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## **THE MEANING OF THE ENGLISH VARIETY SPOKEN BY THE BALINESE VENDORS IN KUTA BEACH, BALI**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study is concerned with the meaning of the English variety spoken by the Balinese vendors in Kuta beach, Bali which is located south of Denpasar City and become a tourism icon. As a part of tourism industry, Kuta beach is often visited by tourists from all over the world. There is a variety phenomenon in speaking English that may influence misinterpretation even though misunderstanding in face to face communication among the vendors and the tourists. This study aims to describe how is the semantic meaning which refers to the meaning in the dictionary and pragmatic meanings of the English variety of the Balinese vendors in Kuta beach, Bali. The result of this study is expected to be able to give new information to the readers about the meaning of the English variety spoken by the vendors in Kuta beach, Bali as a part of Sociolinguistics study. As descriptive study, the data findings in this study are described in form of words, phrases, and sentences. The data were collected by using two methods, participant observation and interview. Participant observation was mainly used to get the significant data from the subjects of the study. Audio and note taking techniques were used to collect the data during the participant observation. The result of the present study shows the meaning and characteristic English of Balinese vendors in Kuta beach, Bali is different from the meaning of the English used by the tourists (native speaker). Some English phrases which they use sound uncommon and sometimes they are ambiguous when they are used within a sentence.

***Key Words:*** *Meaning, Spoken English, Balinese Vendors*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Balinese people, who work as vendors in Kuta beach Bali where the writer conducted this study, realize much the importance in having capability of speaking English to communicate with tourists from all over the world. Vendor is someone who is selling something. In this case, most of the vendors there are selling souvenirs such as silver jewelries, sunglasses, Balinese sarongs, and t-shirt or offering services such as hair braiding, making a tattoo or doing massage. The chosen word vendor rather than seller is used by the writer because the meaning of vendor is more appropriate than seller and according to the Cambridge dictionary the meaning of seller could be someone or a product which a lot of people buy (2008).

The utterances such as “Buy me...buy me..., Sir...looking-looking is ok.” is one of the example of English variety spoken by the vendors in Kuta beach, Bali. As one of the tourism industry in Bali, which has popular name as the God’s island or island of the thousand temples, Kuta beach Bali is one of the beautiful beaches there. The beach is

always crowded with domestic and foreign tourists from all around the world. It becomes one of the reasons why Balinese people really love to become vendors in Kuta beach Bali. It means that the vendors have more opportunities in selling souvenirs or offering their services and of course they will get more money from those activities.

The phenomenon of the English variety spoken by the Balinese vendors in Kuta beach Bali above can be regarded as one of the sociolinguistics phenomenon. In which there is relationship among the society and the language. As what Gumperz (1971) has observed that sociolinguistics there is a correlation between social structure and linguistic structure. He also observes any changes that occur between the social and linguistic structure. While Chambers (2002) defines clearly that sociolinguistics is the study of the social uses of language, and the most productive studies in the four decades of sociolinguistics research have been produced from determining the social evaluation of linguistic variants.

## **RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The data in present study are mostly English utterances transcribed into sentences. These utterances of conversation between research subjects and foreigners were collected through written record and audio record, but mostly the researcher did it easily by written record. The conversation is done directly by face to face and in natural circumstances in the process of selling and buying. Considering the research questions of the study, data findings are explain in terms of words, phrase structure, and sentence structure of the English

variety spoken by the vendors in Kuta beach, Bali, and the context in which the English variety of vendors is used. To show how the meaning of the English variety spoken by the Balinese vendors in Kuta beach, Bali, the researcher describes data findings into three categories, first, the unique utterances found as well as the semantic meanings and the pragmatic meanings. Those unique utterances will be classified based on types of meaning in Semantics and types of meaning in Pragmatics. Secondly, the researcher will explain about the structure of the vendors ‘utterance. The structure of the vendors’

utterances is needed to help in analyzing the meaning of it. As what Hasselgård et al. (1998) mentions that the informal speech is rather different with formal writing, especially the sentence structure and sound system. Related to the sound system, the researcher will analyze the

pronunciation of the vendors which rather different with RP (British English) that may cause the appeal of misinterpretation and misunderstanding of the meaning. The English Utterances of Balinese Vendors, the Semantic meaning and Pragmatic meaning.

1. “Buy me..buy me..Mam, looking-looking ,Ok..”

Semantic Meaning	Pragmatic Meaning
<p>Buy is to get something by paying money for it, me refers to the person speaking or writing.  Mam is US slang for a woman  Looking-looking is a reduplication from looking (look+ing) means see, search, seem, direction, warning, hope  Ok refers to agreement with something, it could be yes, right, never mind or no matter</p>	<p>This utterance occurred in the situation when the vendor brings and offering silver jewelries to an Australian woman , so the possible meaning is number 2  It’s influenced by their national language, bahasa Indonesia ‘melihat-lihat’ means see  According to the context in which the Australian woman is permitted to see the silver jewelries never mind whether she will buy or no.</p>

Buy me, buy me, Mam, looking-looking, Ok!?”

T: “No..no..”

V: “I give you cheap price, please for food”

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*Buy me* becomes popular expression among the vendors such as a trademark or jargon in Kuta beach when Kuta beach becomes one of tourism area in Bali. Some Balinese linguists (*i.e.* Prof. Artawa in Japan and Prof. Udayana in Texas when the researcher chats online in 2012) said that they did not know who brings those utterances, how and when exactly those utterances appeared in Kuta beach. However, the researcher found a book in 2010 entitle *Buy Me*, New Ways to Get Customers to Choose Your Product and Ignore the Rest, written by Marshal Cohen, a chief industry analyst of the NPD Group, Inc. Unfortunately, in his book, he didn’t discuss anything about *Buy Me* itself , he only discuss about the economic sector and factors influence it.

In this case, in the Semantic meaning *Buy Me* could be categories as connotative meaning which can be subjective or unstable. It depends very much on how an individual or society perceives a word. It is the association that we make in our mind of what these lexical items represent (Leech, 1981: 12). Meanwhile, those utterances in Pragmatic meaning are indicated as indirect speech act because there is an ambiguity in the meaning. It occurred when male Balinese vendor try to attract attention from a customer, Australian female tourist, to see even though to buy his merchandiser, silver jewelries. The Balinese means by using the utterances are “Meliin nak tiyang abesik, cingak-cingak malu, sing ken ken.” (Beli barang dagangan saya satu, lihat-lihat dulu tidak apa-apa.). In this case, the

most suitable of the indirect meaning from those utterances are “Buy something from me, Mam, just seeing is never mind”. The utterance is *relevance* to the on going situation of trading in Kuta beach, Bali.

Unfortunately, as the time goes by, “some naughty people” in Kuta beach, Bali, use *Buy Me* as the literal meaning which means that they sell themselves or their body to the foreign tourists. It could be categorized as prostitution practice. It was ever uploaded in *You Tube* on April 25th 2010 entitle *Cowboys in Paradise Bali* and on May 9th 2010 entitle *Korean Film Porno Bali* which the location of the background of the film in Kuta Beach, Bali. It has made a bad name in Kuta beach, Bali. That’s why nowadays, rarely we heard the vendors offering their merchandises or services by using

*Buy Me*. They have to find the new utterance beside *Buy Me*. The researcher found the new utterance used by some vendors is *Buy One*, which still has an ambiguity in meaning when ordinary people heard. *Buy* is to get something by paying money for it, *one* is a numeral of one. One of what is still no clear. To help the foreign tourist understand and comprehend of what they meant they show off their merchandises and using their gestures or body language to help in avoiding the misinterpretation and misunderstanding occurred along the conversation between the vendors and the foreign tourists. This expression is also influenced by their national language, bahasa Indonesia, ‘beli satu’, which means in Basa Bali ‘meliin abesik’ or ‘tumbasin asiki’ (more polite)

2. “You go up, I go down”

Semantic Meaning	Pragmatic Meaning
Go up, go down refers to move higher, rise or increase go down refers to move down to a lower level or place.	Indirectly, people thought that it is a such movement or action of someone to go up to the higher level/place or go down move down to a lower level or place. However, this utterances occur while process of bargaining prices between

V4:ok..you go up, I go down, seventy thousand

T: sixty, ok

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We do not know what exactly happened when someone said “You go up, I go down”, if we do not know the context or situation behind the occurring of the utterances. For example, we do not know You and I refer to who and whom. Utterance ‘go up and go down’ is seen as an action relating with stairs, go up the stairs and go down the stairs.

Meanwhile, as the context we know that this utterance occurred in Kuta

beach, Bali. In the process of bargaining or negotiating in Kuta beach, a vendor usually mentions the price of their merchandises or services as high as they want. It is happened because they realizes that the foreign tourists have a lot of money and they will bargain the price as low as possible. That is the reason of the occurring of the utterance go up and go down. In pragmatic meaning this indirect meaning tends to be classified

as metaphor in which the speaker try to express the process of bargaining the price as doing action go to the up, and go to the down stairs. In basa Bali, the word go up means *menek* and go down means *tuun*, in Bahasa means *naik turun*. You go up, I go down means “*rarisan ragane menek tiang tuun*” in bahasa ‘*kamu naikan*

*penawaran harga, saya turunkan penawaran harga.*’ If we often visit traditional market in Indonesia we found that this utterance is a such common sense in the process of bargaining or negotiating price in the process of trading or selling in traditional market in Indonesia.

### 3. “Morning price....”

Semantic Meaning	Pragmatic Meaning
Morning refers to the part of the day from the sun rises or you wake up until the middle of the day or lunch time. Morning is usually used for early time of the day in the morning, this morning etc. Price refers to the amount of money for which something is sold for example the car is priced one hundred thousand	Morning price refers to the price in the morning or opening price. The vendor or a common seller in Bali usually give a cheap price in the morning to make their merchandisers easier to be sold soon.

V4: Ok, morning price I give you , please choose

T: .hmmm.. well this one is good (see to her friend)

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All the vendors in Kuta beach do not know how and when the expression of “Morning price’ occurred among them. Most of them only copy or adopt from their senior vendors who has more working experiences as vendors in Kuta beach. In the morning we usually will feel fresh with new spirit and new hope of the day. It is also happened with the vendors in Kuta beach Bali. They hope that their merchandisers or services will be sold soon with the highest prices as they want and they will get and bring a lot of money.

As a phrase, the utterance “*Morning price*” itself in semantic meaning has connotative meaning, in which morning price may has the connotation cheap price in the society (Kuta beach, Bali). This utterance in pragmatic meaning is a part of indirect speech act and classified as metaphor in which

the price is equal to the price in the morning. Morning itself refers to the early time of the work day. Commonly most of the vendor in Kuta beach, will give cheapest price to the first buyer or customer that bought their merchandises or got their services in the morning of their work day. In their belief that the money from the first buyer will attract another money from another buyer to come to them. In other words we may say that the money from the first buyer will make them lucky and get more profit for the next transaction. Furthermore, they will wave the money from the first buyer to the other merchandises they have. It is meant that the other merchandises hopefully will be sold soon. They call it in basa Bali “*penggarus*” means “*penglaris*” in Bahasa.

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## Discussion

As one of the tourism industry in Bali, Kuta beach is almost crowded everyday visited by tourists from other regions in Indonesia and countries all around the world. English as one of the International language is needed as the medium of communication among Balinese as the local people and foreign tourists. Most of the people, especially the vendors, who live surrounding Kuta beach and work in tourism industry are forced to capable in speaking English. In this case, setting (Kuta beach Bali as tourism industry) of the society of the Balinese vendors, influences the use of the English language (Holmes (1992: 12), Judd (1999: 162), and Hymes (1972)). As what Coulmas said that language use is a social phenomenon in which there is causal links between the language use and the society (1998: 5). Society is any group of people who are drawn together for a certain purpose or purposes, while a language is what the members of a particular society speak (Wardhaugh, 2006: 1).

As what we have seen above, the researcher found some differences of the use of the English language spoken by the vendors in Kuta beach Bali when they interact in trading transactions with the tourists from all around the world. There is a variety occur during the conversation in which the vendors use English language with the Balinese or Indonesian linguistic features for examples the use of buy me, looking-looking, go up go down, big money etc.

One of the reasons a simplification exist is the educational background of the vendors. Most of the vendors come from village far away from Kuta where the beach located such as Kintamani, Tabanan, Karangasem, and Gianyar. Unfortunately, they only get

formal education until Elementary or Yunion High School also. Meanwhile, the others don't get formal education at all. The economy sector and their environment may influence of it. That's why their English is rather poor and the only way to do to learn English is copying from their friends who become vendor before them. The vendors' educational background, the ethnicity (Balinese), and geographic origin may cause the appearing of the simplification even though the variety of the use of the English language. Simply, we say that participants as social factors influence the linguistic choice (Holmes (1992: 12), Judd (1999: 162), and Hymes (1972)).

The English of the vendors is reflected in their daily activities when they interact with foreigners especially the native speakers during the process of selling or offering and transaction (the function, expected goals, ends of the communication, Holmes (1992: 12), Judd (1999: 162), and Hymes (1972)). They make use the utterances to attract the tourists and to create familiar environments.

Talking about meaning, the researcher found that there is a difference among semantic meaning and pragmatic meaning. Meaning itself could be different among each people. As the heart of language (Riemer, 2010: 3), meaning is important to convey the message or information from the sender to the addressee. Thus, we have to understand two types of meaning to understand what the speaker says by uttering a sentence. A view widely shared among linguists is that semantics and pragmatics are essential components that work together in a full description of meaning (Griffiths, 2006: xi).

Some differences of the spoken English of the vendors in Kuta beach,

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Bali with the foreign tourists may cause the appear of misinterpretation and misunderstanding in the conversations. To help their utterances to be understandable and there is no misinterpretation with the foreign tourists as their customers, they use their gesture, behave and body

language in the conversation. Fortunately, the native or the tourists as the buyers try understand and realise this phenomena. So far they feel comfortable and have fun with the utterances although sometimes they don't understand.

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

This final major section consists of the conclusion derived from the analysis. Additionally, the researcher also contributes recommendations for the readers and the future researchers.

Sometimes, in the daily communication there are some difficulties to understand and interpretation of what the speaker or sender wants to convey to the addressee. The addressee has the task of trying to guess what the sender (the writer or speaker) intends to convey, and as soon as the sender's intention has been recognized, that's it – the message has been communicated. The sender's task is to judge what needs to be written or said to enable the addressee to recognize what the sender wants to communicate.

Meanwhile, considering to the fact, all the findings, which are related to research questions of the study, the researcher concludes that the English of Balinese vendors in *Kuta beach*, Bali is unique. The uniqueness of their utterances are as below:

1. Some phrases and sentences that they use in their utterances during they interact and communicate with

the foreign tourists are different to the daily English utterances because they were inspired and influenced by their local tradition, belief and national language.

2. They tend to omit some consonants.
3. The three factors above become the reasons of the appearance of the ambiguity in the meaning. The meaning in semantics is much more different with the pragmatics. The meaning in semantics is almost the same with the meaning in the dictionary. Whereas the meaning in pragmatics depends on the context of situation when the language is used.
4. To help their English function in the context of trading on the beach and less the misunderstanding and misinterpretation, they make use their gesture; their manner of speaking and their behavior during the interaction with the buyers. Thus, the Balinese vendors can achieve the aim of their conversation and the ideas or messages that they intend to be transferred can be understood and accepted by the foreign tourists as the buyers.

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