English has a positive impact in all areas of the tourism sector (Erazo et al., 2019). Drivers of traditional transportation, whether Andong or pedicab drivers in Malioboro, must have English skills to communicate with tourists from abroad who need traditional means of transportation, andongs, and pedicabs that involve them. The development of the quality of tourism services using traditional transportation pedicabs or andongs is still needed in the Malioboro and surrounding areas.

The tourism sector can be a vehicle in the country's development process. One aspect closely related to the development of a country is the economic aspect. Kyara et al. (2021) prove that the development of tourism can promote the economic growth of a country. Ada five sectors in the tourism industry that encourage the growth and development of the country; health tourism, sustainable tourism, cultural tourism, ecotourism, and Islamic tourism (Noor et al., 2019). The tourism industry has an important role as a source of foreign exchange earnings. It can encourage national economic growth, especially by reducing the number of unemployed and increasing the productivity of the Indonesian state (Yakup, 2019). The trade hotel represents tourism activities and restaurant sectors to contribute to economic growth (Antara & Sumarniasih, 2017). Based on the explanation can be concluded that tourism can help in the process of developing the country's economy.

A study conducted by the Indonesian Ministry of tourism explains the tourism sector's contribution to the economy. The role of the national tourism sector in the economy can be seen through foreign exchange earnings, regional income, regional development, and the absorption of investment and labor and business development spread across various regions in Indonesia. According to Pocket Book of the Ministry of Tourism, the tourism sector's contribution to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2014 reached 9% or Rp. 946.09 trillion. Meanwhile, foreign exchange from the tourism sector in 2014 reached Rp 120 trillion and contributed to employment opportunities for 11 million people ([Anggraini & Riyanto, 2017](#)).

The explanation described above shows that the tourism industry contributes to economic development in Indonesia, so it is very important to develop the tourism sector. One of the famous tourist destinations in Indonesia is Malioboro. Although [Maizida's research \(2021\)](#) states that foreign tourists prefer temple tours to Malioboro compared to domestic tourists, [Galura \(2019\)](#) reveals that the Malioboro area is the most important place tourists want to visit when in the city of Yogyakarta. That matters because of its strategic location and close to the historical heritage area. Of course, this is an attraction for foreign tourists who want to know Java's history, culture, and customs, which are still very strong.

As previously mentioned, Malioboro is an industrial tourism area that is in demand by local tourists and foreign tourists. In this regard, what needs to be considered is English as the language of instruction in the services provided for foreign tourists. English has a very important role in the tourism sector ([Erazo et al., 2019](#); [Zahedpisheh et al., 2017](#)). This is because English skills are needed in the tourism sector to provide information and services, for the development of human resources that have a significant positive effect on the performance of local tourism businesses, and can support socio-economic development ([Prihandoko et al., 2019](#); [Thitivesa, 2020](#)). So it can be concluded that the use of English has a very positive impact on the tourism sector.

As explained earlier that English is very important for tourism. It can be seen that English cannot be separated from the tourism sector. For tourism, three categories require the development of English, namely tourism facilities such as bulletin boards or signposts, soft skills such as the ability to speak English of tour guides, and promotional activities such as bilingual websites and social media. ([Reswari et al., 2021](#)). Meanwhile, in Malioboro, research by [Da Silva et al. \(2021\)](#) produced data stating that Indonesian and English have been used in commercial, regulatory, and infrastructure signs in Malioboro, which are primarily informative. However, the percentage of the use of English is still much less than Indonesian.

Foreign language skills are necessary for people working in the tourism and hospitality sectors. This is because staff are required to have an appropriate level of English proficiency to make tourists feel comfortable during their stay and travel ([Erazo et al., 2019](#)). So, tourism workers need to develop their ability to speak English.

Because [Zahedpisheh et al. \(2017\)](#) stated that learning specific skills in English can help apply them correctly and appropriately in certain professions, workplaces, or disciplines, including workers in the tourism industry sector.

Tourism workers improve their English skills to improve the quality of their work ([Lertchalermtipakoon et al., 2021](#)). The most important requirement for English for tourism workers is to speak, then listen, read and write. While the function of using English for them is to provide information, provide services, and offer assistance. Meanwhile, the problems found in the use of English for tourism workers are the inability to understand foreign accents, inappropriate words and expressions, inadequate vocabulary, and lack of knowledge of grammar. So, it can be concluded that English is very important for tourism workers, but there are still obstacles in mastering it.

Based on the explanation in the previous paragraph, it can be seen that tourism workers must have proficiency in English. For example, drivers of traditional transportation such as pedicabs and Andongs. Andong and Andongs are passenger transportation that has uniqueness and characteristics that make them a regular means of transportation and have become part of a halal tourist attraction that is quite popular among tourists in the Malioboro area ([Rahmad, 2021](#)). So for drivers of traditional Andong and pedicab transportation who are also tourism workers, it is important to master communication in English well.

Based on the facts described above, this study aims to analyze the importance of mastering English for drivers of traditional transportation in Malioboro. There are several previous studies whose scope of research theme is similar to this research. For example, [Magupita and Fatmasari's research \(2018\)](#) which examined the English learning strategies carried out by traditional becak transportation drivers in Malioboro with informal learning strategies through self-study, memorization and repetition methods, and learning anytime and anywhere. Then, [Lusiana's research \(2018\)](#) also examines the English learning strategies carried out by the souvenir shopkeeper in Malioboro with self-taught informal learning and learning while practicing. So, it can be seen that the focus of this study is the English learning strategy used by tourism workers in the Malioboro area. Meanwhile, the focus of this research is different from the previous studies described in the previous paragraph. This study will discuss the facts on the English skills of traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro, barriers to mastering English, and their impact.

This research is important to develop the quality of tourism services in Malioboro. This is because the priority of using English is used to provide information and services ([Prihandoko et al., 2019](#)).

Effective communication in English can help develop the tourism sector (Amirbakzadeh & Vakil Alroaia, 2020). Meanwhile, the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the tourism sector in Indonesia (Dinarto et al., 2020; Guridno & Guridno, 2020; Pramana et al., 2021). Data obtained from the statistical agency for the Special Region of Yogyakarta shows the number of foreign tourists visiting Yogyakarta through the number of hotel reservations has decreased during the Covid-19 pandemic (BappedaDIY, 2021). So, this is the right momentum to develop the tourism sector, which is expected to help improve the economy through the tourism sector.

METHODS

This research is classified as qualitative research. Participants in this study were drivers of traditional transportation in the tourist area of Malioboro, Indonesia. The data of this study are about the condition of the English language skills of traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro, the obstacles in mastering it, and their impact. Researchers obtain comprehensive data based on findings from the field. The process of collecting data in this study was carried out using observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were made in the tourist area of Malioboro, Indonesia. The interview technique was carried out conducting two pedicab drivers and one andong driver. Researcher also collects literature sources related to this research topic, such as books and research journals. The data analysis technique used in this research is data reduction and data presentation with coding process, then conclusion drawing. The conclusion is obtained by reducing the data obtained during observation, interviews, and documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation are categorized into three mains

categories: (1) Communication skills in English between traditional transportation drivers and foreign tourists, (2) Factors causing difficulties for traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro in communicating in English, (3) The impact of difficulties in communicating in English for drivers of traditional transportation in Malioboro. Communication Skills with English of Traditional Transport Drivers in Malioboro Table 1 below presents the results of interviews conducted to find out the facts on communication skills with traditional English transportation drivers in Malioboro.

Table 1. English Communication Skills of traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro

From the results of interviews conducted with drivers of traditional transportation in Malioboro, such as Becak and Andong, it can be seen that they are still weak in their ability to communicate in English. Even though some have little basic ability in English to communicate with foreign tourists, they are still very basic. For example, ask for the purpose and the price offered. Those who have difficulty speaking English in communicating with these tourists use the floor plan to ask for destinations and prices. In addition, many tourists are already fluent in Indonesian and even smooth Javanese, so that is quite helpful. From this explanation, it can be concluded that the communication skills in English for traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro are not good.

Drivers of traditional transportation such as andongs and pedicabs are tourism workers in the Malioboro area. For tourists visiting Yogyakarta, Malioboro is a must-visit destination for both local and foreign tourists. Working in tourist attractions that many foreign tourists visit requires

Aspect	Statement	Coding
Ability to communicate in English concerning traditional transportation in Malioboro	Pedicab Driver 1: I can speak English a little bit, for example: 'where are you going?', 'Where are you going?', 'The price is, that's it.'	weak
	Pedicab Driver 2: I usually only talk about the price and the place. I'm not fluent in English. I didn't graduate from elementary school. I can only listen to communication. Here, many Japanese people can speak Javanese. I often take Japanese people first, who can talk to Javanese fluently.	low
	Andong Driver : Many foreign guests can speak Indonesian recently. I can't speak English, I usually ask using a map, and the price. 'Where are you going?', 'Where is the destination?', 'The price is Rp.....', 'I want to see the map.'	weak

them to communicate in an international language, namely English well. This makes it easier for traditional transportation drivers to communicate with foreign tourists so that it can also help in providing good and quality service. Unfortunately, the facts on the ground show that traditional transportation drivers in the Malioboro area do not yet have good skills in communicating in English. If anyone can, it's still only basic English-speaking skill. It is still lacking to be a capital in communicating with foreign tourists well. This is in line with what was stated by [Gani and Damayanti \(2018\)](#) that tourism workers have difficulty speaking English. So, it can be seen that English is still a problem faced by tourism industry workers in Indonesia, reinforced by the results of this study.

It turns out that the problem of mastering English in the tourism sector also occurs in other countries. [Fujita \(2019\)](#) revealed that workers in Japan engaged in tourism have difficulty listening and speaking in English when communicating with foreign tourists. In addition, also there are problems in the publicity translation of china red tourism which due to the lack of understanding of the target language and the function of the text, there are various problems in the translation of words, sentences and discourses ([Shen, 2021](#)). So, it can be concluded that the problem of the ability to communicate in English in the tourism sector does not only occur in Indonesia but is also a problem in other countries.

Factors Causing the Difficulty of Traditional Transportation Drivers in Malioboro in Communication with English Table 2 below presents the results of interviews conducted to determine the factors that cause difficulties for traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro in communicating in English.

Table 2. Factors causing difficulties for traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro in communicating in English

The interview results show that several obstacles hinder traditional transportation drivers in the Malioboro area so that they are less fluent in English. Some of these factors are (1) low economy, (2) old age, (3) limited time, (4) low literacy, (5) low education, (6) no free English training from the government so that it can be seen that there are indeed many obstacles faced by drivers of traditional transportation in the Malioboro area, which causes them to be unable to master English.

The inhibiting factors faced by tourism sector workers are not only those mentioned in the previous paragraph. Gani and Damayanti (2018) revealed the obstacles tourism workers face in communicating with foreign tourists using English, namely the problem of opportunity to speak English, lack of vocabulary and collocation of guides, and mispronunciations. In addition, [Lertchalermtipakoon et al. \(2021\)](#) added that the obstacles faced in using English are listening and speaking skills as the biggest problems in communication. It can be seen that the results of these studies support that there are indeed many factors that hinder tourism workers in communicating in English. And this study adds several factors that have not been mentioned in previous studies.

The Impact of Difficulty Communicating in English for Drivers of Traditional Transportation in Malioboro. Table 3 below presents the results of interviews conducted to determine the impact of difficulties communicating in English for drivers of traditional transportation in Malioboro.

Aspect	Statement	Coding
Factors Causing the Difficulty of Traditional Transportation Drivers in Malioboro in Communication with English	Pedicab Driver 1:	
	<i>Because, first, the economic demands of the family. Second, my age is old, sir. I want to study, but time is constrained, sir. I work as a Andong driver to earn income for the needs of my wife and children. As the head of the family, I was required to provide them with food and drink (sustenance) for the family.</i>	-Economic low - old age -Limited time
	Pedicab Driver 2:	
	<i>I can't read, I can't write, let alone English, because I didn't graduate from elementary school. I have never received direction or facilities for learning English from the Government.</i>	-Low reading and writing skills -Low education -No English training from the government
	Andong Driver :	
	<i>I have never had any English training. Those who want to speak English must study our participation in independent training because we have not received learning facilities from the government.</i>	-No English training from the government

Table 3. Impact of Difficulty in Communicating in English for Drivers of Traditional Transportation in Malioboro.

tourism practices and coordinating with businesses and residents. Synergistic interaction between the central and regional governments can encourage the rapid

Aspect	Statement	Coding
The Impact of Difficulty Communicating in English for Drivers of Traditional Transportation in Malioboro	<p>Pedicab Driver 1:</p> <p><i>Foreign tourists often also bargain for transportation costs by Andong. There are good tourists, they give tips, bigger money. Good passengers sometimes charge more. I'm usually by agreement. However, if I was given more money, I accepted it because it was a gift from the passenger.</i></p> <p>Pedicab Driver 2:</p> <p><i>There are various kinds of foreign tourists; some can be Indonesian. They like to haggle the cost of Andong transportation.</i></p> <p>Andong Driver:</p> <p><i>I can't raise the price, just the standard price—the difference between short distance and far distance costs. I often take foreign tourists to hotels around Pawirotaman, Yogyakarta.</i></p>	<p>Tariff determination</p> <p>Tariff determination</p> <p>Tariff determination</p>

Based on the results of the interviews presented above, in general, the impact obtained by drivers of traditional transportation such as Andongs and pedicabs in the Malioboro area revolves around the problem of determining service rates. Offering a specific price, of course, requires a communication process. However, they have difficulties due to their lack of expertise in communicating in English with foreign tourists. They find it challenging to determine what traditional transportation costs they want. They have limitations in English.

Several research results support the research results described in the previous paragraph. If it was mentioned earlier that the lack of English proficiency possessed by tourism workers could have a negative impact on the tourism industry, then having ability in English can have a positive impact. As [Erazo et al. \(2019\)](#) stated in the results of their research, proficiency in English has a positive impact on the tourism industry sector. So it can be concluded that English is very important for the tourism sector because it can have a significant impact.

The explanation presented above on the impact of English on the tourism sector shows the importance of English in the tourism industry. It should be a concern for the Yogyakarta local government to pay more attention to the quality of traditional becak and andong transportation drivers, especially in terms of communication skills in English. According to the theory expressed by [Liu et al. \(2020\)](#) that the central government plays the role of steering, and the local government plays the role of serving by directly managing

development of tourism. Government policies and tourism resources (including traditional transportation drivers) simultaneously affect the competitiveness of tourism businesses, which can affect the performance of tourism businesses ([Susanto, 2019](#)). So that indirectly it can help increase the interest of foreign tourists to visit Indonesia, especially Malioboro.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the English skills of drivers for traditional becak and andong transportation in Malioboro are still lacking. Many drivers have difficulty communicating with foreign tourists using English. This hampers the smooth communication between customers and service providers. Furthermore, the factors that hinder drivers in mastering English are low economy, old age, limited time, low literacy, low education, and no free English training from the government. These inhibiting factors come from internal and external sides. Meanwhile, the impact of the inability to communicate in English well is the difficulty in making an agreement on service rates. This of course can interfere with the comfort of the tourists and harm the drivers as well.

Some of the factors that prevent drivers from mastering the ability to communicate in English can partly be resolved by themselves, but there are also those that need support from other parties.

For example, the local government of Yogyakarta should provide an English language training program for tourism workers in Malioboro including drivers for traditional becak and andong transportation. This is done to improve the quality of service through the development of the quality of tourism workers in Malioboro, in order to attract more foreign tourists. As well as traditional transportation drivers in Malioboro can get a decent wage.

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