



Tourist Perceptions Toward Language Proficiency of the Users of Balish at Ubud Tourism Area



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Keywords

Balish;
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Abstract

Balinese English which is in this article called Balish has an important role in the world of tourism, namely as one of the most important capitals for workers in the field of tourism because they use Balish. This article discusses tourists' perceptions toward Balish when they communicate using the English language with tourism workers in Ubud tourism areas. The data were taken from tourists who come to Bali on holiday and stay at Ubud. Quantitative data were collected by distributing questionnaires to the tourists. The quantitative results of the research show that the tourists are satisfied enough with their English ability in listening skill, and speaking skills. The theory that was used to analyze the data is the theory developed by Young and Fox (2020), i.e. theory of Oral Communication between Native and Non-Native Speakers Focuses on "Competency". This theory gives perceptions related to non-native speakers of English. Qualitative results indicate that tourists have some perceptions of their ability to use English, especially Balish. Their Balish is understood communicatively, but their ability in speaking skills needs to be improved particularly those related to accents, pronunciation, accuracy, and lexical choices.

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1 Introduction

The effect of the rising popularity of Balish develops words or lexical items in the morphological processes for Balish. Balish is a term that is used in the research to indicate Balinese English, i.e. the language used by workers, that are classified as a lower class such as merchants, masseurs, parking attendants, shop assistants or kiosks, etc. Balinese English which is called Balish has an important role in the world of tourism, namely as one of the most important capitals for workers in the field of tourism because they use Balish. This aims to discuss tourists' perceptions toward Balish when they communicate using the English language with tourism workers in the Ubud tourism area ([Drozdova et al., 2015](#)).

It seems that the speakers of Balish do not speak English fluently, and misunderstanding often occurs when they communicate with tourists and feel disappointed. This certainly still becomes a problem and therefore there must be solutions to avoid misunderstanding. Their language proficiency becomes important when they communicate and convey meaning in English through listening and speaking. As stated by [Hymes \(1972\)](#), to communicate effectively, speakers must know not only what is grammatically correct or incorrect, but also what is communicatively appropriate in a particular context. Balish eventually becomes communicative when fulfilling certain aspects such as mastering vocabulary, correct pronunciation, connecting grammar and of course, being able to relate to the context of the conversation (both semantically and pragmatically).

[Malinowski \(1930\)](#), states that the main function of language is practical, serving the needs of communication in a particular cultural context. Understanding the meaning of a language requires an examination of the social and cultural practices of its speakers. In line with that, tourists can understand what the Balish speakers say because they can relate to the situation/cultural context in each interaction. It is interesting to note that Balish is an English language with imperfect grammar, but the speakers found a way to communicate pragmatically with foreign tourists, as well as being able to reduplicate vocabulary, body language, and pronunciation of a word ([Vittersø et al., 2000](#); [Lepp & Gibson, 2003](#)). This article aims to discuss tourists' perceptions toward Balish when they communicate using the English language with tourism workers in Ubud tourism areas.

2 Materials and Methods

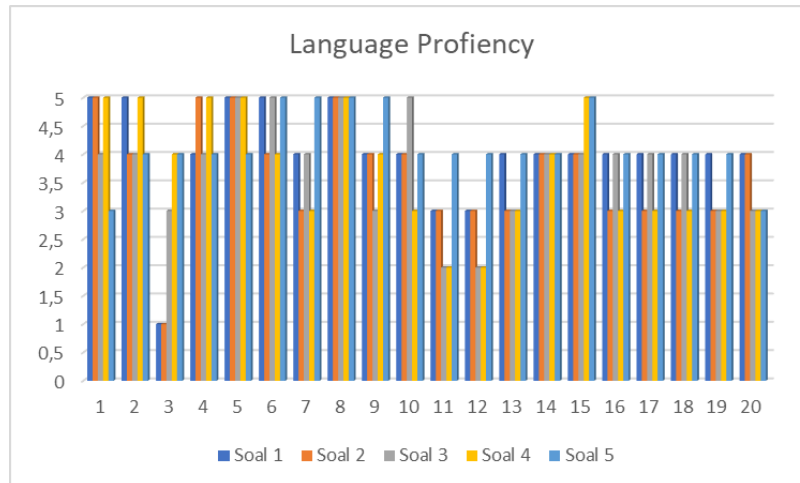
The data of this article were qualitative - quantitative sourced taken from tourists who came to Bali for a holiday. The main data is qualitative, data inside the form of words. The data found are in descriptive form, and the collected data were analyzed using the descriptive qualitative-quantitative method. The method of descriptive qualitative is used to describe the data analyzed by applying the theory of Oral Communication between Native and Non-Native Speakers Focusing on "Competency".

The theory that was used to analyze the data is the theory developed by Young & Fox (2020), i.e. theory of *Oral Communication between Native and Non-Native Speakers Focuses on "Competency"*. This theory gives perceptions related to non-native speakers of English. Qualitative results indicate that tourists have some perceptions of their ability to use English, especially Balish. Their Balish is understood communicatively, but their ability in speaking skills needs to be improved particularly those related to accents, pronunciation, accuracy, and lexical choices. According to [Hymes \(1972\)](#), to communicate effectively, speakers must know not only what is grammatically correct or incorrect, but also what is communicatively appropriate in a particular context.

[Malinowski \(1930\)](#), states that the main function of language is practical, serving the needs of communication in a particular cultural context. Understanding the meaning of a language requires an examination of the social and cultural practices of its speakers. In line with that, tourists can understand what the Balish speakers are saying because they can relate to the situation/cultural context in each interaction. [Sawangpol \(2019\)](#), states that tourist satisfaction is strongly influenced by the way messages or information are delivered.

3 Results and Discussions

Language proficiency is a person's ability to communicate and convey meaning in English through listening, speaking. Data collected from 20 respondents included answers to five questions regarding the Balish proficiency of tourism workers at Ubud, Gianyar.



The graphic illustration above is the number of answers from 20 respondents at Ubud, Gianyar related to the questionnaires of Foreign Tourist Perception of Balish. The horizontal line shows the number of respondents who have answered the Language Proficiency question. While the vertical line shows the Likert scale chosen by 20 respondents. The vertical line contains the range of answers from 1-5, where point 1 is the lowest point and point 5 is the highest point. The 20 respondents were selected from foreign tourists who visited and stayed at Ubud for more than one night. In addition, the 20 respondents who have answered the questionnaire, on average, have a college education, are aged 20-55 years, and are English speakers (intermediate to fluent/native speakers) who come from abroad.

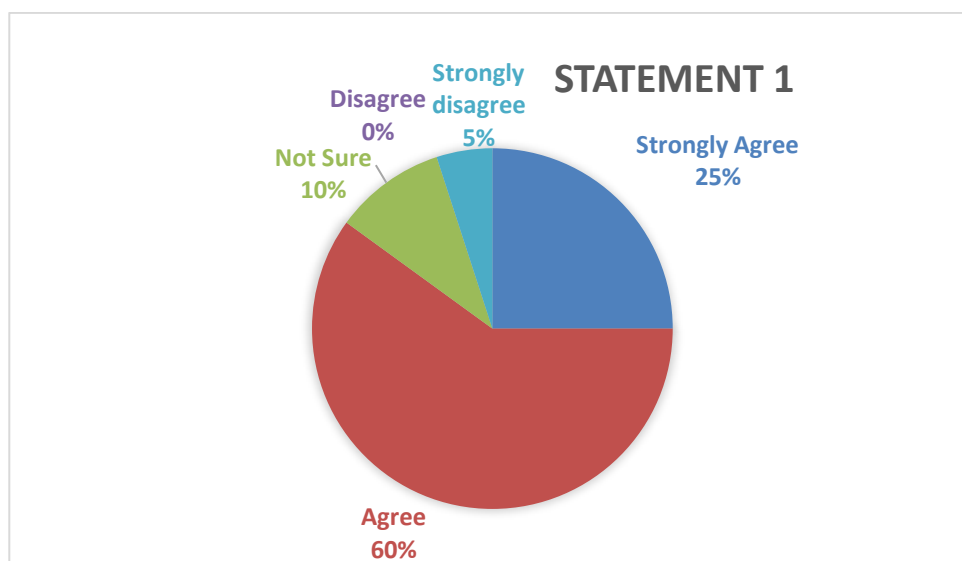


Figure 1, Tourists' understanding of Balish used by vendors

The graph on question 1, "I can understand Vendors who speak Balinese English (Balish)", shows quite interesting results. A total of 60% of respondents agreed and chose range 4 which means they agree, that foreign tourists understand the speech in Balish (Balinese-English) spoken by hawkers. This speech is a form of speaking skills by the hawkers, including pronunciation in using Balish. Then, as many as 25% chose to strongly agree that the Balish spoken by vendors can be understood by tourists. Followed in the next position with 10% choosing Not Sure and Strongly Disagreeing as much as 5%. With the accumulation that 60% and 25% chose Agree and Strongly Agree, it can be concluded that with foreign tourists understanding what is spoken by the Balish Speakers, then Balinese-English is communicative as a language (Astuti & Darma, 2019).

According to Hymes (1972), to communicate effectively, speakers must know not only what is grammatically correct or incorrect, but also what is communicatively appropriate in a particular context. Not only that, Balish to eventually become communicative must certainly fulfill aspects such as mastering vocabulary, correct pronunciation, connecting grammar and of course being able to relate the context of the conversation (both semantically and pragmatically). Malinowski (1930), states that the main function of language is practical, serving the needs of communication in a particular cultural context. Understanding the meaning of a language requires an examination of the social and cultural practices of its speakers. In line with that, tourists can understand what the Balish Speakers are saying because they can relate to the situation/cultural context in each interaction. It should be noted that Balish is an English language with imperfect grammar, but the Speakers found a way to communicate pragmatically with foreign tourists, as well as being able to reduplicate vocabulary, body language, and pronunciation of a word.

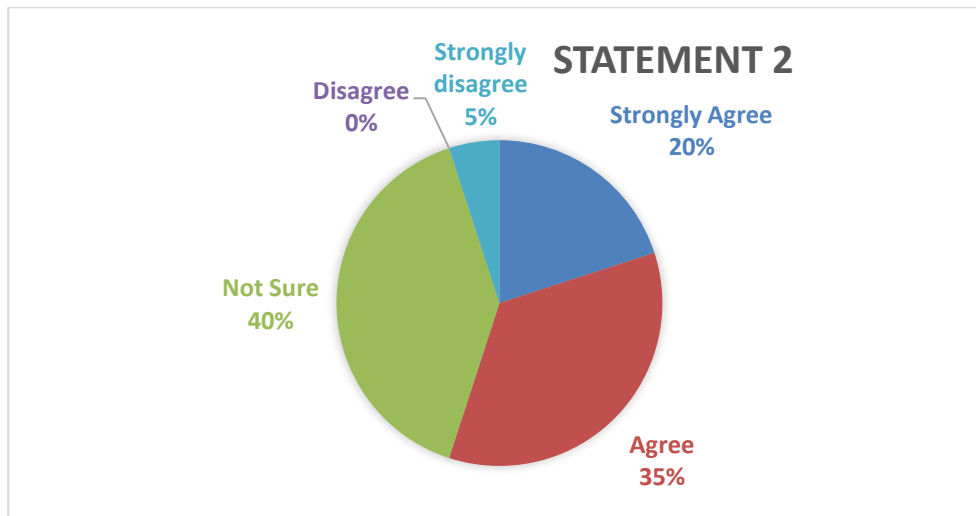


Figure 2. Ease of tourists to identify the meaning of sentences spoken by sellers in Balish easily

The graph on question 2, namely "I can easily identify the meaning of sentences spoken by sellers in Balish". Of the 20 respondents, 35% chose range 4 which means agree and 20% stated Strongly Agree, where they can identify the meaning of sentences spoken by sellers in Balish easily. When accumulated, 55% stated that Balish can understand the sentences. Meanwhile, as many as 35% chose Not Sure and in the next position with 5% choosing Strongly Disagree. With the accumulation that 55% and 25% chose Agree and Strongly Agree, it can be concluded that with foreign tourists understanding what is said by the Balish speakers, then Balinese-English is communicative as a language.

The 55% in favor of statement 2 shows that Balish can be used in exchanging ideas and can be semantically interpreted in a straightforward manner. Limitations in grammar and pronunciation did not turn out to be a very big challenge in the use of Balish. Assuming that the respondents have perfect English proficiency, Balish is a communicative language with the combination of basic units to achieve a meaning. In addition, the pragmatic approach is certainly used in communication by tourists and Balish speakers. Then, 40% respondents chose Not Sure and 5% chose Disagree possibly due to the nature of the language itself. Single phrases may be difficult to understand, but with the majority of people understanding the context or message is greater. In addition, accents that differ from standard English also influence this figure. A related

study was conducted (Sriwichai, 2013), which found that problems in overall listening ability may be due to the inability to understand different accents. However, this can be handled by the vendor's strategy of repeating statements continuously using body language such as showing fingers to express prices. Thus, foreign tourists can mostly identify the meaning of sentences spoken by sellers in Balish easily.

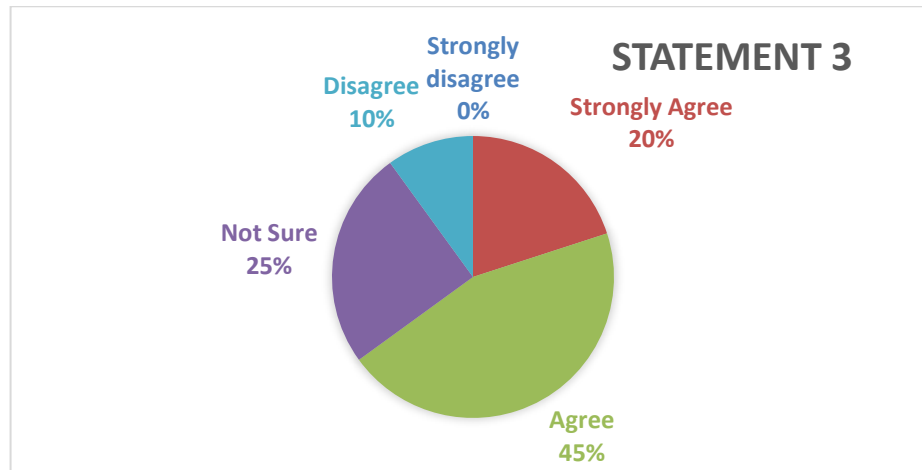


Figure 3. Ease of tourists following the message delivered by the vendor in Balish

The graph on question 3, namely "I can easily follow the message conveyed by the seller in Balish". A total of 20% of respondents stated Strongly Agree and 45% stated agree, where foreign tourists can easily follow the message conveyed by the seller in Balish. Then, in the next position, 25% chose Not Sure. A total of 0% chose Strongly Disagree on statement 3. With an accumulation of 65% chose Agree and Strongly Agree. It can be concluded that foreign tourists easily following the message conveyed by the seller in Balish, then Balinese-English is communicative as a language (Yenkimaleki & van Heuven, 2019; Atli & Bergil, 2012).

With an accumulation of 65% expressed in favor of statement 3, the message in Balish expressed by the Balish speakers at Ubud can be followed. Foreign tourists and Balish speakers use a pragmatic approach by connecting contextually in their communication. Using context is not a foreign thing in communication because every utterance is not what humans say. In addition, listening skills are also used on this occasion by the Balish speakers. The listening ability in question is to capture the message conveyed in Balish and then interpret it in the form of spoken language. The previous study by Sawangpol (2019), entitled "Tourists' Expectations and Satisfaction towards the Use of English and the Content of Information by Thai Tour Guides in Bangkok" states that tourist satisfaction is strongly influenced by the way messages or information are delivered. Reflecting on the 65% who agreed, Balish can be said to be a communicative language.

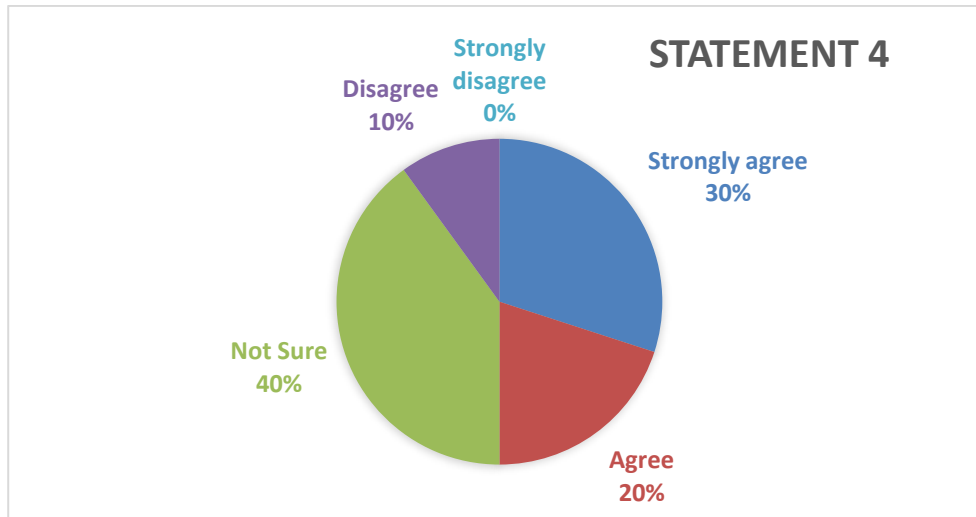


Figure 4. Tourists' understanding of English pronunciation by Balish speakers

The graph on question 4, namely "I can understand the pronunciation of English words spoken by Balish speakers". A total of 30% of respondents stated Strongly Agree and 20% stated agree, where foreign tourists understand the pronunciation of English words spoken by Balish speakers. Then, in the next position, 40% chose Not Sure, and 10% chose Disagree. A total of 0% chose Strongly Disagree on statement 4. With an accumulation of 50% chose Agree and Strongly Agree. It can be concluded that with foreign tourists understanding the vocabulary conveyed by sellers in Balish, the Balinese-English language is communicative as a language.

50% of respondents at Ubud stated that they understood the pronunciation of English words by the Balish speakers. This is a reference that vendors at Ubud have good speaking ability. This percentage is quite interesting considering that in speaking ability there are 4 ranges of speaking skills; fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and grammar. However, given that vendors do not receive a formal education, there will certainly be some obstacles in conveying a message with limited vocabulary (usually Balish vocabulary is only related to trade). However, the 50% who stated that they understood means that the vendors' English language skills in Balish are qualified. In line with that, (Nunan, 1995) says speaking is saying words orally, communicating by speaking, making requests, and making speeches. Thus, Balish has become a language well and effectively to build good communication with others.

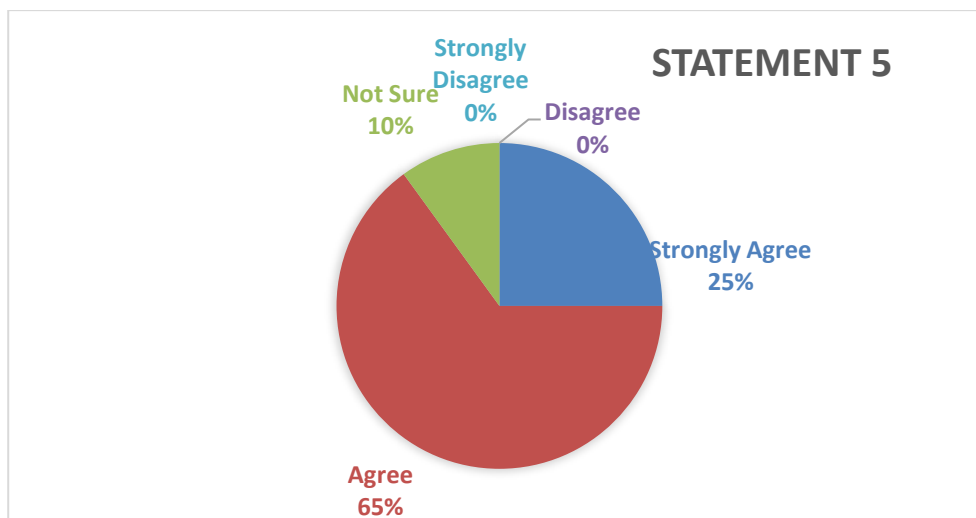


Figure 5. Tourists' understanding of context and English vocabulary by Balish speakers

The graph on question 5, namely "I can understand the Balish by linking the context and the use of English vocabulary". A total of 25% of respondents stated Strongly Agree, 65% stated agree, where foreign tourists understand the pronunciation of English words spoken by Balish speakers. Then, in the next position, 10% chose Not Sure, 0% chose Strongly Disagree, and Disagree on Statement 5. With an accumulation of 90% chose Agree and Strongly Agree. It can be concluded that foreign tourists understand Balish by linking the context and the use of English vocabulary, and then Balinese English is communicative as a language (Hashemi, 2011; Gömleksiz, 2010).

90% of respondents agreed that by relating the context, they understood the context and English vocabulary of Balish. Given Balish's speakers, the 90% figure is certainly a very interesting achievement. This happens for a reason. The communicative strategy applied by Balish speakers becomes a paradigm in Balish to foreign tourists. Strategies such as traders using familiar English vocabulary, such as nouns, and verbs to offer goods, numbers, and negotiation terms, help foreign tourists understand the messages conveyed (Hancock et al., 2007). This ease becomes a springboard for Tourists to relate the vocabulary to the context of the transaction. Tourists may also use communicative strategies, such as relating words to situations or using synonyms, to ensure understanding. In addition, the ability to analyze discourse is also the foundation of tourists and Balish speakers in communicating. Ran (2000), states that discourse comprehension involves constant selection, adjustment, and adaptation of listeners to contextual assumptions. As Balish speakers do, foreign tourists can easily understand and involve context in their communication.

4 Conclusion

The results of the quantitative analysis indicate that the tourists are satisfied enough with their English ability in speaking skills, understanding the meaning of sentences or understanding spoken English, pronunciation, and context in use. Foreign tourists identified that Balish speakers used the language communicatively. Their Balish is understood communicatively, but their ability in speaking skill needs to be improved particularly those related to accents, pronunciation, accuracy, and lexical choices.

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