
An Analysis of Linguistic Barriers Affecting Street Vendors' Communication: A Study at Mandalika Special Economic Development Region of West Nusa Tenggara

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Article History

Received : August 06th, 2024

Revised : September 17th, 2024

Accepted : October 25th, 2024

Abstract: This study explores the linguistic barriers faced by street vendors in Kuta Mandalika, a popular tourist destination in Indonesia, and their impact on communication, job performance, and customer satisfaction. Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, the research subject is 13 street vendors who has an ability to communicate with foreign customer, the research involved semi-structured interviews and observations of street vendors who interact regularly with international tourists, the data analysis will be conducting thematic analysis to analyze the data. The findings highlight several major challenges, including difficulties in understanding foreign accents, limited English vocabulary, pronunciation issues, and reliance on non-verbal communication. The noisy environment where vendors operate further complicates these communication barriers. These linguistic challenges lead to frequent misunderstandings, incorrect orders, and customer dissatisfaction, significantly affecting the vendors' business performance and customer relations. This research is rarely talked by researcher as in the previous study the researcher is focusing on semantic area but that's quite too deep to learn by street vendors and an English beginner, this approach will contribute to the overall economic vitality of the Mandalika region, benefiting both vendors and the local community.

Keywords: Analysis of linguistic, communication, linguistic barrier.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, an archipelago known for its stunning natural landscapes, rich culture, and diverse attractions, stands out as a prominent tourist destination. Each island offers unique experiences, drawing visitors from around the world. Lombok, specifically, has become increasingly popular among international tourists due to its picturesque beaches, vibrant nightlife, and unique cultural experiences. It is known for its pristine sandy shores and clear blue waters, making it a haven for beach lovers. Visitors to Kuta Mandalika, a prime location within Lombok, can engage in a variety of outdoor activities such as surfing, snorkeling, and hiking. These activities attract adventure enthusiasts looking for thrilling experiences. Additionally, tourists can immerse themselves in local customs, savor authentic cuisine, and witness traditional ceremonies, which provide a deeper understanding of the local culture. The blend of natural beauty and cultural heritage makes

Lombok an exceptional and memorable travel destination for visitors from around the world. Such a rich cultural tapestry and stunning natural environment contribute to Lombok's reputation as a must-visit location.

In bustling areas like special economic and tourism zones, the presence of street vendors is ubiquitous. These vendors are an integral part of the local economy, offering a variety of goods and services to both locals and tourists. Street vendors contribute significantly to the economic vibrancy of these areas, providing essential products and services that cater to both local residents and tourists. They offer an array of items, from food and beverages to souvenirs and everyday necessities. However, one of the significant challenges they face is overcoming communication barriers, which can hinder their business operations. Effective communication with customers is vital for any business, including street vendors, as it directly impacts product sales, customer relationships, and overall business success. When vendors can

communicate well, they can better understand customer needs and preferences. This enhances customer satisfaction and encourages repeat business. Therefore, improving communication skills is crucial for street vendors to thrive in competitive environments.

Street vendors, particularly those operating in international tourist destinations like Mandalika, require strong communication skills, especially in English. Many of their customers are from different parts of the world and speak various languages. Proficiency in English is essential for effectively offering their products to international consumers. Good language skills can bridge the gap between sellers and consumers, enhancing the market potential for street vendors. When vendors can communicate effectively in English, they can explain their products better and negotiate prices more efficiently. This ability to converse in a common language can lead to better sales and customer satisfaction. Moreover, it helps in building trust and rapport with customers, which is essential for business success. The ability to communicate effectively in English not only improves sales but also fosters positive interactions and relationships with customers, which are crucial for business sustainability.

Despite their economic importance, street vendors face numerous communication challenges. In urban and special economic areas where competition is intense, language barriers are a common obstacle. These barriers are particularly pronounced for those without formal education or training in communication skills. Language barriers can lead to misunderstandings, ineffective negotiations, and ultimately unsold products, which significantly affect their economic success. For instance, a vendor might misunderstand a customer's request, leading to an incorrect order and an unhappy customer. The inability to communicate effectively in English can result in lost opportunities and diminished customer satisfaction, further complicating their business operations. This can create a cycle of poor performance and low sales. Addressing these communication barriers is essential for the vendors to improve their business outcomes and thrive in competitive environments.

One of the primary issues faced by street vendors is their limited ability to communicate with international tourists. This is especially true in special economic zones like Mandalika, where a significant number of foreign visitors interact

with local vendors. The lack of proficiency in English among street vendors can create a gap in communication, making it difficult for them to offer their products and services effectively. This gap can lead to misunderstandings and miscommunications, which can negatively impact their business operations and customer satisfaction. For example, a vendor might not be able to explain the features of a product properly, resulting in a lost sale. Additionally, misunderstandings can cause frustration for both the vendor and the customer. Improving language skills can help vendors better meet the needs of their customers and enhance their business performance. Effective communication is key to building successful business relationships in diverse markets.

The impact of linguistic barriers on street vendors is multifaceted. It affects not only their ability to communicate with customers but also their overall business performance. Misunderstandings and communication breakdowns can lead to incorrect orders, dissatisfied customers, and ultimately a loss of sales. For instance, if a vendor cannot understand a customer's request, they might provide the wrong product, leading to customer dissatisfaction. These issues are exacerbated in environments where street vendors operate, which are often noisy and bustling, making effective communication even more challenging. The inability to understand and use English fluently can significantly hinder their ability to engage with international customers and compete effectively in the market. This can result in a competitive disadvantage compared to vendors who can communicate effectively in multiple languages. Therefore, addressing these language barriers is critical for the vendors' success.

This study aims to investigate and analyze the impact of linguistic barriers on the communication abilities of street vendors in Kuta Mandalika. Understanding these barriers is crucial for developing strategies to improve their communication skills and, consequently, their business performance. By identifying the specific linguistic challenges faced by street vendors, the study seeks to provide insights that can inform the development of targeted language training programs and policies to support these vendors. These programs can equip vendors with the necessary skills to communicate more effectively with international customers. Improving language skills can help vendors increase their

sales, enhance customer satisfaction, and ultimately improve their economic outcomes. The findings of this study can be used to advocate for better support and resources for street vendors.

The research questions guiding this study are twofold. First, it seeks to identify the key linguistic challenges faced by street vendors when communicating in English with foreign customers. This includes understanding specific difficulties such as vocabulary limitations, pronunciation issues, and the ability to understand different accents. Second, it aims to analyze how these linguistic barriers affect their job performance and customer satisfaction. By addressing these questions, the study aims to shed light on the specific communication difficulties faced by street vendors and their impact on business operations. Understanding these challenges can help in developing effective interventions to support vendors. This, in turn, can improve their ability to communicate with customers and enhance their business performance.

The significance of this study is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the existing body of knowledge on intercultural communication and language acquisition, particularly in the context of street vendors. By understanding the linguistic barriers faced by street vendors, the study provides valuable insights that can inform theories related to language acquisition and communication in business settings. Practically, the findings can guide the development of training programs and policies designed to support street vendors in overcoming linguistic barriers, thereby improving their communication skills and business performance. These programs can be tailored to address the specific needs of street vendors, providing them with the tools they need to succeed. The study highlights the importance of addressing linguistic barriers to support the economic development of street vendors.

Overall, the study underscores the importance of addressing linguistic barriers faced by street vendors in international tourist areas like Mandalika. Effective communication is crucial for business success, and language barriers can significantly hinder this. By investigating the specific challenges faced by street vendors and their impact on job performance and customer satisfaction, the study aims to provide actionable insights that can

inform the development of targeted interventions to support these vendors. This, in turn, can enhance their ability to engage effectively with international customers, improve their business performance, and contribute to the overall economic vibrancy of the region. Addressing these barriers is essential for the sustainable development of street vendors and the local economy.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to understand the linguistic barriers faced by street vendors in Kuta Mandalika. By adopting a qualitative method, the research aims to capture the depth and complexity of vendors' communication challenges. A case study design is chosen to provide an in-depth examination of these specific issues. This design allows for detailed and comprehensive analysis, making it possible to explore the nuances of each vendor's experience. Through this approach, the study can highlight the individual and collective struggles of street vendors. The case study design ensures that the research is grounded in real-world contexts, providing practical insights. It enables the researcher to gather rich, contextual data that would not be possible through quantitative methods. This approach is particularly suited to exploring the lived experiences of street vendors. Overall, the qualitative case study design provides a robust framework for understanding and addressing linguistic barriers.

The participants in this study are street vendors from the Mandalika special economic zone who have some ability to communicate in English. These vendors are selected because they regularly interact with international tourists, making their communication skills crucial. A purposive sampling technique is employed to select a diverse group of vendors. This technique ensures that the study includes vendors with varying roles, experiences, and levels of language proficiency. By selecting a diverse group, the study can capture a wide range of perspectives and challenges. This approach helps in understanding how different factors, such as experience and proficiency, influence communication barriers. The selection process aims to include vendors who represent the broader population of street vendors in Mandalika. This diversity allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the issues. Ultimately,

the purposive sampling method ensures that the study's findings are relevant and applicable to the wider community of street vendors.

Data collection involves semi-structured interviews and observations to gather comprehensive insights into the vendors' experiences. Semi-structured interviews are conducted to explore the vendors' experiences with language barriers. These interviews are designed to be flexible, allowing the researcher to probe deeper into specific issues as they arise. They provide a detailed understanding of the vendors' perceptions of their communication challenges. Additionally, observations are conducted to capture real-time interactions between vendors and customers. Observing these interactions helps to identify the practical difficulties vendors face. This method provides contextual insights that interviews alone may not reveal. Together, interviews and observations offer a holistic view of the communication barriers. This dual approach ensures that the data collected is rich and multi-faceted. It allows the researcher to cross-verify findings from interviews with actual observed behaviors.

The data collected through interviews and observations is analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involves identifying and analyzing patterns or themes within the data. The interview transcripts and observational notes are coded to identify recurring themes related to linguistic barriers. These themes are then reviewed and refined to ensure accuracy and depth of understanding. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to systematically categorize and interpret the data. This process helps to reveal underlying issues and common challenges faced by the vendors. It provides a structured way to make sense of complex qualitative data. The analysis focuses on identifying significant themes that capture the essence of the vendors' experiences. By doing so, it provides a comprehensive understanding of the communication barriers. Thematic analysis is particularly useful in this study as it highlights both individual and collective experiences of the vendors.

The qualitative approach, combined with a case study design, offers a thorough investigation of the linguistic barriers affecting street vendors. This methodology is well-suited to exploring the nuanced and context-specific nature of the vendors' challenges. It allows for the collection of rich, detailed data that provides a deep

understanding of the issues. The use of semi-structured interviews and observations ensures that the data is comprehensive and well-rounded. This approach helps to uncover the real-world implications of communication barriers for street vendors. Thematic analysis provides a robust framework for interpreting the data, revealing key patterns and themes. By focusing on the lived experiences of the vendors, the study can offer practical insights and recommendations. This methodological approach ensures that the findings are grounded in real-world contexts. It provides valuable insights that can inform the development of targeted interventions and support programs.

The researcher will employ thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that involves identifying and analyzing patterns or themes within the collected data. This approach will allow the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the employees' experiences and identify any common issues or challenges they may face. Additionally, by employing thematic analysis, the researcher can provide rich and detailed descriptions of these themes, which will enhance the overall validity and reliability of the study's findings. The researcher will analyze interview transcripts and observational notes using thematic coding. Identify recurring themes, patterns, and variations related to cultural and linguistic barriers affecting English fluency. Codes will be grouped into themes representing different dimensions of the identified barriers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study reveals several key linguistic challenges faced by street vendors in Kuta Mandalika, with one of the most prominent issues being the difficulty in understanding foreign customers. Many vendors reported that customers often speak too quickly or with accents that are difficult to comprehend, making it hard for the vendors to follow the conversation. This often leads to repeated requests for the customer to slow down or repeat themselves, which can result in frustration for both the vendor and the customer. The difficulty in understanding accents is particularly challenging when dealing with tourists from non-English speaking countries who speak English with a heavy accent. Additionally, some vendors mentioned that they struggle to pick up on the nuances of different

English dialects, further complicating their interactions with international customers.

Another significant finding is the limited vocabulary that many street vendors possess. This limitation hampers their ability to describe their products in detail, answer customer questions accurately, and engage in more meaningful conversations. For example, when asked about specific features of their products or the ingredients in their food, vendors often find themselves unable to provide detailed responses. This lack of vocabulary not only frustrates customers but also diminishes the vendors' ability to build rapport and trust. Vendors often resort to using very basic phrases and words, which can come across as inadequate and unprofessional. This issue is compounded when customers use idiomatic expressions or technical terms that vendors are not familiar with, leading to further confusion and miscommunication.

Pronunciation issues also emerged as a significant challenge in the study. Many vendors have difficulty pronouncing English words correctly, which can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Mispronunciations can change the meaning of words entirely, causing confusion and potentially offending customers. This problem is particularly acute when vendors try to communicate important information about their products, prices, or services. For instance, mispronouncing the name of a product or its ingredients can lead to a customer receiving the wrong item, which affects their overall experience and satisfaction. Moreover, poor pronunciation can make it difficult for customers to take the vendor seriously, undermining their credibility and professionalism.

The study also found that street vendors heavily rely on non-verbal communication, such as gestures and body language, to bridge the language gap. While non-verbal communication can be helpful to some extent, it is not always effective and can sometimes lead to further misunderstandings. Vendors often use gestures to indicate the price of items, explain product features, or show directions. However, these gestures can be interpreted differently by people from various cultural backgrounds, leading to confusion. For example, a gesture that means one thing in one culture might have a completely different meaning in another. This reliance on non-verbal cues highlights the vendors' struggle to communicate verbally and underscores the need for better language skills.

The noisy environment where street vendors operate further exacerbates these communication challenges. The bustling streets, crowded markets, and constant background noise make it difficult for vendors and customers to hear each other clearly. This noise pollution adds another layer of difficulty to an already challenging communication landscape. Vendors have to speak louder and more clearly to be heard, which can strain their vocal cords and lead to fatigue. Customers, on the other hand, may become impatient or annoyed if they have to repeat themselves multiple times. The combination of language barriers and environmental noise creates a significant hurdle for effective communication, impacting the overall customer experience and the vendors' ability to conduct successful transactions.

Discussion

The findings from this study highlight the significant impact of linguistic barriers on the communication abilities of street vendors in Mandalika, shedding light on the practical implications of these challenges. The difficulty in understanding foreign accents and fast speech aligns with existing theories on the importance of listening skills and familiarity with different dialects in effective communication. These challenges underscore the need for vendors to develop better auditory processing skills and gain exposure to a variety of English accents. This finding is consistent with Ullah et al. (2023), who emphasize the impact of accents on communication. Improving these skills can help vendors understand their customers better, reducing the need for repeated clarifications and enhancing the overall interaction experience.

The issue of limited vocabulary and pronunciation problems reveals a significant gap in the language proficiency of street vendors. This gap not only affects their ability to communicate effectively but also impacts their professional image and customer trust. Limited vocabulary restricts vendors' ability to engage in detailed conversations, making it hard to build rapport with customers. Pronunciation problems, on the other hand, can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations, which can be detrimental to business. As highlighted by Mahdi (2024), effective communication is essential for business success, and these linguistic deficiencies can significantly hinder the vendors' ability to sell their products and satisfy their customers.

Addressing these issues through targeted language training can enhance vendors' confidence and communication skills, leading to better business outcomes.

The reliance on non-verbal communication among street vendors points to a coping mechanism used to overcome language barriers. While gestures and body language can aid communication, they are not foolproof and can sometimes lead to misinterpretations, especially among people from different cultural backgrounds. This finding aligns with Harzing & Feely (2008), who discuss the limitations of non-verbal communication in overcoming language barriers. Vendors' heavy reliance on non-verbal cues indicates their struggle with verbal communication and highlights the need for improved language training. By developing stronger verbal communication skills, vendors can reduce their dependence on gestures, leading to more precise and effective interactions with customers.

The study also highlights the impact of environmental noise on communication. The noisy and bustling environment where vendors operate makes it challenging to communicate clearly. This external factor exacerbates the existing linguistic barriers, making it even harder for vendors to engage with customers effectively. The constant background noise requires vendors to speak louder and more clearly, which can be physically taxing and lead to vocal strain. This finding is supported by Huo (2020), who emphasizes the role of environmental factors in communication difficulties. Addressing this issue requires not only improving vendors' language skills but also considering ways to reduce noise pollution in their operating areas to facilitate better communication.

Overall, the findings suggest that addressing linguistic barriers is crucial for improving the communication skills of street vendors in Mandalika. Enhanced communication skills can lead to better customer experiences, increased sales, and overall business success. Providing targeted language training that focuses on vocabulary expansion, pronunciation improvement, and listening skills can significantly benefit the vendors. Additionally, cultural sensitivity training can help vendors understand and respond to the diverse backgrounds of their customers, leading to more effective interactions. The study's findings highlight the importance of a comprehensive

approach to addressing linguistic barriers, combining language training with practical support to help vendors overcome their communication challenges.

CONCLUSSION

The findings reveal that street vendors experience significant difficulties in understanding and using English effectively due to limited vocabulary, poor grammatical skills, and challenges with pronunciation. These barriers result in frequent misunderstandings, incorrect orders, and an overall decrease in the quality of interaction with customers. The study also shows that the noisy environment and different accents of foreign customers further exacerbate these communication difficulties. These challenges negatively impact the street vendors' ability to perform their jobs efficiently and lead to customer dissatisfaction. Misunderstandings and communication breakdowns often frustrate both the vendors and their customers, which affects repeat business and damages the vendors' reputation

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Thanks to all the element who participating at this research, so the research have done verry well

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