

The Identification of Language Functions and Expressions Used by Gift Shop Attendants in Lovina Bali Resort

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Abstract

This study entitled Identification of Language Functions and Expressions used by Gift Shop Attendants in Lovina Bali Resort. The purpose of this study is to know how Gift Shop attendants use their skills in communicating with customers during shopping. It also concerns to the utilize of the language functions and expressions used in various context of discourse. In identifying those language functions and expressions, the researcher involving Language Function Theory that is developed by Blundell (1987), Meta Function Theory (Halliday, 1994), as well as some of theories that relevant to this study. The researcher is using descriptive qualitative approach to collect the data in the form of words related to language functions and expressions. Data collection is done through observation and recording the interaction of Gift Shop attendant while serving the customers in various aspect of shopping experience. In this study, the researcher gets 2 Gift Shop attendants as subject of study, and after all data were collected and analysed, as the result obtained there are 9 language functions used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort, that are; describing product, telling for the price, informing availability, greeting customers, offering assistance, suggesting product, requesting payment, thanking the customers, and structuring conversation. The Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort mostly applied interpersonal function of language, as well as using directive expression when interacting with the customers.

Keywords: *Expressions, Language Functions, Shop Attendants.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent eras, the role of language has been essential for communication in tourism industry. Language includes conveying ideas, meanings, and contextual information (Halliday, 2000). The use of language is more crucial in the tourism industry because it provides communication service. People who work in tourism must pay attention to their language to create a good impression to the guest. From this statement, it leads to the ability to convey information or messages clearly and effectively. Based on the concept of functional linguistic by Michael (1978) stated that language is seen not just as grammar and vocabulary, but as a tool for communicating specific intentions in social context. In shopping environments, particularly in tourism areas, language plays a vital role in customer behaviour. The availability of information and service in a customer's native language can significantly enhances their shopping experience, as well as leading to increased satisfaction and spending. Therefore, to achieve this purpose, shop attendants must to master language skills, which can be supported by using the theory of language functions and language expressions. According to Pine and Gilmore's experience economy theory, he stated that in doing business should create memorable experience (M.Mehmetoglu, M.Engen, 2011) In this

case, Gift Shop can provide things to achieve that purpose by offering tangible symbols of intangible memories. Indirectly, this can make the guest enjoy the shopping experience within the resort.

Some experts purpose the theory of language functions and language expressions, Michael Halliday (1978) stated that language has evolved to serve three majors of functions, that are "Ideational (expressing ideas/context), Interpersonal (interacting with others), and Textual (organizing messages)". In this case, it explains that the function of language is not only for conveying information, but also for establishing social relationship (interpersonal) and organizing message structure (textual) to create a complete meaning. In shopping environment, language function has been critical in understanding how shop attendants interact with customers to fulfil their communicative needs. Blundell (1987), in his book entitled *Function in English*, he stated that language functions are the purposes for which people speak or write. In this book you will find some of the ways the English people use to express the various functions. So, under the function Greeting people, for example, you will see expressions like Good morning, Good afternoon, Hello!, Hi!, and under Saying goodbye you will find Bye- bye, See you and so on. Speech Act Theory which conducted by Searle (1969) was revealed about the use of languages, not just as simply words, but do actions to convey certain purposes. The act of using language is called language expression. There are parts of speech act that are "Directive and Expressive". Directive is used when the speaker wants the listener to do something / an action. The use of term directive speech act consists of activities such as requesting, commanding, questioning, and suggesting. Whereas, Expressive is a speech act in which the speaker expressed feeling and attitude about something, such as apologizing, thanking, congratulating, and complimenting.

Several studies have been conducted regarding the existence of the use of language functions and expressions in certain fields. Laia (2022) investigated about English language functions used by villa butlers. She found that there were some kinds of good expressions used by the butlers, and belonged to informal English. It was found for 10 language functions used in butler activities handling the guests. Other research in line with this topic, which was conducted by Setiadi (2024), about language function used by local drivers at Tanah Lot Area with passengers while having a conversation and found that drivers are able to express and use language functions related to the situation, but mostly do grammatical error. There are 6 language functions present in the interactions, and this study tends to discuss the formal and informal context of communication. Also, the same as the research from Arindrayana (2014) discussed about the kinds and uses of the English language functions that are communicated by the art shopkeepers of five art shops to their guests. There are 6 language functions and expressions found in this research. The context is similar to recent research about the English skills used by art shopkeepers in conversation with guests. Then, Indraswari (2014) also has a similar topic which is about English used by Art shop Attendants in the Kuta Area and found 8 language functions appear in their conversation with the tourists. This study focused on the use of English in real life by certain people, concerns with their functions and formality of the expressions used by the art shop attendants.

From the above studies, most of them were conducting the use of language functions and expressions for various purposes referring to the field of the tourism industry such as Villa attendants, art shop attendants, tour drivers, etc. However, there are only few studies

discuss about language functions and expressions in shop environment regarding different context of discourse, as well as the similar studies have never been conducted in the Gift Shop at Lovina Bali Resort. So, in this case, the researcher has a chance to fill this gap by identifying the language functions and expressions used by attendants to interact with customers in the Gift Shop. As people who works in hospitality, there will be many utterances used in the interaction. Therefore, there must be certain language functions involved in their interaction.

METHOD

The present research implements for qualitative descriptive as research design to observe and describe the language functions and expressions used by Gift Shop attendants. The subject of this study is two Gift Shop Attendants in Lovina Bali Resort that willingness to be observed in their job. The data consist of individual opinion obtained through observations and recording the interaction between Gift Shop attendants and the customers. Observation was done when the Gift Shop attendants performing their duties in handling customers shopping from welcoming to closing. The researcher will listen and take a note on spoken expressions focusing on their function and discourse context. After that, identify all expressions that related to meta function of language. Recording is used to facilitate data collection. Before recording, the researcher asking for permission to Gift Shop attendant and manager for make a record of conversations during interactions between the Gift Shop attendant and customers. This purposed in confirming precision when transcribing and examining the data.

The data collected through observation and recording method, will analyze descriptively. Data from observation was analyzed by identifying what are language functions and language expressions commonly used by Gift Shop attendants. Then, list all of information as data gained in the tables that already provided according to its classification. As supporting data, the recording results will be transcribed verbatim all recorded conversations into form of written text. The last step is the researcher will interpret all the findings based on the research purposes and literature review. Then, the researcher will make a description of the tabulated data that has been collected and describe it in detail.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result of this study indicate that based on the context of discourse there are some of language functions and expressions employ by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort while handling customers. The following is the result of the observation that has been done by the researcher directly to Gift Shop in Lovina Bali Resort.

Language Functions used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort

After the data were collected, the researcher found several language functions used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort, regarding to theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as proposed by Halliday (1978). The data were categorizing into three meta functions of language (Ideational, Interpersonal, and Textual), The following table is containing of several language function founded.

Table 1. Language functions commonly used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort

No	Language Functions
Ideational	
1.	Describing Product
2.	Telling for the Price
3.	Informing Availability
Interpersonal	
4.	Greeting Customers
5.	Offering Assistance
6.	Suggesting Product
7.	Requesting Payment
8.	Thanking the customers
Textual	
9.	Structuring Conversation

Based on the table 1, the researcher found for 9 language functions commonly used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort.

1. Ideational

The use of ideational function can be like giving statements, descriptions, explanations.

A. Describing Product

In shopping environment, both of Gift Shop attendants have been able to describing a product to the customers in a good way. Sometimes customers also ask for the materials of the product was made. Whether the ingredients of the product, types of fabric, etc. So, it aims to make the product has label and can be used to make customers well understood about what kind of product that they will buy with specific material that they are interested in.

B. Telling for the Price

A great description and explanation of the product will use to upselling the product. Herewith, Gift Shop attendants able to tell the price of the product followed by adjectives that aim to promote the product.

C. Informing Availability

This function aims to giving information about availability of the product to meets customer need. The customers will inquiry for other sizes, other colours, more quantity, etc.

2. Interpersonal

D. Greeting Customers

First important thing when welcoming customers is giving a warm greeting. The greeting from the Gift Shop attendant will be the face of the shop as well as the first experience for customers when entering the Gift Shop.

E. Offering Assistance

Next step after welcoming the customers, then Gift Shop attendant will be offering assistance in terms of helping them to looking for something they want to buy. It will be appreciated because can make the customers feel well-serve during their shopping experience.

F. Suggesting Product

Some of customers need someone to give advice or recommendations on which product is suitable for them or which is the best. To fulfil their needs Gift Shop attendant one who can help with. There may be a comparison between a product with another products, telling for high quality of the products, or even give any advice which one looks beautiful to the customers.

G. Requesting Payment

After finishing selecting the items that the customer is interested in, then all the items must be paid for. They will go to cashier, and Gift Shop attendant will collect the payment directly from the customers. Herewith, there are 3 types of payment that provided, either by cash, credit card, or charge to the room bill. So, Gift Shop attendant also must to asking customers to fill in the name of guest, room number, and signature on the bill that has been created.

H. Thanking the customers

The function of greeting plays the same role as the function of thanking the customers. Gift Shop attendant will farewell with give some of magic word to the customers with the aim of making customers feel happy and very welcome to come back again, as well as really appreciate customers who have shopped at the Gift Shop.

3. Textual

I. Structuring Conversation

In this function aims to organize messages to be coherent based on a certain context. It will guide the development of the topic clearly, either by using conjunction, cohesion, or adding sequence

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Table 2. Language expressions commonly used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort

No	Language Expressions
Ideational	
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This coconut oil has essential smell that produced by local people. (1) - It is made from premium shell, so it looks like luxury & high value. (1) - This bag is handmade which is crafted by Balinese people. (1) - This is barong ashtray, barong is really iconic in Bali, it's like culture in Bali. (1) - This post card featuring culture of Bali, such as temples, barong, etc. (2) - This is we call "Kamen", in Bali people wear Kamen for pray to the God or go to the temple. (2)
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It will be cost at 150.000 rupiah per pcs. (1), (2) - The price of this bag is 850.000 rupiah. (1) - If you buy two, I will give you special price at 250.000 rupiah. (2) - Rp 120.000 is the fixed price for this item. (1)

3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After I checked, there are 2 more size L. (1) - Wait a minute, I'll check first for the other sizes... Oh sorry, the other sizes are out of stock. (2) - Yes, we have size double XL. Please wait a moment, I will get it for you. (2) - You're very lucky, because we have 1 left in size M. (1)
Interpersonal	
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hello, Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening, welcome to Gift Shop (1), (2) - How are you Sir/Madam? (1), (2) - How was your day Sir/Madam? It's nice to meet you. (2)
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can I help you? (1), (2) - How may I assist you? (1), (2) - What are you looking for? Let me show you the best seller items here. (2) - Do you need any help? (carry the selecting dress/souvenirs) (1), (2) - Do you want me to wrap it? (to protect purchased items) (1)
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As your need, we have these items that have great value and suitable to present as a gift. (2) - This is a limited-edition item, you can grab it now before it runs out of stock (1) - I recommend you for choose big size for the coconut oil. (1) - You can choose that one for your girlfriends, it's can make she happy. (2) - For this incense, if you like soft scent, you can choose frangipani, but if you like a strong scent, you can choose lemongrass. (1)
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anything else, Sir/Madam? (1), (2) - Would you like pay by cash, credit card or charge to the room? (1), (2) - Do you have small money for payment? (1) - You can charge to the room, if you not bring cash/credit card right now. (2) - Can I have your name, room number, and signature on this bill, please? (1), (2)
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thank you so much for coming to Gift Shop. (1) - Thank you, sir/madam. I hope you will come again to our Gift Shop later. (2) - Thank you, have a nice day. (1), (2) - If you need something again in further, just come to Gift Shop, thank you (1)
Textual	
9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First, you can see the items in this display, then we move to the other side. (1) - We need your sign here, then you will find this bill when you check out. (1) - As you can see, this bag is actually fake, but it still has premium quality. (2)

Based on the table 2, the language expressions commonly used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort, and as the number exist, (1) is for first respondent, (2) is for second respondent. Then, it will describe as follows;

According to the meta function theory, the researcher divides language expressions into 3 parts (ideational, interpersonal, and textual). First point is Ideational, there is language expression use in describing products, it depends on the product and the context, respondent 1 and 2 usually explain using their own words and ideas, for example "This coconut oil has essential smell that produced by local people", "It is made from premium shell, so it looks like luxury & high value", "This bag is handmade which is crafted by Balinese people",

"This is barong ashtray, barong is really iconic in Bali, it's like culture in Bali", "This post card featuring culture of Bali, such as temples, barong, and so on", "This is we call "Kamen", in Bali people wear Kamen for pray to the God or go to the temple". These expressions will use to give any information when the customer asking for more details, functions, meaning, culture, etc. Regarding to types of speech act, these expressions is belonging to representative, because the Gift Shop attendants as a speaker give their statement about true information, and facts of the product.

Then, next language expressions using in telling for the price, for instance "It will be cost at 150.000 rupiah per pcs", "The price of this bag is 850.000 rupiah", "If you buy two, I will give you special price at 250.000 rupiah", "Rp 120.000 is the fixed price for this item". Both respondents used these utterances to inform the price, when the customer was already interested in the product. These expressions also classified to representative or assertive speech act, because the price is as true information which tell to the customers.

There are also language expressions in informing availability, such as "After I checked, there are 2 more size L", "Wait a minute, I'll check first for the other sizes... Oh sorry, the other sizes are out of stock", "Yes, we have size double XL. Please wait a moment, I will get it for you", "You're very lucky, because we have 1 left in size M". Respondent 1 and 2 are using these expressions to tell the availability of the items, so Gift Shop attendant able to explain clearly the exist or not an item to the customers. From these expressions, the Gift Shop attendants also provided factual information about the availability, so it also falls into the representative speech act.

The second point is interpersonal function; there will be some of expressions used by Gift Shop attendants. For instance, language expressions in greeting the customers, "Hello, Good Morning/Afternoon/Evening, welcome to Gift Shop", "How are you Sir/Madam?", "How was your day Sir/Madam? It's nice to meet you". These expressions employ by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort with aim to generate a friendly and welcoming atmosphere for customers when they first come to the Gift Shop. So, when the speaker or Gift Shop attendant gives a greeting, it expresses their feeling in welcoming the customers, then it belongs into expressive speech act.

Next, there is language expression in offering assistance. Both respondents the following expressions, "How can I help you?", "How may I assist you?", "What are you looking for? Let me show you the best seller items here", "Do you need any help?" It refers to the action of a shop attendant concern to customers to carry the selecting dress/souvenirs, "Do you want me to wrap it? it is an act of offering assistance to protect the purchased items. All of that utterance, applied by Gift Shop attendants to showing the willingness to help the customers while shopping. When Gift Shop attendants offering assistance directly to the customers, it should be asking the customers to answer the speaker. The speech act that related to this function is Directives.

The next one is language expressions in suggesting products, e.g. "As your need, we have these items that have great value and suitable to present as a gift", "This is a limited-edition item, you can grab it now before it runs out of stock", "I recommend you for choose big size for the coconut oil", "You can choose that one for your girlfriends, it's can make she happy", "For this incense, if you like soft scent, you can choose frangipani, but if you like a strong scent, you can choose lemongrass". These expressions will use also depend on the context. For instance, respondent 1 and 2 answered the inquiry of suitable items that match

the customer's needs, also helps the customers solve their confusion in selecting products. This function is belonging to Directive speech act, because the customers will do something, like thinking and selecting which one is better items after suggested by the Gift Shop attendant.

There is language expressions use in requesting payment. Both respondents showed these expressions after customer has finished shopping and would like to make payment at the cashier, for examples, "Anything else, Sir/Madam?", "Would you like pay by cash, credit card or charge to the room?", "Do you have small money for payment?", "You can charge to the room, if you not bring cash money/credit card right now", "Can I have your name, room number, and signature on this bill, please?". So, these expressions will help to explain to customers what information we need to complete the payment process, and also ask what payment method will use by the customers. This function also falls into Directive speech act, ask the customers to do something. In making payment there are some activities applied, such as ask the customers to give a credit card, make a sign in the bill, etc.

The next is language expressions in thanking the customers. Some of expression used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort, as follow; "Thank you so much for coming to Gift Shop", "Thank you, sir/madam. I hope you will come again to our Gift Shop later", "Thank you, have a nice day", "If you need something again in further, just come to Gift Shop, thank you". Same as the expressions of greeting, the expression of thanking the customers will use when all shopping activities have been finished, and still generate a friendly atmosphere to make a good impression on customers, as well as adding an invitation to come back. These expressions showed some feeling from the speaker or the listener. So, one of relatable speech act is Expressive.

The third point is textual function. It refers to the coherent of the sentence use in language expressions. One of them is the language expression in structuring conversation, in order to connecting ideas/concepts, assisting the customers in making selections of the products, and making sure the conversation is coherent and easy to understand, both respondents involved several things, adding conjunction and sequence, for examples, "First, you can see the items in this display, then we move to the other side", "We need your sign here, then you will find this bill when you check out", "As you can see, this bag is actually fake, but it still has premium quality".

CONCLUSION

Regarding the identification of language functions and language expressions used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort, as the results of this study, it could be concluded that, there are several language functions and language expressions that commonly used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort, which are describing product, telling for the price, informing availability, greeting customers, offering assistance, suggesting product, requesting payment, thanking the customers, and structuring conversation. (9 language functions founded). Then, several language expressions which already mentioned by each language functions in table 2 above. These are important things that shop attendants must understand and remember, in order to create a lively and welcoming atmosphere when handling customers. Gift Shop attendants as respondents are really willing to give a space for researcher to observe their job while handling customers. After doing observation with two Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort, the researcher conclude that respondent 2 has

more expressive feeling and confidential while interact to the guest, than respondent 1. Also, in explaining product to the customers, respondent 2 able to provide more sufficient knowledge rather than respondent 1. In terms of grammatical, both of them use informal / casual language interact with customers in handling shopping activities.

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