

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Communication strategies refer to the specific verbal, nonverbal, and para-verbal techniques used to ensure messages are conveyed accurately between individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In the context of tourism, these strategies are crucial for facilitating interactions between local guides and international visitors. Tour guides must often navigate language barriers, cultural differences, and unfamiliar terminology, requiring them to adjust their word choice, tone, and gestures to achieve mutual understanding. The use of these strategies enables guides to effectively communicate important information, foster meaningful engagement, and address potential misunderstandings, ultimately enhancing the quality of the tourist experience.

Gianyar Regency, located in central Bali, is renowned for its lush landscapes, cultural heritage, and natural attractions, including a series of scenic waterfalls. Among these, Tegenungan Waterfall stands out as a particularly popular destination, drawing both domestic and international tourists with its accessible location, picturesque views, and inviting natural pools. This site offers not only recreational opportunities such as swimming and trekking, but also moments of peace and connection with nature. Beyond its visual appeal, Tegenungan Waterfall serves as a platform for meaningful cultural exchange. Local guides play a vital role in shaping visitors' experiences by providing information, ensuring safety, and interpreting the surrounding environment. The interaction between guides and tourists becomes especially significant given the linguistic diversity and cultural differences often present. Therefore,

examining the communication strategies used by guides at this location offers important insights into how tourism experiences are created and enhanced at a grassroots level.

Local guides serve as cultural interpreters, storytellers, and facilitators of meaningful experiences for visitors. In Bali's tourism ecosystem, particularly at sites like Tegenungan Waterfall, guides are responsible not only for sharing factual information but also for fostering emotional and cultural connections between tourists and the local environment. Their ability to communicate effectively influences not only the clarity of information but also the tourists' sense of welcome, safety, and enjoyment. To achieve this, guides must adapt their communication style to suit diverse tourist backgrounds, varying in language proficiency, cultural norms, and expectations. A successful guide adjusts tone, simplifies explanations, or uses gestures and other para-verbal cues to overcome misunderstandings and ensure clarity. These strategies also allow guides to manage tourist expectations by providing accurate and accessible descriptions of attractions and experiences. Furthermore, guides play a role in sustainability education. By articulating the importance of preserving Bali's natural and cultural heritage, they help raise awareness and encourage respectful behaviors among visitors. Therefore, communication is not merely transactional, it becomes a transformative tool for shaping responsible tourism and lasting memories.

Several scholars have investigated how local guides communicate with international tourists across different destinations in Bali, offering insights that enrich the context of this study. Darmadika (2024) explored communication strategies employed by local guides at Gitgit Waterfall. The study compared guides with varying educational backgrounds and found that guides used eight distinct strategies, including code-switching, non-linguistic means, asking for help, circumlocution, and avoidance. Notably, the guides' educational background influenced

their style and flexibility in communication, showing that training and experience shaped how effectively they navigated language challenges.

Utama (2023) conducted research at Aling-Aling Waterfall, focusing on why guides use particular strategies with foreign visitors. The researcher used observation sheets, interviews, and audio recordings to identify nine strategy types, such as time acquisition, versatile word usage, and estimation. The study emphasized that these techniques help overcome cultural and linguistic barriers while encouraging mutual understanding, especially with visitors unfamiliar with local customs and language.

Febri (2024) examined guide-tourist communication at Kelingking Beach and identified eight strategies, including silence, use of general words, and leveraging enthusiasm to reduce language anxiety. The findings highlighted that guides consciously adjust their language tactics to manage anxiety, improve skills, and maintain meaningful dialogue.

These studies demonstrate that communication strategies are influenced by factors like location, tourist demographics, and the guides' educational level. While there is some overlap in strategy types, each study reveals different motivations and contextual challenges, highlighting the dynamic nature of guide-tourist interaction in Bali's tourism landscape.

While previous studies have explored communication strategies used by local guides at destinations such as Gitgit Waterfall, Aling-Aling Waterfall, and Kelingking Beach, no focused investigation has been conducted at Tegenungan Waterfall. As one of Bali's most popular tourist sites, frequented by both domestic and international visitors, Tegenungan presents a valuable context for examining how guides interact with tourists through effective communication.

This study aims to explore two key aspects: the types of communication strategies utilized by local guides, and the challenges they encounter when engaging with tourists from

different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Understanding these aspects is essential to evaluate how communication contributes to successful guide-tourist interactions and enhances the overall visitor experience.

By focusing on Tegenungan Waterfall, this research adds new insight to tourism communication studies and offers practical recommendations for improving guide training and intercultural engagement. The findings will be especially useful for aspiring guides in Gianyar, helping them develop stronger communication techniques and contribute to more memorable and meaningful tourism experiences.

1.2 Problem Identification

Local guides are essential figures in Bali's tourism industry, helping tourists discover and experience cultural and natural sites like Tegenungan Waterfall. Their role is not limited to delivering factual information — it includes creating memorable experiences through interaction, assistance, and storytelling. This function resembles service-oriented roles in hospitality, requiring attentiveness, patience, and effective communication. However, local guides at Tegenungan often face communication difficulties when engaging with international tourists. These challenges stem from factors such as low educational background, limited English vocabulary, lack of confidence in using grammar correctly, difficulty pronouncing words, and unfamiliarity with slang or informal expressions. Many guides feel anxious or embarrassed while speaking with foreigners, which affects their ability to communicate smoothly and professionally.

Despite these limitations, guides still find practical ways to express themselves and serve tourists effectively by applying various English communication strategies. These may include

spelling out words, using gestures, simplifying sentences, or asking for help when needed. Their resilience and adaptability reflect a need for structured support and training. Based on these issues, this study explores the types of communication strategies used by local guides at Tegenungan Waterfall and the challenges they face in communicating with foreign tourists. The goal is to understand how these strategies can be improved to support clearer interactions and enhance the tourism experience.

1.3 Research Limitation

This study is delimited to examining the communication strategies that local guides employ when interacting with international tourists at Tegenungan Waterfall and the reasons they choose these strategies. Specifically, this research focuses on identifying the types of communication methods that guides use to convey information and engage visitors, including verbal, nonverbal, and para-verbal techniques. It also examines the challenges that guides encounter during these exchanges, such as language barriers and cultural misunderstandings.

Participants are limited to local guides who routinely lead and communicate with foreign tourists at Tegenungan Waterfall. Guides at other tourist attractions in Gianyar or those whose work involves only domestic visitors are not included. Because the study centers on a single high-traffic site and relies on qualitative observations and interviews, its findings are specific to the practices and experiences of guides at Tegenungan. Therefore, the results may not be directly transferable to other tourist destinations, regions, or guide populations.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the statements of the problems of this research can be formulated as follows:

1. What types of communication strategies are utilized by local guides at Tegenungan Waterfall?
2. What are the challenges faced by local guides in communicating with tourists?

1.5 Research Objective

In line with the statements of the problems, the purpose of the study can be formulated as follows:

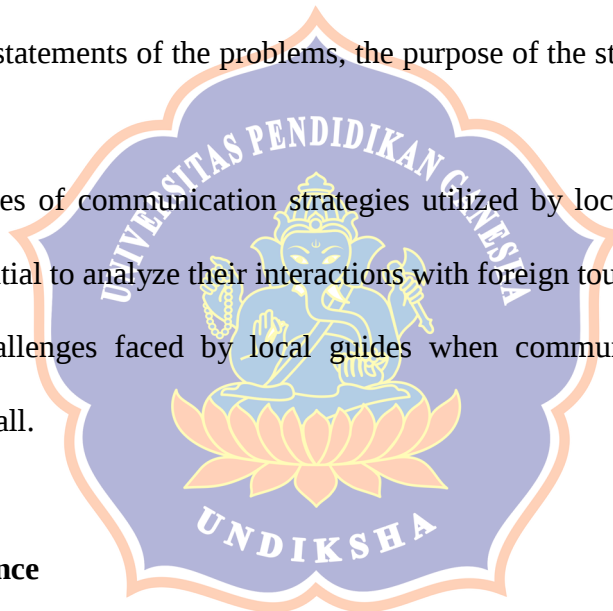
1. To describe the types of communication strategies utilized by local guides at Tegenungan Waterfall, it is essential to analyze their interactions with foreign tourists.
2. To analyze the challenges faced by local guides when communicating with tourists at Tegenungan Waterfall.

1.6 Research Significance

This study has two significant aspects: theoretical and practical significance.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

In theory, this research can make a positive contribution to English language learning, particularly in the field of linguistics, by showcasing examples of communication strategies employed by tourism workers. These findings can serve as a reference for the further



implementation of communication strategies in social interactions and can also aid in future investigations on communication strategies.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable insights for various audiences, including students studying English for specific purposes, teachers specializing in English for tourism, and researchers in related fields. For students, this study can serve as a resource for learning communication strategies and exploring practical examples used in social interactions. It aims to spark their interest in studying English by making them more aware of effective communication techniques. For teachers, the research offers additional perspectives for English language educators, particularly those teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) in tourism. Educators can integrate the identified communication strategies into their teaching methods to foster student engagement and avoid monotony. Furthermore, the findings can be used as practical examples and teaching tools in the classroom. For researchers, the study provides a useful reference for designing and conducting similar research on communication strategies. It lays the groundwork for further studies and contributes to the broader knowledge base in linguistics and tourism.