

# LANGUAGE FUNCTION AND EXPRESSION USED TO HANDLE COMMON GUEST'S COMPLAINTS BASED ON PROCEDURE IN DISCOVERY KARTIKA PLAZA HOTEL BY THE RECEPTIONIST

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**Abstract:** Guest Complaints should be handled appropriately by hotel reception staff using polite expressions in order to give satisfaction to hotel guests. This study investigates the language function and expression utilized by receptionists at Discovery Kartika Plaza Hotel in handling complaints based on established procedures. The data were gathered by interviewing three reception staff in the hotel using field-note. The gathered data were analyzed descriptively using theory proposed by Mhlanga (2011) for the types of complaint, and DeWitt and Brady (2003) for language function and expression. It is shown that there were three types of complaints, namely mechanical, attitudinal, and service-related complaints. It is also revealed that the reception staff followed the established procedure of the hotel, including empathetic listening, problem-solving, offering solutions, apologizing, reassurances, and follow-up actions are identified as essential components in handling guest complaints. A variety of language functions and expressions were employed by the reception staff.

**Keywords:** language function; language expression; handle complaints.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The front office department is responsible for communicating with all other departments in the hotel as well as different sections within the department. To get the front office and back office jobs done successfully, the front office staff members need to communicate with their peers as well as their colleagues and subordinates.

There are some essential job descriptions of front office staff in a hotel. According to [Questibrilia \(2019\)](#), front office staff have some responsibilities, there are 1) Receiving and handling prospective guests, 2) Reconfirming Reservation, 3) Handling arrival and departure, 4) Billing, 5) Asking for a deposit, 6) Giving information, 7) Handling complaint, 8) Handling guest belonging. Thus, we can see that one of them is handling guests' arrival. When the guests arrive at the hotel, many possibilities will happen at the front desk. It may be the guest want to ask for information about the hotel, checking the booking or the availability of accommodation, or the guest want to check-in. After making a reservation or booking in a hotel, the guest will choose an exact date when they will be coming. The time of guests' arrival is known as check-in date. The front office staff (receptionist) in this case have a responsibility to handle guest from arriving at the hotel until going to the room. Concerning check-in [Sambodo \(2016\)](#) state that check-in is the process for the guest who would like to stay in the hotel, start from welcoming, offer assistant till escorting to their room.

Within the department, the staff of the front office communicate with each other to provide the best possible guest services such as reserving accommodations, registering guests, managing guest accounts, handling guest email, and personalized guest services. The receptionist has a very important role and responsibility in a hotel because they are the first people who have direct contact with guests or what can be called the first and last impression of a hotel from guests, must have more knowledge and also look professional, therefore they are required to know all the information available to give an attractive and pleasant impression to guests. It is not only a place to provide information about the hotel but a receptionist is also the first person to serve, handle complaints, and provide solutions to all complaints reported by guests.

A complaint is an expression or form of dissatisfaction with guests when they come to a hotel which

may be informal, such as a verbal complaint, or usually in a formal written form. Complaints usually arise because the facilities we provide to guests are not good and usually complaints also come from the staff hotel not respecting. According to [Wijaya \(2016\)](#), Complaints are a means that can be used as a place to communicate between hotel staff and guests so that they can get feedback about guest dissatisfaction with the hotel. Complaints that guests give to the hotel cannot be ignored even though the complaints are not a big problem. Therefore, all complaints reported by guests must be immediately followed up with improvements or solutions to reduce disappointment that is given by guests and negative impressions from guests to the hotel. To create a professional attitude in handling complaints from guests, there are language expressions and procedures that must be used by a receptionist when handling guest complaints to make a better impression from guests to the hotel. The study identifies the language expression, type of guest complaint, and procedures used by receptionists for handling complaints. It is expected that it will assist a receptionist used to communicating when handling complaints and how to make guests not disappointed when reporting the complaints and hopefully, it will be useful for the reader to know how to handle complaints from the guest in the hospitality industry. This study is crucial as it provides valuable insights into effective communication strategies essential for maintaining guest satisfaction and loyalty. By understanding the specific language functions and expressions that receptionists use to address and resolve complaints, the hotel can refine its training programs, ensuring that staff are equipped with the best practices for managing conflicts and enhancing guest experiences. This research not only helps in identifying communication gaps but also contributes to the development of standardized procedures that can be implemented across the hospitality industry to improve service quality and customer relations.

## **2. METHOD**

The instrument used was a field note in interviewing the subjects. The interview designed to explore receptionists' experiences and strategies in handling complaints. The research instrument consists of semi-structured interviews by note. The data were gathered using a semi-structured interviews technique. An interview sheet for the receptionist outlines the questions or topics that the interviewer plans to cover during the interview. It serves as a guide to ensure that all relevant areas are addressed and allows for consistency across interviews. The interview is conducted once for each receptionist. To analyze the receptionists' responses effectively, the first step involves gathering all interview notes and transcripts. Once compiled, the data is organized either chronologically or by themes and topics to facilitate a systematic review. In this process, particular attention is paid to the similarities and differences in language expression among participants, highlighting any patterns or divergences in their experiences and perspectives. Finally, drawing from this comprehensive analysis, conclusions are described to provide insights into the receptionists' approaches to handling guest complaints.

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

To have a comprehended discussion, this part is divided into two main sections based on the findings found which are: complaint's type and procedure of speaking. From the three examples taken from the three receptionists, it can be seen that only one type of speaking was found which is dialogue. As it is stated by [Astuti, Ginaya, & Sadguna \(2018\)](#), one of the duties of the hotel receptionist is to assist the customer. While the guest asked for information about the kinds of hotel facilities, the way to make a room reservation, and the way to make a horse riding reservation, the students assisted the guest by giving specific explanations related to the needed information only in a short time. By choosing to use dialogue, the three receptionists were able to answer the guests' questions in an effective time. From the previous findings, it can be concluded that there was only one type of speaking which is dialogue used by the three receptionists while completing their duty hotel receptionists.

Speaking serves several crucial functions in communication. Firstly, it facilitates the exchange of information, allowing individuals to share knowledge, ideas, and experiences. Secondly, speaking plays a key role in expressing emotions and establishing personal relationships, enabling people to convey feelings and build social connections. Thirdly, it aids in persuading and influencing others, which is essential in various contexts such as leadership, sales, and advocacy. Lastly, speaking supports the organization and management of activities, as it helps in giving instructions, coordinating tasks, and ensuring collective efforts are aligned toward common goals.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings, several key points emerged regarding the types of complaints, procedures for handling complaints, and the language functions and expressions used at Discovery Kartika Plaza Hotel.

**Types of Guest Complaints:** Guests commonly lodged complaints about three main issues. These include discrepancies in room cleanliness, noise disturbances, and dissatisfaction with amenities or services provided. These complaints were significant factors affecting guest satisfaction and required prompt resolution.

**Procedure for Handling Complaints:** The hotel has established a standard operational procedure (SOP) for handling guest complaints. This SOP outlines specific steps to be followed by employees when addressing guest concerns. However, during the research, it was observed that adherence to these steps varied among staff members. While some staff strictly followed the SOP, others deviated from it. For instance, two staff members

diligently followed the SOP by promptly acknowledging the guest's complaint, apologizing sincerely, and offering appropriate solutions, such as room changes or complimentary amenities.

Language Functions and Expressions: Throughout the complaint handling process, staff utilized various language expressions to effectively address guest concerns. These expressions included phrases such as "We apologize for the inconvenience," "Thank you for bringing this to our attention," and "Your satisfaction is our priority." Additionally, staff employed language functions such as active listening, empathy, problem-solving, and reassurance to ensure guests felt valued and understood. These language functions played a crucial role in de-escalating situations, finding satisfactory solutions, and maintaining positive guest relations.

The research demonstrates the critical role of effective communication skills in managing guest complaints at the hotel. By utilizing language functions and expressions customized to address specific guest concerns, receptionists can effectively resolve complaints while upholding professionalism and enhancing guest satisfaction. Moreover, active listening skills are essential for receptionists to grasp the full scope of guest complaints, enabling them to provide appropriate solutions.

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