


## Mapping the Levels of English Storytelling of Tour Guides in Jajar Gumregah Tourist Village Trenggalek

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Submitted : 8 August 2023 Accepted : 20 November 2023 Published : 2 November 2023	Storytelling is part of an adequate tourism promotion. Storytelling can describe a place, a tradition, a culture, and many other things that become tourist attractions. Storytelling is needed to promote tourism in Indonesia, including tourist villages. Tourist villages in Indonesia are part of tourism development in Indonesia. This study then analyzes and map the level of tour guides' storytelling skill in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah Trenggalek. Seven participants were involved in this study by presenting their storytelling and were assessed by the researchers using some assessment criteria: pronunciation, fluency, comprehension, grammar, and expressions. Descriptive qualitative research design was employed in this study. The results indicated various levels of tour guides' storytelling skill, which is influenced by some factors. They are educational background, environment, confidence, and frequency of practice.
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Levels, English, Storytelling, Tour Guides	
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### Introduction

Following the current trend of tourism development in Indonesia, tourist villages have become a trend where these tourist villages are being intensively developed. A tourist village is a village that offers its regional uniqueness in the form of customs, dances, traditional food, traditional houses, regional dances, and other cultural arts as a tourist attraction, where these are combined with other supporting facilities (Darsono, 2005). Tourism villages have several supporting components, including local community participation, the prevailing system of community norms, community customs, and local culture (Prasiasa, 2012). The development of tourist villages is not only carried out in large regencies but also in developing regencies such as the Trenggalek Regency.

As a tourism village with pilot status, Jajar Tourism Village requires various developments, not only facilities, infrastructure, and facilities, but also human resources, one of which is the ability of tour guides in the tourist village. This tourist village offers tourist attractions in the form of culture and customs, nature tourism, and crafts through weaving and making sculptures. With its potential, Jajar Village is one of the priorities of the Trenggalek Regency Tourism and Culture Office to be fostered and developed. Because of its potential, storynomics tourism has a huge opportunity to be developed in this tourist village. Storynomics tourism can be developed if the tour guides who are members of the Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Group) in Jajar Village have mastered the ins and outs of English storytelling skills to are given further coaching. To support the development of a tourist village, the Jajar Village Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) and the Trenggalek Regency Tourism and Culture Office are intensifying various efforts, one of which is increasing the competence of tour guides.

According to data from the Tourism and Culture Office of Trenggalek Regency, the number and distribution of tour guide abilities in tourist villages in Trenggalek have not been mapped evenly. Likewise, the ability to tell stories and English is one of the essential components that tour guides must master. This is related to the orientation of the Trenggalek Regency government in developing tourism villages for international marketing. If the storytelling and

English language skills of the tour guide have been mapped, it will be known what training is appropriate for the tour guides.

The development of tourist villages in Indonesia is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been proclaimed, considering that tourism villages are based on Community Based Tourism (CBT) where the main tourism policy stakeholders are the community (Irwan & Agustang, 2021). Along with the development of a tourist village that has principles on the SDGs and CBT, qualified natural and human resources are needed. In terms of human resources, a skilled tour guide is one of them. Among the several skills that tour guides must possess, storytelling is one of them.

*Storytelling* is a method of telling or conveying a story to another party. Serrat (2018) defines storytelling as a description of life that includes personal experiences, ideas, beliefs, and life lessons. So, in the storytelling activity or process, there is storytelling from the storyteller to the listener or recipient of the story. Storytelling is one type of public speaking. Public speaking itself is an activity of speaking in public in which a speaker (speaker) will speak in front of many people (audience) directly (face-to-face) and with a flow of dialogue that is continuous (continue) (Sulistyo & Arswendi, 2021). Meanwhile, according to Juwito et al. (2021), public speaking is closely related to personal branding.

*Storytelling* was chosen in the development of a tourist destination, especially in the aspect of promotion, because storytelling is claimed to be able to fulfill the wishes of tourists for specific existing values that are characteristic or characteristic of particular tourist objects that can leave deep impressions for these tourists (Woodside, 2005). Because of the benefits of storytelling, storytelling is one of the skills a tour guide must possess, and the storytelling abilities of tour guides must be analyzed and developed. According to Mutiaraningrum and Meningwati (2021), storytelling can improve the English language skills of tour guides, especially in speaking, and can be used for teaching (Khaerana & Nurdin, 2018).

The importance of tour guides to explore storytelling techniques was also stated by Bryon (2012). According to him, storytelling can be used by tour guide groups that have different tourist segments. In addition, storytelling is also believed to form a brand, be used as a marketing medium to advertise tourist attractions, create relationships between tourists and brands, and maximize the travel experience in tourist destinations (Jo et al., 2022). Furthermore, it is also stated that storytelling that is applied to develop a tourist destination includes five components, namely interest, the ability to educate and provide knowledge (educability), sensitivity, descriptiveness, and uniqueness.

This aligns with the Trenggalek Regency Tourism and Culture Office, which targets foreign tourists, where mastery of English is essential. As revealed by Asmin and Hasby (2017), mastery of English can support the quality of human resources in the tourism sector. Mastery of English in the field of tourism is also a response to the increase in the number of foreign tourists from year to year (Prabhu & Wani, 2015). Therefore, satisfactory service from tour operators is needed, one of which is reflected in the ability of the tour guides to speak English. Related to this, Wahyuningtyas et al. (2022) have mapped the English skills of tour guides in the Trenggalek tourist village based on speaking and writing skills, where the English language skills of the tour guides vary from essential to intermediate levels. Therefore, tour guides should also have sufficient English storytelling skills.

According to Kemenparekraf/Baparekraf RI (2021a), *storynomics* tourism is a tourism approach in which narratives, creative content, and culture are the treats and attractions of these tourist destinations. Meanwhile, according to Casmudi (2021), stories about charm and tourist attraction that are packaged in such an attractive way in storytelling are the core of *storynomics* tourism, which attracts not only local tourists but also foreign tourists. It was further explained that *storynomics* tourism had contributed to recovering the pandemic tourism that had hit. This is confirmed by Kartika and Riana (2020), who state that *storynomics* tourism is an effective creative marketing tool to attract tourists.

Tourism villages are one type of tourist destination that has the potential to develop with the application of the *storynomics* tourism approach, as revealed by Rahmawati et al. (2021), who applied the *storynomics* tourism approach to the Laksana Tourism Village to develop the potential

of a tourism village in that tourism village, with the creation of content **and stories** - folklore in tourist villages. It is hoped that tourism in the village will develop. In addition, Storynomics tourism can be carried out in various ways, one of which is by sorting out the folklore or oral traditions that are developing in the area and then preparing them to be told to tourists (Sari et al., 2022) and if a tourism village wants to develop *storynomics tourism*, the tour guides then have to have good skills, including English ones. Tour guides are expected to have received English storytelling training. Before giving the training to the guides, their English storytelling skills should be mapped to know the types of training that should be given.

In this case, thus, it is necessary to analyze and map the English storytelling abilities of the tour guides in the Jajar Gumregah Tourism Village. Thus, the formulation of the problem of this research is: How is the English storytelling ability of the tour guides in Jajar Gumregah Tourism Village?

### Research Method

This study employs descriptive qualitative research design as its research design, with result analysis as its approach. As stated by (Creswell, 2008), through a qualitative study, the researchers compile the data through interviews, observations, and documentation. Also, this study collected multiple sources of data instead of just relying on one source of data. Poedjiastutie (2020) asserted that qualitative research aims to recognize social fields through the points of view of the respondents. In addition, it focuses on several main aspects, such as tendencies, distinctions, complications of the aspects, background considerations, and universal structures. Wahyuni (2023) narrated that qualitative studies use phenomena exploration; the method can be semi-structured, like deep interviews, focus groups, and participant observation.

Furthermore, this type of research is also expected to describe variations, relations, individual experiences, and group norms. The research criteria mentioned above are in line with the criteria of this study. The data used in this research is in the scores of the English-speaking test of seven tour guides in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, Trenggalek.

### Research Participants

The participants of this research are seven tour guides from Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, Trenggalek. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants. As defined by Podjiastutie (2020), purposive sampling is conducted to match the researcher's purposes. The researcher has already set the criteria for the research participants before collecting the data and seeking the participants. In this study, the criteria of the research participants are as follows:

1. Have performed as a tour guide in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, Trenggalek;
2. Have already enrolled in an English class;
3. Have already had English proficiency, at least a basic level;
4. Have already been involved in tour guiding in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah.

The information gathered from these participants is then used to answer the research problem about the English storytelling skills of the tour guides in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah.

### Research Instruments

The research speaking assessment rubric used in this study was referred to by Brown (2001). The speaking assessment criteria were chosen because of the detailed explanation and measurement of each assessment criteria. The assessment criteria determined by Brown (2001) were then completed by another criterion, which is content. This was made because the criteria set by Brown only assessed speaking skills, while this study is about analyzing and mapping storytelling. Therefore, content assessment was included in the comprehension criteria. In addition, there will be one more criterion: expression or gesture. The researcher thus added this criterion to the assessment form. The explanation and description of the criteria are detailed as follows:

Aspects	Score and Description			
	1	2	3	4
<b>Fluency</b>	(No Specific fluency description. Refer to the other four language areas for the implied level of fluency.)	Can handle with confidence but not with a facility in most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, work, family, and autobiographical information.	Can discuss particular interests of competence with reasonable ease. Rarely has to grope for words.	Able to use language fluently on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Can participate in any conversation within the range, oh this experience with a high degree of fluency.
<b>Pronunciation</b>	Errors in pronunciation are frequent, but can be understood by a native speaker, used to dealing with engineers attempting to speak his language.	The accent is intelligible, though it often needs to be fixed.	Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. The accent may be foreign.	Errors in pronunciation are quite rare.
<b>Grammar</b>	Errors in grammar are frequent, but speaker can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his language.	Can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar.	Control of grammar is reasonable. Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.	Able to use the language accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Errors in grammar is quite rare.
<b>Comprehension</b>	Within the scope of his very limited language experience, can understand simple questions and statements if delivered with slowed speech, repetition, or paraphrase.	Can get the gist of most conversations of non-technical subjects (i.e., topics that require no specialized knowledge).	Comprehension is complete at an average rate of speech.	Can understand any conversation within the range of his experience.
<b>Expression/Gesture</b>	The expressions were not too apparent and did not reflect the story	The storyteller can express and use some gestures to tell the story, but the expressions do not vary	The expressions vary pretty, but still not too confident	The expressions illustrate the story really well and make it as if the audience experiences the things that

**Table 1. Storytelling Assessment Criteria**

Using the speaking assessment rubric above, the researchers then assessed the English storytelling skills of the participants.

### Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected in June 2023, with the following steps:

1. The researchers made some questions and arranged the research instruments to assess the participants.
2. The researchers held a Zoom meeting in early June 2023 to describe and explain the preparations that should be made by the research participants, preparing an English short story and the way they would present it. A question-and-answer session also followed this online meeting to ensure that all the instructions given by the researchers were clear and could be understood well.
3. The researchers then asked the person in charge (PIC) of the village community in Desa Wisata Jajar to find the respondents, and it was found seven respondents.
4. The researchers then went to Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah to hold the data collection for two days.
5. On June 24, the researcher then collected the data by observing, assessing, and analyzing the performance of the participants who told the short stories that they prepared. The data collection on that day took around 6 hours, involving 7 participants.
6. Before starting collecting the data, the researchers mapped the English skill that the participants already had and their educational background, as these aspects will affect the score of their English storytelling skills.

### Results and Discussions

The results of this study were then elaborated as follows:

The assessment criteria are fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension. The test results of the participants' storytelling are described as follows:

Respondents	Criteria Score (1-4)					Total Score
	Fluency	Pronunciation	Grammar	Comprehension	Expression/Gesture	
RE	3	3	3	3	3	15
AN	2	2	2	3	2	11
AW	2	3	2	3	2	12
FR	1	1	1	1	1	5
RA	2	2	2	2	2	10
DI	3	3	2	2	2	12
YA	3	2	2	3	3	13

**Table 2. Score of Tour Guides' Storytelling Skill**

#### *The English storytelling test:*

The storytelling test indicated that five participants scored higher than 10, which means above average. They were RE, AN, AW, DI, and YA. Meanwhile, there was one participant who achieved a medium score, 10, participant RA. There was only one participant who got under average score, participant FR, as he only got 5 for his storytelling score. Before asking the participants to perform their storytelling, the researchers asked and observed the educational background of the participants. RE graduated with a bachelor's degree, taking English Education major. She also became the best achiever on this test. Her educational background influences her achievement. Aside from RE, five other participants, AN, AW, FR, DI, and YA, had bachelor's degree titles, while only one was a senior high school graduate and participated in RA. They graduated from various departments and universities, and RE was the only participant from the



English Education Department. The second-best achiever, YA, who scored 13 in her storytelling performance, graduated from the Arts Department. He is also a filmmaker that already produced several short and tourism movies.

Regarding intelligibility, their English could be understood well and efficiently by the researchers. Their thick Javanese accent did not affect the meaning of their utterance. Intelligibility is important as Baese-Berk et al. (2023) described intelligibility as a measurement of speech perception, of how an utterance or speech is perceived and understood by people. Thus, intelligibility becomes an essential element in speaking, including storytelling.

RE, as the best achiever, achieved a score of 3 in all aspects or criteria of the assessment, which is quite good but could be better. This is based on the assessment and scoring on five assessment criteria: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, comprehension, and expression/gesture, where she scored 3 out of 4. She was good at speaking, although there were some words that she forgot and asked researchers to find the words. She told a story about a tradition in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, which could be understood easily, although she had some pauses in her story. For the grammar, she did not encounter any serious errors. Some minor errors occurred, but she could handle them well. Her expression also could represent the tone and ambiance of the story.

In contrast, the participant who scored the lowest had difficulties in most of all criteria. RA only scored 2 in all criteria. She needed to be more confident in telling the story. She also still tried to find the correct vocabulary in English. The researcher helped her most of the time to finish her story. She also still needs to practice her gestures and expressions. Moreover, she often made grammatical errors and pronunciation that should be fixed.

This result indicated that the level and background of education influenced the storytelling skills of the tour guides. This can be seen and reflected in the interview that showed RE, as the best achiever, completed her bachelor's degree in English education. At the same time, RA, the participant with the lowest score, only earned a high school degree. This different educational level causes different English skill levels and, in turn, influences the participants' storytelling skill levels. Some factors may also influence, such as environment, confidence, frequency of practice, etc. The interview results indicated that the participants lacked motivation when the environment did not support them speaking English. They rarely practiced English. They were also not confident to speak English as they were afraid to make mistakes and were not accustomed to speaking English. That is why the tour guides have different skills and levels of storytelling. Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah is still a new tourist village in Trenggalek. The number of foreign tourists that visited this village still needed to be higher.

Therefore, tour guides in this village seldom speak English with foreign tourists. In addition to this study, some efforts must be made to improve their storytelling skill, including media use. Some media can be used, one of which is YouTube. YouTube videos are claimed to improve someone's storytelling skills (Afriyeni & Masbiran, 2022). Through classroom action research, the researchers divided the study into two cycles: cycle one and cycle 2. In addition, compared to cycle 1, the average score in cycle 2 increased. This becomes an external factor or way to improve students' storytelling skills.

## Conclusion

Our study found that tour guides in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah Trenggalek have different English storytelling scores and levels. The highest score was achieved by the tour guide, who earned a bachelor's degree in English Education. Meanwhile, those with above-average scores graduated with bachelor's degrees in different majors. This indicated that the tour guides' education level was closely connected with their English storytelling score. Although they have different storytelling skill levels, their speaking intelligibility is good, which means what they are telling can be understood well.

The English storytelling skill level from this study varies. The highest score that this study achieved was 15, and the students got a score of 3 in all components (fluency, pronunciation, grammar, comprehension, expression/gesture). Meanwhile, the participant who achieved a low score (5) only got a score of 1 in all components of English storytelling skills. The other 5

participants. This indicated that the participants, consisting of tour guides in Desa Wisata Jajar Gumregah, had varied levels of English storytelling skills.

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