

# The Contribution of English Language Mastery toward Sustainable Tourism in Gorontalo

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**Abstract.** *The main objective of this community service activity is to increase the knowledge and understanding of the Dumati village community in general about the importance of English language in relation to managing tourist objects. The future of the world tourism industry has such a bright prospect as stated by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), even the world tourism organization estimates that tourism will grow with an average growth of 4.2% per year. One of the regions that will experience the greatest growth rates are countries in Asia, including Indonesia. Of course, it is very important for the parties to receive foreign language assistance to the community in implementing the concept of tourism for the realization of sustainable tourism. And how to do it so that tourists do not experience language barriers so that sustainable tourism can be realized. The current community service uses focus group discussion and in-depth interviews that aims to develop the community's awareness toward the importance of English language mastery as the key factor for sustainable tourism in Gorontalo. This activity received a very good response and went well. Dumati village officials and the village community were very enthusiastic about participating in this seminar, it was seen from the many people who participated by asking questions and discussing the concept of English language that could be developed in the Embung Dumati tourism village. This community service is hoped to form basic information on how's the community's level of English and how to develop from there.*

**Keywords:** *Sustainable Tourism, English training*

Received: January 2, 2021

Received in Revised: January 10,  
2021

Accepted: January 14, 2021

## INTRODUCTION

Data from the Central Statistics Agency 2019 shows an increase in the number of foreign tourist arrivals in 2018 reaching 15.81 million people compared to the same period in 2017 which was only 14.04 million people (BPS, 2019). One of the efforts that should be done to maintain such increase is through sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism development is a tourism development process and system that can ensure the continuity or existence of natural resources for socio-cultural life and provide economic benefits for future generations (Sudarto 1999). Gortazar adds that sustainable tourism has a special emphasis on three things: first, Preservation of natural and cultural heritage, traditions of local communities by reducing the context of intensive objects and mass cultural tourism; second, Reduction of negative impacts arising in connection with tourism development; third, Empowering local communities to improve their social and cultural life to improve the quality and local communities who live

around the mountain pancar ecotourism area (Gortazar, 1999). In this concept, it is clearly explained that in tourism development there must be a guarantee that the present and future generations have the same rights and opportunities to enjoy the resources that are used as tourist attractions and objects.

The tourism industry has a far-reaching influence on many aspects such as social and economic development, culture, city development, and revival; in particular, it has the greatest influences on economics (UNWTO, 2011). The output value of the tourism industry accounts for US\$ 6 trillion of the global economy which is 9% of global GDP (WTTC, 2011). UNWTO further estimated that, by 2020, the number of global tourists will reach 1.6 billion and 2 million people; global tourism earnings will reach as much as two trillion US dollars. The data indicates that tourism can bring in an enormous amount of economic benefits (I. Hwon, 2013).

Indonesia is a country the largest archipelago in Indonesia. Based on data from the Directorate General Public Administration, Ministry of Internal Affairs Country published by the Central Agency Statistics, that Indonesia has 17,504 island in Indonesia which is famous at 32 province (before the division of Kalimantan North and West Sulawesi) (Rahma, 2020).

Gorontalo is a province in Indonesia which is located in the northern part of the island of Sulawesi and has a provincial capital with the same name, namely Gorontalo City. Gorontalo is very famous for having many tourist attractions. Its main attractions are marine tourism and mountain nature tourism such as protected forests, waterfalls and lakes. Currently, there is one tourist spot that is popular among young people of Gorontalo, namely Embung Dumati. This relatively new tourist attraction is a lake which is located about 15 minutes drive from the center of Gorontalo City.

Embung is another term for small dam. A small dam is a dam that is not qualifies as a large dam. Embung itself functions as a means of holding water tanks (Sari & Suarka, 2014). The tourist attraction of Embung Dumati itself is located in Dumati Village, Telaga Biru District, Gorontalo Regency. Embung Dumati is an attraction that was developed recently with embung attractions and stunning natural beauty. Since the opening of this tourist attraction, tourists visiting both local tourists, domestic tourists and foreign tourists have reached quite a large number. Meanwhile, the entrance fee charged at this tourist attraction is IDR 3,000.00 This amount is relatively cheap and affordable for the people of Gorontalo. This tourist attraction is classified as village tourism because of its location in the village. The concept of village tourism needs to involve all village communities in order to run well. Maximum community involvement will make this tourist attraction sustainable in terms of the economy, social environment and culture. In developing this tourist attraction, it is necessary to emphasize the use of foreign languages so that when foreign tourists come, foreign language skills should not be a barrier to

communication between officers at Embung Dumati to establish communication with foreign tourists themselves.

On the one hand, lecturers in higher education, especially the University of Muhammadiyah Gorontalo, have the obligation to carry out Caturdharma of higher education which consists of teaching, research, community service as well as applications of Al Islam and Kemuhammadiyah. So that making people realize the importance of mastering foreign languages is indeed the main target that we should be able to achieve together. Because with the knowledge that English lecturers have as the target foreign language, it will make it easier for people to get access to learning English itself. This is the main reason why this community service is carried out. The title of this service is “The Contribution of English Language Mastery toward Sustainable Tourism in Gorontalo”.

## **METHODS**

This community service used focus group discussion to provide information to Dumati’s village community on the contribution of English language mastery toward sustainable tourism in Gorontalo, after that, a question and answer session follows up.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The seminar activity aims to increase the knowledge and understanding of village communities on the contribution of foreign languages to sustainable tourism in Embung Dumati Tourism Attraction. Providing assistance to the community in implementing the concept of tourism and the large contribution to mastering English language for the realization of sustainable tourism. This activity went well and received quite a good feedback. Officials and village communities were very enthusiastic about participating in this seminar, seen from the number of people who asked and discussed what the real contribution of foreign language mastery was to the development of sustainable tourism in the Embung Dumati tourist attraction.

This community service was done with the collaboration of lecturers from both English Literature department and tourism department of Muhammadiyah university of Gorontalo can be categorized as successful that can be seen from the achieved indicators. The first one is the community of Embung Dumati village arrive on time and were being positive during the seminar. They also asked questions, and were being enthusiastic in welcoming the community service team. Upon the arrival of the team of the community service, the village officials who facilitates the seminar was supportive and prepared everything well. Here are some of the materials that is the focus of this community service activity:

1. The basic of the whole process of communication between the locals and foreign tourist requires the ability and mastery of foreign language, specifically English. The role of

English in increasing Embung Dumati's tourism includes promotion from outside Gorontalo province, reservation service, accommodation service, including local guides.

2. Tourism promotion to other countries thorough online marketing. Living in this digitalized era, it is important for everyone especially those involved in tourism industry to start using online marketing as their main tool to introduce Indonesian tourism all over the world. The online tourism must include at least several key information such as; the location of their attractions, the beauty of their nature, culture of the people, access to tourist attractions, hotels and facilities and other things related to the area of the tourism attraction.
3. Giving tourism service to foreign tourist should not only began at the tourism spot but all the way since the foreign tourist arrived in the area's international airport. It can expand into service officers at the airport, transportation service to the hotel, during the trip in and out of the hotel, and while enjoying local arts and culture.

The findings obtained in the field are as follows:

The Director of BUMDes (Village-Owned Enterprises) is very enthusiastic and even offers to cooperate as a partner in this community service. The village hopes that there will be a continuation of the discussion that will be realized in the foreign language training for the community of Embung Dumati village.

The seminar material is in accordance with the community level of Dumati Village, Telaga Biru District, Gorontalo Regency, seen from the effectiveness and level of community understanding. This material really provides an overview, understanding and adds insight to the community, especially tourism actors (stakeholders).

The situation and conditions of the seminar are very conducive so as to provide comfort for the seminar participants. This, of course, is supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure belonging to the Dumati Village government.

The obstacle that was found in the implementation of this seminar program was the unclear division of tourism awareness groups at the Embung Dumati tourist attraction so that choosing language training participants must also be well targeted

The community and village officials have a strong determination and sincerely want to develop the tourist attraction of the Dumati Embung with mastery of foreign languages. However, it is expected to always establish good cooperation between the community, village officials and tourism actors (stakeholders).

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the activities above it can be concluded that seminar *The Contribution of English Language Mastery toward Sustainable Tourism in Gorontalo* can increase the knowledge and

understanding of village communities on the contribution of foreign languages to sustainable tourism in Embung Dumati Tourism Attraction.

#### THANK-YOU NOTE

1. To the Research and Community Service Institutions of Muhammadiyah University of Gorontalo toward the implementation of this community service program.
2. To the village government and the community for their participation in the action of the seminar entitled The Contribution of English Language Mastery toward Sustainable Tourism in Gorontalo.
3. To the Board of Editors of the Boar Jurnal Pengabdian, for the publication of this community service journal.

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