



# English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Training for Mangrove Forest park actors to Enhance Coastal Tourism Services

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**Abstract:** The urgency of this PKM activity is to see the enormous tourism potential of the Mangrove Forest Park, managed by PT Perseroda (partner), and its influence on the economy of Langsa City. The increasing number of tourists at home and abroad must be accompanied by quality service and human resource capabilities. English language skills are required for all tourism operators at Mangrove Forest Park to provide quality services. Following up on this, the service team provided English for Specific Purposes (ESP) training to improve the quality of human resources' English language skills and partner services. The objectives of PKM are: (1) Improve the quality of partner human resources capabilities by improving English language communication skills specifically for Frontliners, guides, parking attendants, security and small business traders who interact directly with tourists; (2) Improving partner services through services using English to foreign tourists so that they can add value and increase the interest of foreign tourists who will visit. To achieve the objectives of this service, tests, interviews, questionnaires and observations were used to collect data. The targets for achieving this PKM activity are: (a) Increasing the ability of Partner HR in communication skills using English; (b) There has been an increase in the quality of services provided by partners which can increase the number of foreign tourists. The results of PKM activities show an increase in the ability of Partner HR to use English from a score of 55 to 75 after PKM activities. Apart from that, based on observations and interviews with participants, it is known that there has been an increase in partner services through services using English provided by frontliners and Mangrove Forest Park tour guides.

**Keywords:** ESP; Coastal tourism; Mangrove Forest Park; Tourism.

## Introduction

The allure of the coastal area in Langsa has gained popularity as a favorite destination amongst visitors. One of the most famous attractions is the Mangrove Forest Park, Hutan Bakau Kota Langsa. This destination presents an expanse of mangrove plants consisting of various types and beautiful scenery that can lure visitors locally and internationally.

Mangrove Forest Park is an ecotourism destination located on the coast of Kuala Langsa village, West Langsa District, Langsa City, Aceh. This tour presents a stretch of mangrove plants consisting of various types and beautiful scenery that can attract local and foreign tourists. This tourist destination is increasingly recognized among the national and international community after the inauguration of the Tower

Mangrove Forest Park by the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno, in April 2022 (Hanafiah, 2022). Mangrove Forest Park, or the Langsa mangrove forest, is currently managed by PT Pelabuhan Kota Langsa (Perseroda) and has received awards such as 1st place in the 2019 Anugerah Pesona Indonesia tourism category. It is also named one of Southeast Asia's largest mangrove forests, with an area of around 8,000 hectares and 38 types of mangroves (Wijaya, 2022). In addition, this mangrove is often also a reference for researchers (Ramadani and Navia, 2019; Iswahyudi, et al., 2020; Andiny, 2020; Purba, et al., 2023).

The charm of Mangrove Forest Park has attracted tourists from various circles, such as; researchers, nature and environmental lovers, students, students, and the general public from various regions in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, such as Singapore (Zubir, 2016). Seeing

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this interest and the incessant Langsa City Government promoting this ecotourism, it can be concluded that the potential for ecotourism attraction in the Kuala Langsa mangrove area is classified in the high category and the location is feasible to be developed into an object of ecotourism attraction so that it is very possible to become world ecotourism. This can be seen from the large number of visitors, which continues to increase both locally, nationally, and internationally. In response to this, workers with foreign language skills, especially English as an international language, are needed to improve services to international tourists to attract foreign tourists to visit Mangrove Forest Park.

The number of foreign tourists positively impacts the country, the City Government, and the people of Langsa City. Directly, this ecotourism opens up many new jobs, increases the income and welfare of the surrounding community, public facilities that are getting better and more complete and becomes one of the sources of local revenue (PAD) for the city of Langsa (Sobari, 2022). This is evident in August 2022, this mangrove forest ecotourism was closed and affected increasing the number of unemployed due to mass layoffs. People had no income and reduced regional income. In this condition, the government is trying to reopen this tourist location in December 2022 and continues aggressively promoting it (Gunawan, 2022).

The partner in this service is PT Pelabuhan Kota Langsa (Perseroda), who is entrusted by the Langsa City Government to manage the mangrove forest park. Based on the results of the discussion of the service team with partners, it was found that many workers at Mangrove Forest Park lacked English language skills, which caused frequent misinterpretations in communication with foreign tourists so that foreign tourists did not get extensive information and felt uncomfortable. This situation can bring down the image of Mangrove Forest Park, which is portrayed as not good at service and can decrease the number of foreign visitors. In terms of helping to improve the tourism sector, the service team conducted English for Specific Purposes (ESP) training to Mangrove Forest Park tourism actors.

Damanik & Weber (2006) state that tourism actors consist of tourists, service providers such as restaurants/dining houses and tourist information centers, tourism service supporters such as guides, government, and local communities. In this service, the intended tourism actors are those who support service improvement, namely frontliners, tour guides, security, parking attendants, and small business traders at Mangrove Forest Park where they are the people who will interact directly with tourists. The selection of this sample is also adjusted to the results of direct findings in the field. Writers found that some frontliners, sellers, tour guides and parking attendants could not

communicate using English with outside tourists, so there was confusion on the part of tourists. If this continues, it will reduce visitors so that it can impact the local residents' economy. English for specific purposes (ESP) is English language learning based on the needs of learners whose needs are reflected in the development of materials that can improve language skills. Fadlia, et al. (2020) stated that ESP is an English learning approach tailored to students' needs to achieve certain goals or in accordance with expectations. In the world of work English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is known as learning English for work purposes or needs.

In this service, the ESP approach is more suitable to be applied than EGP (English for General Purposes), because ESP focuses on adults who learn English according to their world of work and focus on the context of lexis, syntax, semantic and discourse according to the profession while EGP focuses on the age of varied learners (children to adults) who learn English in general which emphasizes four language skills equally, and is used in school students. This ESP training focuses on English for tourism, whose material is tailored to the needs of partners, especially in terms of services such as greetings, answering calls, introducing mangroves, daily transactions, and so on.

The priority problems agreed upon with partners in this PKM activity are (1) partners need to improve their English language skills, especially in the field of services to tourist workers at Mangrove Forest Park. 2) Partners need to improve English-language services for international tourists so that they can attract many visiting tourists. Based on the priority problems that have been formulated, the objectives of implementing this PKM activity are: 1) Improve the English language skills of partners specifically for Frontliners, guides, parking attendants, security and small business traders in areas that interact directly with tourists. 2) Improve partner services through English services to foreign tourists so that they can add value and increase the interest of foreign tourists who will visit.

## Method

This Community Service activity occurred at the Langsa City Protected Forest Hall. The implementation time was on Friday, August 11, 2023. Participants in this PKM activity are Frontliners, guides, parking attendants, security and small business traders in the Mangrove Forest Park area totalling 30 people. The stages of implementing this PKM are carried out in 3 stages: planning and preparation, implementation of activities, and monitoring and evaluation. In addition, this PKM activity also involves data collection using test techniques, observation, interviews, questionnaires, and

literature studies. The details of the PKM Steps are as follows:

### 1) *Planning and Preparation Stage*

Planning has been carried out since the process of formulating partner problem priorities. At this stage, preparations were made, including coordination with partners and needs analysis. Coordinating with partners is carried out to agree on the schedule of activities, confirm the problems to be solved, and determine the location of the activities. A needs analysis was conducted to determine the difference between the expected and current conditions. As a result of this analysis, training materials and preparations were planned during the training. During this planning, observations were also made about English-language services, conversations that often arise, and the vocabulary used by tourism actors.

### 2) *Activity Implementation*

The implementation of PKM activities is carried out in 2 forms of activities, namely training and mentoring. Training is carried out face-to-face and involves partners, service teams, and students. In addition to these activities, the service team conducted tests and interviews and gave questionnaires to partners about participants' responses to service activities. Tests were carried out before the activity (pretest) and after the activity (post-test) to measure English language skills. While the questionnaire was given to determine the participants' responses to the service activities (Menggo, et al., 2022).

### 3) *Monitoring and Evaluation*

Monitoring and evaluation is carried out by measuring the achievement of PKM activity targets. The results of monitoring and evaluation are used as a reference in following up the next activity process. In order to obtain information on the sustainability of the activity results, the proposer records and records the obstacles and suggestions submitted by partners during the PKM activity process.

## **Result and Discussion**

In accordance with the stages of service activities, from the results of planning and preparation activities by the service team, some information is obtained, namely the implementation of service activities can be held at the planned location. The implementation time has been agreed upon and the equipment and materials for the service activities have been prepared, including presentation equipment, materials in the form of pocketbooks, stationery, and so on. According to the results of an interview with one of the partners, a lattice

of ESP English material used in training and mentoring has been formulated, namely general dialog that may occur in several tourist sites of Mangrove Forest Park Kuala Langsa.

The service activity involved 30 participants from the members of the Mangrove Forest Park Kuala Langsa management partners. The training activities began with giving pretest questions to participants to determine their initial English language skills. Followed by the delivery of material by the service team. The participants enthusiastically participated in the training (Figure 1) and received training and mentoring materials on English ESP. The materials provided are:

- (a) Conversation at Parking area in mangrove forest
- (b) Asking and giving directions
- (c) Conversation at ticket counter
- (d) Conversation at the park
- (e) Conversation at the restaurant or café
- (f) Conversation at the mangrove park

During the training activities, participants listened to the material explanation and some participants asked about how to pronounce English vocabulary related to Mangroves. The training activities were interactive, and all participants were actively involved.

The next session in the service activity was assisting participants to practice Conversation dialog from the material in the pocketbook prepared by the service team. Participants in pairs practiced English pronunciation and asked questions in between practice activities when they did not understand the pronunciation of vocabulary in the pocketbook. The service team and students went around giving directions and assistance to participants who had difficulty practicing English dialogues. After 30 minutes of practicing the dialogue, participants were asked to simulate the activity of meeting foreign tourists, where students who acted as foreign tourists to demonstrate the use of English dialogue. During the mentoring activity, participants' confidence increased, and some participants offered to demonstrate the use of English.

The training and mentoring activities were closed by filling out the participant response questionnaire and taking the post-test. In addition, during the activity the service team interviewed participants to get feedback on the results of the service activities. One of the participants stated that they really wanted to get continuous coaching related to ESP, because the Mangrove Forest Park Kuala Langsa tourist location is a tourist location that has been recognized by many foreign tourists. In addition, other participants expressed their hope that this activity could be continued with activities that directly involved foreign tourists, so that the material that participants had learned could be validated and the results of improving participants' abilities directly in the field were known.

The achievement of PKM activity targets is measured through monitoring and evaluation activities. The monitoring and evaluation are carried out by analyzing the data collected during the service activities. The data obtained are pretest and post-test results, questionnaire answers, observations and interviews. The target achievement of this service activity is the

improvement of the participants' English language skills and the improvement of partner services through services using English to foreign tourists.

The recapitulation of the pretest and post-test results of the service participants on English language skills can be seen in Figure 1.

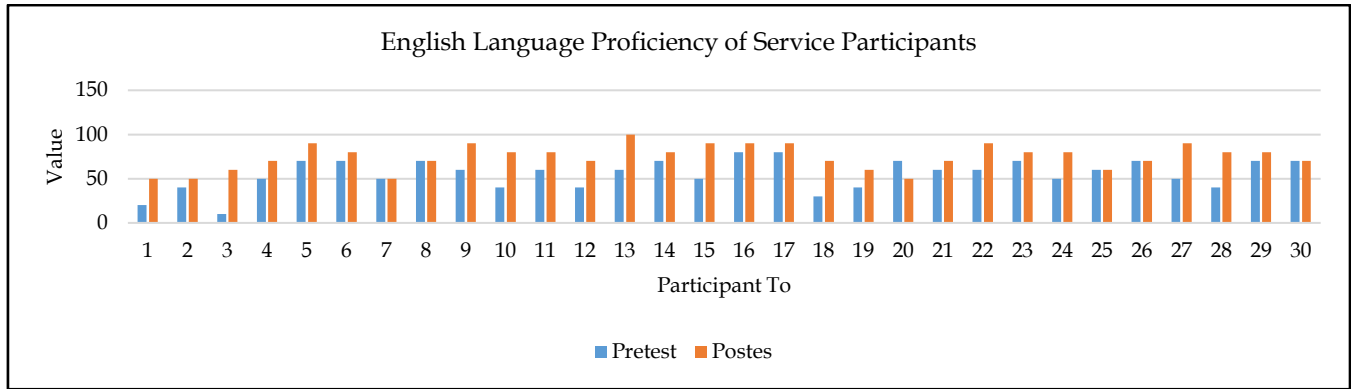


Figure 1. Recapitulation of Pretest and Posttest Results of Service Participants

Based on the participants' answers to the 10 questions of the English language proficiency test, the average score on the pre-test was 55. After the participants participated in the training and mentoring activities, the average score of the participants increased to 75 in the post-test. Based on Figure 1, 5 out of 30 participants did not improve their scores. Based on an interview with one of the participants, it was found that the participants had difficulty in understanding English

The target achievement of improving partner services through services using English is known to the service team from the results of interviews and observations to Mangrove Forest Park Kuala Langsa 1 month after training and mentoring activities. Based on the results of observations, it is known that several times the frontliners and tour guides used English in showing directions and making announcements. From the results of interviews with Mangrove Forest Park managers, this was done by participants not because of foreign tourists, but to re-train the results of training and familiarize

themselves with using English while working at Mangrove Forest Park. In addition, the Mangrove Forest Park manager is very happy with the initiatives taken by his workers.

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of PKM activities is also carried out through distributing questionnaires of participants' responses to PKM activities. The questionnaire was developed by referring to the Menggo & Taopan article (2022). The results of the participants' answers to the response questionnaire can be seen in Table 1 below.

because they did not understand the basics of English and the lack of memorized vocabulary in English. This pretest and post-test data shows the achievement of the target of the service activity, namely an increase in the English language skills of participants specifically for Frontliners, guides, parking attendants, security and small business traders in areas that interact directly with tourists.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Response Questionnaire Answers by Service Participants

Statement	Frequency of Answer		Percent (%)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
I like and enjoy attending this training	30	0	100	0
This training is useful for improving my English	30	0	100	0
This training improved my English	24	6	80	20
The material presented is in accordance with the needs	28	2	93	7
The content is clear and detailed	25	5	83	17
Training time allocation is appropriate	20	10	67	33
Media and methods in training are interesting	27	3	90	10
The tutors explain the material clearly and in detail	30	0	100	0
The handbook is clear and useful	30	0	100	0
Practice is clear and useful	29	1	97	3
Average	27	3	91	9



Based on Table 1, it is known that 100% of participants stated that the training in this PKM activity was useful for improving English, as well as the mentors explained the material clearly and in detail with a clear and useful pocketbook.

## Conclusion

There is an increase in the quality of services carried out by partners which can increase the number of foreign tourists. The results of PKM activities show an increase in the ability of Partner HR to use English from a score of 55 to 75 after PKM activities. In addition, based on observations and interviews with participants, it is known that there is an increase in partner services through services using English carried out by frontliners and Mangrove forest Park tour guides.

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