

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Tourism is one of the activities that provide facilities and infrastructure as well as various other services, Tourism has some elements whose existence will determine success in attracting the tourists. According to Yoeti Oka (1997 hlm.57). "These elements include interaction, transportation, restoration, accommodation, conservation, and institutions that organize and maintain all elements of support. All these elements can be used as a "tourist facilities". According to Marpuang (2000, hlm.46) "Describes the definition of tourism as follows; Tourism is a time-honored journey undertaken from one place to another with a plan and enjoying sightseeing or recreational activities to fulfill the other's activities".

Tourism is travel for pleasure or business; also the theory and practice of touring, the business of attracting, accommodating, and entertaining tourists, and the business of operating tours. Tourism may be international, or within the traveler country. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines tourism more generally, in terms which go "Beyond the common perception of tourism as being limited to holiday activity only", as people "traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". According to Tourism Society in Britain (1976, hlm.89) tourism is the departure of people while in the short term to the destination outside the residence and daily work.

Tourist can be domestic or international, and tourist has both incoming and outgoing implications on a country's balance of payments. Today, tourism is a major source of income for many countries, and affects the economy of both the source and host countries, in some cases being of vital importance. However, the tourists who visited other countries certainly

requier language as a means to communicate with other people. According to Brown (1994) said “ Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols, which allows everyone in a particular culture, or others who have studied the culture system, communication or interaction.”

“Travel is more than seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living”-Miriam Beard (American historian, archivist). The Tourism industry is a global phenomenon. It is big business and will continue to grow. Tourism is alive with dynamic growth, new activities, new destinations, new technology, new markets and rapid changes (Charles Goeldner & Brent Ritchie, 2006). Tourism is travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes. The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as people who “travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for more than twenty four (24) hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

Matheson and Wall (1982) created a good working definition of tourism as "the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs". According to Macintosh and Goeldner (1986) tourism is "the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business suppliers, host governments and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors" A Part from economic benefits, tourism encompasses social and cultural benefits as well. From social and cultural point of view, tourism develops interaction between cultural customs of the visitors and others of the host population. It promotes friendship, understanding and social interactions among different parts of the world. Realizing the importance of the tourism, all the countries in the world are promoting tourism.

Through its Ministry of Tourism, Indonesia promotes itself as a tourist destination in foreign countries with its "Pesona Indonesia" campaign. It is important for the government to invest in such promotional campaigns to spread a positive image of Indonesia as most western countries mostly receive negative headline stories from Indonesia (for example radical Islam, natural disasters such as a tsunami or massive volcanic eruptions), causing an undue negative image of the country. It is also important for authorities to build a magnetic brand for the country as a whole. While the island of Bali already has a strong brand that is widely known across the globe, Indonesia as a whole hasn't.

Through its Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Indonesia promotes itself as a tourist destination in foreign countries with its "Wonderful Indonesia" campaign. It is important for the government to invest in such promotional campaigns to spread a positive image of Indonesia as most western countries mostly receive negative headline stories from Indonesia (for example radical Islam, natural disasters such as a tsunami or massive volcanic eruptions), causing an undue negative image of the country. However, Bali and Jakarta have already seen a large influx of investment in recent years (especially in the upper end of the market) leading to excessive supply. Investors who want to establish hotels in these regions (as well as existing hotels) need to come up with original and creative new concepts to become market leaders.

In general, a hotel has two core departments that are essential for a hotel to operate. All other departments are "extras" or non-essential departments which a hotel could operate without. The two essential departments are the Housekeeping Department and Front Office Department. Front office members or Guest Service Agents go through a lot more training over their careers, compared to other departments. This is because they are the face of the hotel and hotels want to have their staff conveying their values and hotel concept to their

customers or the guest. Front office staff are also usually the ones to hear about guests problems first. Many are highly trained to combat or calm a guest down before referencing them to the right manager.

The writer has researched and found problems of Guest Service Agents in Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers from the data instruments. As a support service for foreign guests, Guest Service Agents as one part of Front Office Associates are indispensable to mastery in English language. Therefore, the role of mastery English is very supportive satisfy the guests. In order to avoid a miss communication between Guest Service Agents and the guests and also to improvement of service quality at the hotel, English speaking skill needs to be reviewed, and to know how the influence of speaking skills of guest service agents.

Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers is a five star (*****) Hotel in Bandung. It is located in the west of Bandung city especially Dago, close to the center of the tourism. It brings a resort concept, and comfort supported by many garden surrounded by the feel of the natural beauty of Bandung. Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers also an accommodation option by guests from foreign tourists, hence the English speaking skill is very important and very need by the Guest Service Agents dealing with the guests directly.

The writer choose the Guest Service Agents for her research object because it is the most important aspect who make a contact with the guest firstly. In this case, the writer is going to conduct a research about the correlation of English speaking skills of Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers.

1.2 Identification of Problems

Based on the background of the study, the writer identified three problems, those are:

- Guest Service Agents does not mastering many vocabularies so the explanation in their service information does not deliver well to guest.
- Test and examine speaking skills between GSA and the guest, in order to find out how skills level of Sheraton Hotel employees are.
- Identify what factors that make hotel employees can not master the English Language skills and to find out how and what effect the good and bad ability to speak by GSA especially speaking skills in English.

1.3 Research Question

1. How good is the GSA fluency of English speaking skill in explaining the information to the guest?
2. What factors that make the hotel's staff do not mastering the correct English?

1.4 Limitation of the Problems

Researchers limit the study of how speaking skills between Guest Service Agent of Sheraton Hotel and guest when on duty. In this paper the writer focus on learning about the effectiveness in using good and correct language in serving. Apply in the field at the time the employee is on duty, and the writer wants to know what the effect is if Guest Service Agent is not good at English speaking skills and why they do not master many vocabularies. Therefore, the writer further discuss matters related to the subject given in “The influence of speaking skill of Guest Service Agent in Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers.

1.5 Significances of the Study

The aim of this research is to provide benefits to employees and the image of the Sheraton Hotel itself and provide good benefits to prospective employees in other hotels.

For fellow employees:

1. Employees should be confident in Speaking English with the expertise of speaking in serving the guests.
2. Learning by doing and learn the vocabulary that will be used in serving guests. It will give more passion of the employee to continue to learn.

For guest:

1. Guests will assess how much English speaking skill level of Guest Service Agent.
3. The employee will learn how to speak level between guest and employee.

The main responsibility of a Guest Service Agent is to provide professional services in a courteous manner. He/she is responsible for efficient handling of the guests and to make sure that they check in and check out as per the rules and regulations. He/she has to make sure that the visitors remain satisfied with the services that are being offered, and also take feedback from their guests as to how their services can be improved. The points mentioned below will help you in giving a better and more idea as to what exactly are the key responsibilities that are being carried out by a guest service agent:

1. To greet and welcome the guests who are checking in, arrange for the collection and storage of their luggage
2. To pay close attention and carefully listen to the needs of the guests and attend to their special needs
3. If there are any issues, he/she is responsible for apologizing in an empathetic manner and then sorting out the problems in a calm and quiet manner

4. To keep a track of the current hotel accommodations and ensure that the hotel registration procedures are carried out appropriately
5. To promptly respond to the customer's inquiries and demands, and make arrangements for the subsequent services.