

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Communication is a way to speak up what is in our mind and what we want to tell others to exchange information between individuals. Thus, language cannot be separated from people's lives as it is the medium to communicate. Communication is the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another (Keyton, 2011). People can communicate, convey information or messages, and influence others through language.

On the other hand, English language is a very important in tourism industry. English language is now a global lingua franca that is officially spoken by almost 60 sovereign states. According to Polyudora (2014) speaking English is a significant skill for career growth and interaction with other cultures around the world. A lot of people travel world-wide, like it or not, they must learn to speak English as the universal language to survive. Not only visitors but also employees who work in tourism sector are expected to be more communicative in English language to serve guests with no geographic bounds. The frontline employees as the most important link between a company and its customer are the crucial first step in developing and implementing effective communication systems.

In terms of providing customers with satisfaction and strengthening cooperation among company and customers, guest relation is supported by guest relation officer. Guest relation officer, also known as a guest relation coordinator or guest relation specialist, is a customer service-oriented employee who essentially greets guests.

Guest relation officers ensure a pleasant and satisfying service. They also handle guest complaints, assist with the check-in process and explain all facility amenities, such as performance and restaurants.

In addition, guest relation officer must have several skills. According to Fari (2016), essential skill for a public relation officer are having networking skills, emotional intelligence, innovating and troubleshooting skills, organization and management skills, and creativity. According to [trainedfortourism.org.mt](http://trainedfortourism.org.mt) (n.d.), guest relation officer should have skills that include personality, communication, listening, time management skills and ability to deal with difficult situations when handling foreign visitors.

International guests would be glad if the officer could speak a language that they understand, so it would not cause a communication barrier. It could be a problem if they do not understand the language and cannot communicate with the people around them. Therefore, a guest relation officer must know that speaking English that could be understood by international visitors.

Furthermore, in order to support successful communication between the officer and the guest, the guest relation officer must have communication skills. At the same time, we speak with people from different countries, and this skill also helps cope with communication barrier between the officer and visitors.

The role of guest relation is very important in PT. Saung Angklung Udjo. It is to help deliver what visitors' needs. According to the writer observation, communication was used by guest relation officers in ticket box where all international and domestic guests bought their ticket to watch the bamboo

performance. Sometimes, the officer who had limited English proficiency only assumed that they understood what the guests were saying. However, they did not know what the guest was saying because of the thick guests' accent or different meanings of some words. As a result, communication barrier sometimes happened during conversation between the guests and the guest relation officer.

The writer conducted her internship in PT. Saung Angklung Udjo, Bandung as a guest relation officer. The writer chose PT. Saung Angklung Udjo, Bandung, because this place was very popular in Bandung for foreign visitors. The writer assumed that there would be a lot of foreigners visiting this place and the writer's English skill would be needed. Besides, this practice would improve the writer's English skills and give the writer experiences in communicating with foreign visitors such as explaining information, and some places to the visitors.

The use of communication was needed especially in ticketing box, welcome drink spot, and seat arranger because these were the heart of this place and it was because there were so many foreign visitors from around the world that would communicate with the writer asking about some information. However, based on the writer's experience, the writer assumed that communication barrier frequently occurred. The writer would like to discuss it in this final report with title "Factors and Strategies to Cope with Communication Barrier during Internship at PT. Saung Angklung Udjo, Bandung"

## **1.2 Statements of the Problems**

- 1 What were factors that caused communication barrier done by guest relation officer in PT. Saung Angklung Udjo?

2. What were strategies used by guest relation officer to cope with communication barrier?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out factors that caused communication problems by guest relation officer in PT. Saung Angklung Udjo
2. To discover strategies that guest relation officer used cope with communication problems.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

#### **1. For the writer**

This final report is beneficial for the writer in:

1. Improving the writer's experience and comprehension in handling communication with international visitors;
2. Developing the writer's speaking skill; and
3. Gaining more knowledge and information in handling communication with international visitors.

#### **2. For the Alma Mater**

This final report is beneficial for the alma mater in:

1. Establishing good corporative relationship between Universitas Airlangga and PT. Saung Angklung Udjo;
2. Improving the quality of Universitas Airlangga Students; and
3. Exploring the knowledge to improve the quality of English Diploma students' ability in handling communication with international visitors.



### **3. For the Company/ Institution**

This final report is beneficial for the company/ institution to:

1. Improve the quality of Guest Relation Officers of PT. Saung Angklung Udjo in handling communication with international visitors using good English language skills; and
2. Evaluate the performance of Guest Relation Officers of PT. Saung Angklung Udjo

### **4. For other interns**

This final report is beneficial for interns in:

1. Increasing knowledge and experience in handling communication with international visitors; and
2. Increasing knowledge how to be an excellent Guest Relation Officer.

## **1.5 Review of Related Literature**

### **1. Definition of Guest Relation Officer**

Guest Relation Officer, also known as a guest relation coordinator, is a customer service-oriented employee who essentially greets guest (JobHero, n.d). Guest relation officer is employee that providing satisfaction and strengthening cooperation among company and customers. Guest relation officer handles guest complaints and deliver information that the visitors need. Guest relation officer commonly found in hotel division; however, guest relation officer plays vital role in PT. Saung Angklung Udjo that responsible to deliver information about ticket, performance, and public facilities.

## 2. Factors that Cause Communication Problems

As a human living in this world, it is true that we might face any possible issues when communicating with people from another country. Those issues might be caused by the speakers, listeners, or situation.

According to Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011), listening has an important role in the communication process. Listening is the key for effective communication. With that ability, the message is easily understood. When the speaker has difficulties in understanding or hearing because they talk softly, the audio equipment suddenly fails, or the speaker speaks too fast, good listening skill would help them to reduce misunderstanding from the speaker.

During the communication with non-English speaker that could not speak English, it might affect in communication barrier if the speaker and the receiver did not speak the same language. According to bussnesstopia (2018) "if the speaker and the receiver do not use the same language and words, there is no meaning to the communication." The employees who work in the tourism industry would increase effectiveness in communicating from speaking English when handling international visitors. According to Al-Saadi (2015) states that "English considered as a tool to increase the effectiveness of communication in tourism organizations."

A good speaker should have clear pronunciation to help them understand what they said and to avoid miscommunication. Not all people speak clearly and their accent could be difficult to understand. Therefore, Yates (2002 as cited in Gilakjani, 2016) stated that pronunciation is a way that used for making meaning. A word could be pronounced differently by people because of several factors such

as areas where they live, different situation, culture, social class, or their education level.

### **3. Strategies to Cope with Communication Problems**

Communication strategies are method to overcome communication problem that occurred verbally and nonverbally. According to Rosas (2016) stated that learners with low oral proficiency usually use communication strategies more than advanced learners to overcome communication barrier. Tarone (as cited in Ahmed, 2018) stated that learners usually use the communication strategy to overcome the lack of knowledge, it could help deliver the message effectively.

There are several strategies that could use to overcome communication barrier. According to Putri (2013: 130-131) Bialystok (1990) has adapted a taxonomy of CSs from Varidi (1973), Tarone (1977) and Faerch and Kasper (1983) in which he has categorized CSs in three types: avoidance and reduction strategies, achievement compensatory, paraphrasing, circumlocution, and time gaining. According to Willems (1987) has categorized the communication strategies into positive (achievement/compensatory strategies) and negative (reduction strategies), they may be mother-tongue-based or based on another foreign language the speaker happens to have (some or full) command of, they may contain an implicit or explicit request for help and they may be non-verbal (paralinguistic strategies). They cannot always be identified unambiguously. (P: 352) Based on the discussion above-mentioned and other studies, communication strategies can be categorized into the following:



The first one is Paraphrasing Strategies. This strategy is used by the speaker when she or he faces some difficulties situation to express themselves with structure or vocabulary, then he paraphrases the meaning with the words and structures that he has by using approximation, word coinage, circumlocution.

The second is avoidance strategies. This strategy is used when the speaker avoids talking about specific concept that they do not understand due to the lack of language. For example, when the speaker might not be able to describe something but she or he explain it with their own words.

The third is switching into native language. This strategy is used when the two speakers speak the same mother tongue. They usually depend on switching into mother tongue when they facing difficult to express themselves in the target language.

The fourth is seeking help or asking for clarification. This strategy is used when the speaker is unable convey the message due to his limited linguistic knowledge. The speaker would ask the listener about specific meanings that he lacks so that he can continue his interaction and convey the message.

The fifth is non-verbal strategies. This strategy is used when the speaker could not find the right words, so they use non-verbal signals to get the message across. For example, by using facial expressions, body languages, acting, using pictures. These non-verbal signals play an effective role in getting meanings across while communicating orally.

The sixth is time fillers. This strategy is used to help the speaker to gain time, restore knowledge and keep the communication ongoing. There are various



time fillers that speakers could use to fill gab in communication, for example such as, —well I mean, —what I mean, —actually.

## **1.6 Methods of the Report**

### **1. Location and Participant**

The writer conducted a case study on herself who worked as an intern guest relation officer in PT. Saung Angklung Udjo Bandung from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 until 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 that assisted six other guest relation officers. Within that period, she had got chances to be a speaker in 6 conversations with six different other guest relation officers. They are consisting of four female officers and two male officers for one month. In this case, the writer asked the supervisor's permission in the writer division to communicate and interact with visitors from overseas whenever they came to ticketing box and also ask them where they came from. The foreign visitors that usually visit Saung Angklung Udjo are from Europe, Asia, United States, Africa, and Australia. After the writer got permission, the supervisor showed several things that the writer could do and could not do during the internship.

### **2. Data Collection**

To collect data, the writer used observation to find out what factors caused communication barrier with foreign visitors. Also, she used this instrument to find strategies that were often used to cope with what communication problems when handling foreign visitors. The observation was documented in note-taking activities and audio recording taken at Saung Angklung Udjo in the ticket box, welcome drink, and arranged seating. The person whom the writer observed was a foreign

visitor who came to Saung Angklung Udjo. The writer also wrote a daily journal to describe every day activities in details.

### 3. Data Analysis

After all the data were collected, the writer listen then transcribe the audio-recorded files and compile all the observation notes. The, the writer analysed the data obtained from audio recording of conversations between guest relation officers and foreign visitors. She also used observation notes to know more about what strategies were used in Saung Angklung Udjo when handling the foreign visitors. After that, she decoded the data to find out strategies that were frequently used by GRO to cope with communication problems.

## 1.7 Framework of the Report

