

## THE ROLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS FOR WAITERS IN IMPROVING SERVICE QUALITY AT COMPASS ROSE RESTAURANT THE ANMON RESORT BINTAN

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### ABSTRACT

This research examines the role of English language skills among waiters in enhancing service quality at the Compass Rose Restaurant of The ANMON Resort Bintan. As an international language, English plays a vital role in the hospitality industry, especially in interactions between waiters and foreign guests. This study aims to analyze the English proficiency levels of waiters, identify its impact on service quality, and propose recommendations for service improvement. The research employs a qualitative approach through direct observation and in-depth interviews. Informants include one food and beverage manager, one supervisor, ten waiters, and six restaurant guests, selected to provide comprehensive data. Findings reveal that the English-speaking skills of waiters are still suboptimal, particularly in speaking, leading to miscommunications during food and beverage orders. These misunderstandings often result in incorrect orders and guest complaints, which significantly affect guest satisfaction and overall service quality. The study recommends a consistent and structured English language training program under the supervision of the food and beverage manager. The program should focus on practical communication skills relevant to restaurant service tasks. Implementation of this recommendation is expected to improve service quality and create a more satisfying dining experience for guests at Compass Rose Restaurant.

**Keywords:** English language skills, service quality, restaurant, hotel

## INTRODUCTION

English has emerged as the predominant international language, serving as a vital tool for communication across various sectors, including hospitality and tourism. The ability to communicate effectively in English is not merely an asset but a necessity for professionals in the hospitality industry, particularly for waitstaff or waiters, who interact directly with guests from diverse backgrounds. This study focuses on the role of English language proficiency among waiters in enhancing service quality at Compass Rose Restaurant, located within The ANMON Resort Bintan.

The hospitality sector is characterized by its dynamic nature, where customer satisfaction is paramount. Effective communication is a cornerstone of quality service, as it directly influences guests' experiences and perceptions. However, observations at Compass Rose Restaurant indicate that many waiters struggle with English proficiency, particularly in speaking and listening skills. This deficiency often leads to misunderstandings and complaints from guests, ultimately affecting their overall satisfaction and the restaurant's reputation.

This research aims to investigate the current level of English language skills among waiters at Compass Rose Restaurant and assess how these skills impact service quality. By employing qualitative research methods, including direct observations and interviews with restaurant staff and guests, this study seeks to provide insights into the challenges faced by waiters in their communication with international guests. Furthermore, it will explore potential strategies for improving English language training and support within the restaurant, thereby enhancing the quality of service provided.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on language proficiency in the

hospitality industry and offer practical recommendations for restaurant management. Ultimately, the goal is to foster a more effective communication environment that not only meets the needs of international guests but also elevates the overall service standards within the hospitality sector.

Service quality is an intangible action that can be perceived by guests. It is reflected through the service received in fulfilling guests' expectations and desires. In the hospitality industry, service quality is crucial and must be delivered with good attitude, effective communication, attentiveness to guests' needs, responsibility in handling complaints, and prompt service. Feedback and comments, whether shared directly or through platforms like Google Reviews or TripAdvisor, or shown by repeat visits, indicate the quality of service provided.

A restaurant is a commercial establishment providing food and beverage services to meet guest needs and ensure satisfaction. To maintain and enhance service quality, effective and fluent communication, especially in English, is essential.

Based on research at The ANMON Resort Bintan, many waiters still struggle to communicate fluently in English due to limited vocabulary and poor pronunciation. This hinders upselling and product explanation to guests, resulting in frequent complaints due to order misunderstandings. For example, a guest requesting fries might receive rice instead, due to poor listening and pronunciation skills. Therefore, mastering English is essential for waiters to communicate effectively with international guests.

According to (Putri, 2018), four key aspects are important in improving English proficiency:

- a) Speaking: Communicating ideas clearly. Practice methods include speaking to oneself in the mirror or recording speech for pronunciation review.

- b) Listening: Actively understanding spoken information. Practice through English songs, movies without subtitles, and podcasts.
- c) Reading: Understanding written messages. Practice through reading English books, novels, or news.
- d) Writing: Communicating in written form. Practice by writing daily plans or activities in English to retain vocabulary.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study aims to present the English language proficiency of waiters in communicating with guests at Compass Rose Restaurant, The ANMON Resort Bintan.

## RESEARCH METHOD

A qualitative method was used, allowing exploration of multiple perspectives and detailed information through observation and interviews.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by waiters at Compass Rose Restaurant in terms of English language proficiency and its implications for service quality. Research findings indicate that the English proficiency of waiters remains insufficient across four key aspects:

- a) Speaking: Waiters often struggle to express ideas when recommending food or explaining ingredients. This creates misunderstandings and diminishes guest trust. Many fail to engage in small talk that enhances guest experience. Common incorrect questions:
  - "You like stay at The ANMON or not?"
  - "Your first time come to Bintan, you like Bintan or not?"
  - "For the food and drink, you like it or not enough?"

Correct versions:

- "How is your experience while staying at The ANMON Resort Bintan?"
- "Is this your first time in Bintan? What do you think about it?"
- "What do you think of our food and drinks? Are they good or would you prefer something different?"
- b) Listening: Many complaints arise due to poor listening, such as mishearing "fries" as "rice." Example:
  - Guest: "I want grilled salmon with tartar sauce. For side dish, what do you have?"
  - Waitress: "We have mashed potato and fries."
  - Guest: "I want rice, is that okay?"
  - Waitress mishears and delivers fries.
- c) Reading: Most room service or BBQ in tent orders come via WhatsApp. Waiters must understand messages clearly. While comprehension is decent, they often reconfirm to avoid errors.

Example:

- Guest: "One nasi goreng with extra sambal and chili padi."
- Waitress: "Do you want them mixed in or served on the side?"
- d) Writing: Waiters are generally good at writing orders in WhatsApp, particularly for BBQ in tent menus. They must list included items, drink options, and side dishes accurately.

Example: Guest: "I want Set A and Set B. What is included?"

Waitress replies with a detailed list of items and drink choices.

Based on the above discussion that English in the hospitality industry can have an impact on guest experience, here is the explanation:

1. Significance of english language proficiency in hospitality

The hospitality industry is inherently customer-centric, where effective communication is crucial for meeting guest expectations. English, being the international lingua franca, serves as a bridge between waiters and guests from diverse linguistic

backgrounds. The study highlights that waiters with limited English proficiency struggle to convey information accurately, leading to misunderstandings regarding menu items, special requests, and service expectations. This situation not only hampers the waiters ability to perform their duties effectively but also diminishes the overall guest experience.

## 2. Impact on Guest Satisfaction

The correlation between language proficiency and guest satisfaction is evident in the study's findings. Instances of miscommunication, such as incorrect orders or failure to address guest inquiries, have resulted in complaints and dissatisfaction. Guests expect a seamless dining experience, and any breakdown in communication can lead to frustration and a negative perception of the restaurant. This underscores the importance of investing in language training for waiters, as improved communication skills can enhance guest interactions, foster positive relationships, and ultimately lead to repeat business.

## 3. Training and Development Strategies

The study emphasizes the need for structured English language training programs tailored specifically for waiters. Such programs should focus on practical communication skills, including speaking and listening exercises that simulate real-life scenarios encountered in the restaurant setting. Incorporating role-playing, interactive workshops, and regular practice sessions can help waiters build confidence in their language abilities. Additionally, ongoing assessments and feedback mechanisms can ensure that training remains relevant and effective.

## 4. Management's Role in Supporting Language Development

The role of the food and beverage manager is critical in facilitating language training and creating a supportive environment for waiters. Management should

prioritize language proficiency as a key competency in hiring and training processes. By fostering a culture that encourages the use of English in daily operations, management can help waiters feel more comfortable and motivated to practice their language skills. Furthermore, recognizing and rewarding improvements in language proficiency can serve as an incentive for waiters to engage actively in their development.

## CONCLUSION

The study on the role of English language proficiency among waiters at Compass Rose Restaurant, The ANMON Resort Bintan, reveals several critical insights regarding the impact of language skills on service quality. The findings indicate that while the waiters demonstrate adequate abilities in reading and writing, their speaking and listening skills remain significantly underdeveloped. This deficiency has led to communication barriers that result in misunderstandings and complaints from guests, ultimately affecting their satisfaction levels.

The ability to communicate effectively in English is essential for waiters, as it directly influences their capacity to provide quality service to international guests. The lack of proficiency in speaking and listening has been identified as a major obstacle in delivering satisfactory customer experiences.

The study highlights a correlation between the waiters language skills and guest satisfaction. Instances of miscommunication have led to dissatisfaction among guests, emphasizing the need for improved language training.

The research underscores the necessity for consistent and structured English language training programs tailored for waiters. Such training should focus on enhancing speaking and listening skills to facilitate better communication with guests.

The food and beverage manager plays a pivotal role in implementing training initiatives and fostering an environment that encourages the use of English in daily operations. This managerial support is crucial for improving the overall service quality at the restaurant.

In summary, enhancing English language proficiency among waiters is vital for improving service quality and guest satisfaction at Compass Rose Restaurant. The study advocates for ongoing training and development efforts to equip waiters with the necessary language skills, thereby ensuring a more effective and enjoyable dining experience for international guests. Future research could explore the long-term effects of such training on service quality and guest loyalty in the hospitality industry.

English language proficiency among waiters at Compass Rose Restaurant is still lacking due to limited practice and experience. Enhancing their English skills is essential for improving service quality and guest satisfaction.

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