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THE USE OF ENGLISH IN ONLINE ARTICLES PROMOTING SOUTH KALIMANTAN

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Abstract: When compared to popular destinations like Bali or Jogjakarta, the number of tourists visiting South Kalimantan is of course lower. It takes sustainable efforts for South Kalimantan tourism board and related parties to promote this province tourism. Online English articles promoting South Kalimantan are sadly not that many in number. When English articles describing about tourist destinations and hospitality of Banjarese people are hardly found online, at least the articles are well written in order to sell the tourism of this province better. However, language barrier may cause the writers of the articles to use English incorrectly. This study is set to contribute to the promotion of South Kalimantan tourism in terms of foreign language usage. The study is descriptive research because its main objectives are to describe how English is used in articles promoting South Kalimantan and to suggest possible improvements for the misuse of English found in the articles. This research is conducted for three months, December 2017 – February 2018. The location of the research is Banjarmasin. The data of this research are collected from six websites promoting South Kalimantan. After the articles becoming the data of this study are collected, they are read carefully in order to determine the accuracy of the English used in the articles and to find the language phenomena being questioned in this research. After making the decision on the accuracy of English usage in the articles, the researchers then focus to find the misuses of English in the investigated articles. The results of the study are useful to review how English is used in online articles promoting this province. The conclusions drawn for this study are (1) the English used in online articles promoting South Kalimantan are generally accurate though several misuses of the language are still found, (2) syntactic problems in the articles do not disturb of the flow of the stories being told. Thus, the writers of the articles have been successful in promoting South Kalimantan through their writings, (3) Semantic problems in the articles are not that many though improvements are still neededrole, and how it promotes active students' interaction.

Keywords: *syntax, semantics, online article, South Kalimantan, tourism, English*

INTRODUCTION

When compared to popular destinations like Bali or Jogjakarta, the number of tourists visiting South Kalimantan is of course lower. It takes sustainable efforts for South Kalimantan tourism board and related parties to promote this province tourism. One of the most effective ways of promotion in this digital era is by publishing promotional articles online. Not only are they cost friendly, online articles can also reach broader targets since they are accessible anywhere as long as people are connected to the internet. In order to reach international potential visitors, the use of English for such articles are inevitable. However, using English is not always easy for Indonesian writers. When English used in the articles is hard to understand by the readers, the promotional goal may not be achieved.

Online English articles promoting South Kalimantan are sadly not that many in number. When English articles describing tourist destinations and hospitality of Banjarese people are hardly found online, at least the articles are well written in order to sell the tourism of this province better. However, the language barrier may cause the writers of the articles to use English incorrectly. Problems in English usage are not surprising since English is a foreign, if not alien, language in this country. The importance of promoting South Kalimantan tourism and possible language barrier led the researchers to investigate the accuracy of English used in online articles promoting South Kalimantan.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study is descriptive research because its main objectives are to describe how English is used in articles promoting South Kalimantan and to suggest possible improvements for the misuse of English found in the articles. Data of this study are taken from six English online articles about South Kalimantan tourism. To analyze the data, the writers apply semantic and syntactic approaches.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Accuracy of English Used in Online Articles Promoting South Kalimantan

After reading the articles thoroughly, the researchers come to the agreement that the English used in the articles are in high accuracy despite still having several linguistic problems. This is because the problems of language use that we found in the articles do not disturb the flow of the stories being told in the articles. Moreover, the readers, in this case, the researchers, can still comprehend the messages of the articles well. To put it short, whoever wrote the articles have done a great job promoting South Kalimantan through their writings.

Syntactic Problems Found in the Articles

Though the articles are generally well-written, there are several problems found in terms of syntax and semantics. The problems in syntax are:

1. S-V Agreement

Linguistically, an English sentence should have at least a subject and a verb. Moreover, the subject and verb combination should follow certain rules that make English different from the Indonesian language. One of the rules often violated in the investigated articles is the subject and verb agreement. A singular subject should be followed by a verb with 's'/ 'es'. However, the researchers found that in the articles there are several sentences flouted that rule as in the following example:

*Mount Meratus **divide** South Kalimantan into two distinct regions.*

In the sentence above, 'Mount Meratus' is a singular noun that should be followed by a verb with 's' or 'es'. Thus, Mount Meratus does not agree with the verb 'divide'. To make the sentence syntactically correct, the verb should be changed to 'divides'. The correct sentence should be:

*Mount Meratus **divides** South Kalimantan into two distinct regions.*

Not only in the main clause of the sentence, problems in terms of subject and verb agreement are also found in adjective clauses. The following sentence is one example of the findings in which subject and verb do not agree in the adjective clause:

*The southern part of the province is low land with **rivers that run** through to the vast mangrove swamps along the coast and make Borneos' soil fertile.*

In the first sentence above, 'rivers' should be followed by a bare verb with no 's' or 'es' attachment because 'rivers' is plural subject. Therefore, 'rivers' and 'runs' violate the subject-verb agreement. To improve the sentence, the sentence should be changed into:

*The southern part of the province is low land with **rivers that run** through to the vast mangrove swamps along the coast and make Borneos' soil fertile.*

2. Number

Not only subject and verb, the number also has certain rules to follow in English. The following sentences are the examples of problems found in terms of number:

*a. This is one of the most attractive **tourist activity** in the city…*

*b. There **are** no active **volcanoes** in South Kalimantan.*

In the first sentence above, 'one of the most' should be followed by plural noun. However, in the sentence, the noun 'activity' is written in singular form, which makes the sentence problematic. In the second sentence, verb 'is' should be followed by singular noun, but in fact, it is followed by plural 'volcanoes' in the sentence. Therefore, to improve the sentences, some changes need to be undertaken as follows:

*a. This is one of the most attractive **tourist activities** in the city…*

*b. There **is** no active **volcano** in South Kalimantan.*

3. Pronoun

The function of pronoun is to replace noun. There are different types of pronouns with different functions. One of them is possessive pronoun. Possessive pronoun functions as adjective to

show possession. The sentence below shows problem in possessive pronoun because it is improperly replaced by subject pronoun.

*After the independence, Banjarmasin regained **its** prominent role.*

To improve the sentence, the suggested correction is by replacing 'it's' to possessive pronoun 'its':

*After the independence, Banjarmasin regained **its** prominent role.*

4. Fragment

The fragment is another name for incomplete sentence. A complete sentence should at least have a subject and a verb. The fragment is the case where one of the sentence elements is missing – be it subject or verb. The example of fragment problems found in the investigated articles can be seen in the following sentence:

Administratively, South Kalimantan … divided into 11 regencies and 2 cities.

The sentence above is a fragment because it has no verb. To make the sentence complete, then the verb 'is' should be added in the sentence:

*Administratively, South Kalimantan **is** divided into 11 regencies and 2 cities.*

5. Voice

Voice deals with whether the sentence is in active or passive form. Though the voice problem in this study is not that many in number, there are still some sentences that have problems in terms of voice. One of them is the following sentence:

*Most of Banjarmasin people activities **has done** around the river.*

The sentence above should be in passive form, but it is unfortunately written in active form. To improve the sentence, the possible change proposed is by changing 'has' into to be 'are' to make the sentence passive:

*Most of Banjarmasin people activities **are done** around river.*

6. Word Order

Word order problem is common for Indonesians, especially those in novice level, because word arrangement or word order in Bahasa Indonesia is different from the one in English. Therefore, problems in word order are not surprising. One example of sentence with word order issue is as the following:

*Due to its **location close** to the convergence of the Barito and Martapura rivers…*

'Location close' in the sentence above shows the wrong word order. In English, adjective acted as modifier should be placed before the noun it modifies. It is different from Bahasa Indonesia in which modifier objective is placed after the noun. Therefore, 'location close' should be changed into 'close location'. The proposed improvement for the sentence is:

*Due to its **close location** to the convergence of the Barito and Martapura rivers…*

7. Multiple Problems in Single Sentence

In the data, there found several sentences in which multiple syntactic problems occur. Two of them are as follows:

> *a. Beautiful traditional handicrafts … made from local raw materials such as stone, gold, silver, brass, iron, and also various **wood** such as bamboo and rattan.*
>
> *b. Taksi antarkota with orange color **serve route Banjarmasin-Martapura via Banjarbaru**, and vise versa.*

In sentence (a) above, there are two problems occur within a single sentence: fragment and number. The sentence is fragment because it misses the verb 'are'. Moreover, the problem in number occurs after the word 'various'. 'Various' should be followed by a plural noun, but in the sentence, it is followed by singular noun 'wood'. Thus, the sentence needs to be changed into:

> *Beautiful traditional handicrafts **are** made from local raw materials such as stone, gold, silver, brass, iron, and also various **woods** such as bamboo and rattan.*

In sentence (b), there are also two syntactic problems occur S-V agreement and word order. The subject and verb do not agree because 'taksi antarkota' should be followed by 'serves' instead of 'serve'.

Semantics Problems Found in The Articles

1. Referent

Referent in semantics refers to the object in real world represented by a lexicon. Therefore, when we say or write a certain word, people can relate that word to the real object. Sometimes, the problem in referent occurs when the lexicon or word used refers to a different object.

The only referent problem found in the data occurs in this sentence:

> *"This is **butter** fruit [Diospyros blancoi], it's soft like butter and tastes good…"*

In the sentence, butter fruit for English speakers refers to avocado, while the writer of the article refers to butter fruit to a typical tropical fruit that can be found in South Kalimantan. Therefore, referent problem occurs in that sentence. To improve the sentence, it is better for the writer to just use Indonesian name of the fruit along with its Latin name as follow:

> *"This is **mentega** fruit [Diospyros blancoi], it's soft like butter and tastes good…"*

8. Language Sense

Language sense takes an important role in giving meaning to language. Though a sentence is syntactically correct, it can make no sense when the one who utters it cast the language sense aside. The example of the problem in language sense found in the data can be seen in the following sentence:

> ***The mosque is well-known for its writings of Shaykh Mohammed Arsyal al-Banjari**, an Islamic scientist which lived from 1710 to 1812.*

The sentence above makes no sense because the mosque cannot write so that it is not acceptable to write '***The mosque is well-known for its writings of Shaykh Mohammed Arsyal al-Banjari…***' even though it is syntactically correct.

9. Tense Logic

Tense in English is not simply rules of how the subject is combined with a verb. It brings time-related logic in it. Thus, the following sentence is problematic:

> *Banjar tribe which **occupied** the entire region of South Kalimantan consists of 3 major groups, namely Kuala Banjar, Banjar Banjar Pahuluan and Batang Banyu.*

The word 'occupied' in the sentence is semantically problematic because it is used to state a fact. To state fact, the correct tense to use is present tense. Therefore, to semantically improve the sentence, the word 'occupied' should be replaced by 'occupies':

> *Banjar tribe which **occupies** the entire region of South Kalimantan consists of 3 major groups, namely Kuala Banjar, Banjar Banjar Pahuluan and Batang Banyu.*

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from this study are:

1. The English used in online articles promoting South Kalimantan are generally accurate though several misuses of the language are still found.
2. Syntactic problems in the articles do not disturb the flow of the stories being told. Thus, the writers of the articles have been successful in promoting South Kalimantan through their writings.
3. Semantic problems in the articles are not that many though improvements are still needed.

Suggestion

As the researchers, we suggest that:

1. When writing in English, the writers should linguistically recheck their writings, especially in syntactically and semantically, so that the messages they are trying to convey through their writings can be delivered better to the readers. Consulting to someone with a better English mastery can be a good option.
2. English online articles promoting South Kalimantan are still low in number so that it is hoped that more and more people can promote this province to the world through their digital writings.

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