CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the report

Communication has already begun since the beginning of time, it was used by our ancestors to deliver messages, to understand each other, to leave a legacy to our generation, etc. Communication could be defined as the talk of sense. This includes the sending and receiving of messages between a sender and a receiver. There are two ways to communicate, namely direct and indirect communication (Pujiyanti & Zuliani, 2014). Direct communication means that people speak to one another in the face to face conversation; meanwhile, indirect communication is when people use objects as an intermediary to hold a conversation with each other.

With the flow of time, communication cannot only be conducted by face-to-face conversation, but it can also be held from a long-distance with the help of tools and technology. The technology that is commonly used in long-distance communication is a phone. A phone has become a need for every person in the world to communicate with others who are separated by distance. Westmyer et al (1998) stated that telephones were seen as an alternative to face-to-face communication. Long-distance communication has become a natural thing in this world and most of the people in the world conduct their communication over long distances (Maines, 1994). In recent years, long-distance communication is more efficient than meeting the person directly resulting in communication through

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another country is possible. Communication is not only being held by the same language speaker, but it is also used to communicate with different language speakers. To communicate with others who are distant and speak a foreign language, people use communication devices called phones. Phones help people to communicate with others who are separated by distance. By using phones, people can talk to the other side of the world without meeting other people directly in person. The communication between people from different languages and cultural backgrounds becomes easier, which sequentially rise the need for intercultural communication skills has increased.

Intercultural communication is one of the most vibrant new arts. In the setting of globalization which has enclosed virtually in all parts of our life, actual communication with other cultures is getting crucial (Reigner, Koroleva & Mikhaleva, 2014). Intercultural communication is the verbal and nonverbal interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds. This term is used to define a person who tries to understand an unknown situation but more often, it is a two-way street, where people from both cultures are trying to improve their communication.

The writer conducted an internship in the Bali Government Tourism Office. The writer was positioned as a regular office worker. The writer's daily work was answering phone calls, handling office e-mails, printing out the document, managing data resources, etc. Bali Government Tourism Office is a government office that mainly handles tourism affairs such as collecting data of the domestic and international tourist, developing strategies to promote tourism, handling

complaints from tourists, and receiving data inputs from all tourism office branch around Bali Island.

During his internship, the writer found a problem that concerns phone calls from foreign visitors. The reason that he decided to analyze this problem because it is the only problem that he found during his internship in Bali Government Tourism Office. The writer interviewed customer care staff that mainly handles phone calls. Most of the calls from the foreigner was a complaint that mainly concerns accommodation place in Bali. When the writer asked the people that act as a customer care staff, they said that there is no Standard Operating Procedure for handling complaints from foreign visitors. In conclusion, the writer is interested in analyzing "METHODS OF HANDLING PROBLEMS THROUGH PHONE CALLS IN BALI GOVERNMENT TOURISM OFFICE"

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There are two main problems in this report:

1.2.1 What kind of approach that customer care use in receiving phone calls from foreign visitors in Bali Government Tourism Office?

1.2.2 What are the methods used to handle problems from foreign visitors through phone calls?

1.3 Purpose of the Report

1.3.1 To determine the approach used by customer care in receiving phone calls from foreign visitors.

1.3.2 To discover the methods that are used to handle problems from foreign visitors through phone calls.

1.4 Significance of the Report

a) For the writer

The final report is beneficial for the writer to be able to understand how to become a good customer care staff by observing, analyzing, and using methods used by the writer's supervisor in the office.

b) For the Alma Mater

The final report is beneficial to build a relationship between Airlangga and Bali Government Tourism Office; thus, increasing the number of scientific works of Universitas Airlangga and the quality improvement of Universitas Airlangga students.

c) For the Company or Institution

The final report is beneficial for the Bali Government Tourism Office to be able to present a good customer care service and use this final report observation as a reference to improve their service.

d) For other interns

The other interns can get knowledge about the way of serving customers and handle people from different cultural backgrounds and can prepare themselves when they are asked to become a customer care staff in Bali Government Tourism Office.

1.5 Review of Related Literature

1.5.1 Steps of Making Successful Phone calls

A phone call sometimes can be quite difficult to handle. When receiving phone calls, the information must be delivered successfully to prevent miscommunication between the caller and the receiver (Richey, 2007). Richey (2007) states eight methods to achieve a successful phone call. First, introducing the customer care and the company. An introduction is important because it gives people the first impression of the introducer and building trust in the people (Sweeney, 1997). Introducing oneself and the company is crucial in phone calls. By introducing, the caller does not feel distant with the receiver; therefore, it makes the caller more comfortable talking to the receiver.

Second, asking and using customer name throughout the conversation. After Introducing oneself, the receiver ought to question the caller their identity. Thus, by knowing each other identity the communication could be friendlier than talking unknowingly.

Third, taking notes of important information. People call customer care because they have some kind of trouble regarding company/institution service; thus, customer care staff must be ready to write down any kind of information that the caller gives during a phone call because customer care staff needs to take notes while listening to the customer's problem (Ozbay, 2005).

Fourth, asking questions to clarify information. In communication, clarification is an action that is given by the receiver to the caller to make sure of

the information understanding exchanged throughout the conversation; thereby, checking the receiver's understanding is correct and clear any confusion or misunderstanding (Hickman, 2012). Customer care ought to ask questions regarding the trouble that is currently encountered by the caller. Depending on the case, each question must be relevant to the problem that the caller encountered and the customer care staff should clarify the information gained during the conversation.

Fifth, repeating and summarizing. Repeating and summarizing information gained during the conversation is one of the most important steps in making successful phone calls. The target of a summary is to check the information and make sure the focus of the problem (Dostál, 2015), and by doing this step the caller is assured that the information is delivered correctly.

Sixth, telling the customer what the customer care is going to do. Assuring the customer about the next move that customer care is going to take can make the customer feels secured and calm because the customer knows that the problem is going to be taken care of.

Seventh, offering the customer further assistance. Sometimes people do not come with only one problem during the call; therefore, customer care staff should question the caller if there is anything that the customer care staff could assist with because customer satisfaction is a key to long-term trust (Kumaradeepan, 2015).

Eighth, showing gratitude to the customer. Giving gratitude can improve well-being and release negative emotions after the conversation (Nelson, 2015). In

customer care service, the customer care staff is obligated to show gratitude for the customer before the call ends, giving gratitude is a standard operating procedure for the customer care staff to be polite and courteous towards the customer.

1.5.2 Dealing with Foreign Customers

Dealing with people directly can be quite tricky and difficult for someone who is a beginner at it; moreover, dealing with someone who is from a different language could increase the difficulties. Customer care staff also needs social skills to deal with people in all kinds of situations (Richey, 2007). Hickman (2012) stated that there are some methods on how to deal with foreign visitors. First, remembering the caller's name. By forgetting the caller's name, the caller might assume that their call was not important at all. Taking that into a consideration, customer care staff is also a human being. It is not weird that customer care staff often forgets the name of their customers, to prevent this situation from happening the customer care staff ought to memorize and write the name of the caller if it is necessary to do so.

Second, rarely ask the foreigner to repeat the information. Dealing with foreign customer calls could be difficult for someone who is not knowledgeable about the caller language; therefore, the calls should be handled with people who understand and rarely ask the caller to repeat unnecessary information.

Third, remember the details of the call. Customer care staff ought to remember every information given by the caller. Usually, customer care staff, use notes to write down all information the caller gives to customer care, but nowadays

because of the advancement of technology customer care staff can record the conversation later that can be used as a source of data.

Fourth, the usage of polite language. Yule (1996) said that politeness is defined as showing appreciation and attention towards other people. The most basic skills in dealing with customers are speaking with the customers politely. The customer care ought to speak politely because he/she is the representative of the company/institution that handles with the customer. If the customer care staff acts poorly toward the customers, that action is reflected in the company/institution's reputation.

Fifth, listening to the customers carefully. Listening to customer trouble/ complaints is one of the main jobs of customer care staff. Nichols & Stevens (1957) stated that at the best, listeners often catch only a few information of what they heard from the speaker; therefore, the call centers ought to listen to customer's problems seriously and help them with a possible solution in handling that kind of trouble.

Sixth, making sure that the customer understands and happy with the service. Make sure the customer understands and satisfied with the service is part of the customer care job as a representative of the company/institution.

Seventh, always follow up and follow through. Encourage the customer to contact the customer care staff again if the same trouble still occurs, by giving the customers all kind company/institution contacts person addresses.

1.5.3 Solving Customer Problems on the Phone

Human beings are constantly challenged with the situations containing obstacles that have to be overcome (Dostál, 2015). When the problems happen with the service provider company/institution, people are most likely to call their customer care. Richey (2007) stated that there are several ways to handle and solve customer problems through phone calls. First, one should speak slowly and use simple language. Not all customers understand difficult languages or terms; therefore, the customer care staff ought to speak and explain something as simple as possible for the customer so that they can understand the information given by the customer care staff. Using simple language could help the customer to understand better and able to process the information that the customer care staff gave to them (Howes, 2018).

Second, checking the information. After the customer told their trouble, customer care staff ought to check and clarify the information that the customer care staff received during the conversation. Clarifying should be done to reduce the possibility of miscommunication.

Third, reassuring the customer of a follow-up. Troubled clients sometimes are anxious whether their problem could be solved right away or not; therefore, the customer care staff ought to assure clients of follow up and call back again if the problem is solved. As said by Kumaradeepan (2015) that a decent follow up is key to build customer relationships and loyalty.

Fourth, taking a summary of the problem. After hearing client trouble, the customer care staff ought to take the main points of the trouble so it can be taken care of right away after the call.

Fifth, giving suggestions to the customer as an alternative. If the customer does not accept a solution and wanted the problem to be solved right away the customer care staff should offer the customer an alternative way according to the company standard operating procedures. To make the customer feel assured, customer care staff should apologize or offer the customer the best possible problem-solution that the customer care staff could give (Krautzel, 2017).

Sixth, end the call with a friendly/helpful tone. Before the conversation ends, the call center should end the call with a smooth friendly/helpful tone so that the customers are satisfied with the service that the customer care staff give.

1.5.4 Cross-Cultural Communication

As a customer care staff, it is not surprising to encounter phone calls from a foreigner with a different language and cultural background. To anticipate that situation, the writer ought to learn the basics and the identification of intercultural communication because each culture is diverse and unique to some degree (Jandt, 2010). There are few methods on how to inspect barriers to intercultural communication on a universal level. Jandt (2010) had compiled six barriers that are commonly found in intercultural communication. First, anxiety in communication. it is when a person feels troublesome when he or she does not know how to act in several situations; therefore, resulting in communication failure. Anxiety can affec

communication when people are too focused on the anxiety that they forget to pay attention to what other people are saying (Jandt, 2010).

Second, assuming similarity instead of difference. As Jandt (2010) said that assuming another culture is similar to their own culture can result in people to ignore important differences and because of that problems might occur when people are acting in a home manner while they are in a different culture. It is very important to assume laws, habits, and attitudes of another society is different.

The third is ethnocentrism, which means believing their race, nation, or group is better (Jandt, 2010). A less perspective of ethnocentrism is called as cultural nearsightedness, or only sees one's own culture and ignoring other culture. Cultural nearsightedness could result in making guesses that common things are the same everywhere (Jandt, 2010).

Fourth, stereotypes and prejudice, Stereotypes are the perceptions about that certain people have particular qualities or abilities because they belong to a particular race, sex, or social class. Stereotypes can be positive and negative. Usually, they are based on rumours. Prejudice can be defined as an unreasonable dislike and distrust of people who are different from the one people know in some way, especially because of their race, sex, religion, etc.

Fifth, non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication can be a helpful tool in understanding ourselves and others (Eunson, 2012). If people do not share or understand the same nonverbal communication it could be problematic to

understand what they are saying because nonverbal communication is used as an alternative in case that the person did not speak or understand verbal language.

Sixth, the language in communication, Sirbu (2015) stated that language is a tool to communicate with other people and used as a tool to convey a thought. Languages are affected by the culture; therefore, some people from other cultures might be lacking equivalences in vocabulary, idioms, grammar, syntax, experiences, and concepts. By using this method as a guide, the writer can easily identify the cause of the cultural barrier and how he supposed to handle it.

1.6 Methods of the Report

1.6.1 Location and Participants

The writer conducted a case study on a customer care staff in Bali Government Tourism Office. In this case, the writer asked permission from the writer's supervisor to observe and do the activities that the customer care staff should do while receiving phone calls from another country. In terms of the background of the participants, the writer observed one customer care staff which is his supervisor. The supervisor's name was Ni Putu Kartina Wiprayanti, she was considered professional in handling phone calls from the foreigner.

1.6.2 Data Collection

To gather data, the writer used three data collection techniques: observation interview, and actual job experience. First, in terms of observation, the writer observed and analyzed the techniques and phrases that the customer care staff made when receiving phone calls from a customer.

Second, the writer interviewed the two-customer care staff using unstructured interviews and asked the customer care staff how do they manage their work and methods used to deal with the foreigner. The writer asked a few questions and noted it to contrast it with the related literature.

Third, an actual job experience that the writer gained during his internship. After doing steps above the writer was suggested to try the job himself. During the internship, the writer got many calls mainly from locals who need information about tourism, while the calls from foreigners only happened three times. In those three calls, the writer only handled two calls. For the first time, the writer was nervous when receiving phone calls from the foreigner, after being given the support by the supervisor, the writer was eager to do his job. The writer received a phone call from a foreigner that complaints about getting frauded by a local travel agent.

1.6.3 Data Analysis

In terms of data analysis, the writer uses the triangulation of data collection techniques to answer the statement of the problem. Further, by the statement problem, the writer could generate two units of analysis which could be answered by using the triangulation of data collection techniques. Take a look at the following table below.

Table 1 Data Analysis

Units of Analysis	Data Collection Techniques
Approach that customer care use in receiving phone calls from foreign visitors.	Observation Interview Actual job experience
Methods used to handle problems from foreign visitors through phone calls.	Observation Interview Actual job experience

Following up table above, the writer analyzed the data collected from each instrument separately based on the units of analysis. After the writer found patterns from each of the data, the writer merged the findings from each of the data to answer the statement of the problem.

1.7 Framework of the Report

Problems

1. **What kind of approach that customer care use in receiving phone calls from foreign visitors in Bali Government Tourism Office?**

2. **What are the methods used to handle problems from foreign visitors through phone calls?**

Data Collection

1. **Observation.**

2. **Interview with Call Centre.**

3. **Actual Job Experience**

Data Analysis

1. **Recapitulating data obtained from data collection.**

2. **Finding patterns from three kinds of data to answer the problems.**

Output

1. **A description of approaches that customer care use in receiving phone calls from a foreigner.**

2. **A description of a method used to handle problems from foreign visitors through phone calls.**