Mastering the Language of Service: English Communication Skills for Food and Beverage Professionals

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Abstract
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This article aims into the crucial role of English language skills in the industry, emphasizing the need for professionals to master communication for enhanced customer experiences and career advancement. English communication skills are vital for career advancement. As professionals in the food and beverage industry aim to move up the ladder, whether it be from waiter or from line cook to sous chef, the ability to effectively communicate becomes increasingly important. Strong English skills allow professionals to confidently interact with senior management, participate in important meetings, and articulate their ideas and concerns. This not only enhances their chances for promotion but also positions them as valuable assets to their employers. This research is descriptive qualitative research. 15 Competence units, 46 elements of competence were found in this research.

Keywords: Language of Service, English Communication, Skills, Food and Beverage, Professionals

INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic world of food and beverage services, effective communication is a cornerstone of success. This article delves into the crucial role of English language skills in the industry, emphasizing the need for professionals to master communication for enhanced customer experiences and career advancement. In the fast-paced and ever-
evolving world of food and beverage services, one thing remains constant the importance of effective communication. Whether you're a waiter attending to customers in a fine dining establishment, a bartender crafting cocktails at a bustling bar, or a chef leading a team in a bustling kitchen, the ability to effectively communicate in English is a vital skill that can make or break your success in the industry.

Why is mastering the language of service so crucial for food and beverage professionals? One of the primary reasons is the diverse nature of customers and coworkers in the industry. Customers from all over the world flock to restaurants and bars, and having a strong command of English allows professionals to comfortably serve a wide range of clientele. From taking orders and explaining menu items to handling complaints and offering recommendations, clear and concise communication is essential for providing outstanding customer experiences.

Moreover, English communication skills are vital for career advancement. As professionals in the food and beverage industry aim to move up the ladder, whether it be from waiter or from line cook to sous chef, the ability to effectively communicate becomes increasingly important. Strong English skills allow professionals to confidently interact with senior management, participate in important meetings, and articulate their ideas and concerns. This not only enhances their chances for promotion but also positions them as valuable assets to their employers.

So, how can food and beverage professionals master the language of service? Well, the first step is dedication and a genuine interest in improving English skills. Professionals should invest time and effort in language classes or online resources to enhance their vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. By immersing themselves in the language and continuously practicing, they can sharpen their skills and improve their ability to communicate effectively.

In addition to formal language learning, professionals should also take advantage of opportunities for real-life practice. Engaging in conversations with English-speaking coworkers, watching movies or TV shows in English, and reading books or articles in the language are all valuable ways to expand vocabulary and improve understanding of idioms and expressions commonly used in the food and beverage industry.

Being a master of the language of service also requires professionals to develop strong listening skills. Understanding customer needs and preferences is vital for providing exceptional service, and actively listening to customers' requests and feedback is crucial. By practicing active listening, professionals can ensure they accurately comprehend each
customer’s desires and tailor their responses accordingly. Furthermore, body language and non-verbal communication play a significant role in the food and beverage industry. Professionals should pay close attention to their gestures, facial expressions, and posture, as these elements can greatly enhance or hinder communication. A warm smile, a nod of understanding, or a confident stance can help establish rapport and effectively convey messages to customers and coworkers alike.

Lastly, professionals should not be afraid to seek feedback and guidance from experienced colleagues or mentors. Learning from those who have mastered the language of service can provide valuable insights and tips for improvement. By adopting a humble and open-minded attitude, professionals can continue to refine their English communication skills throughout their careers. In the fast-paced and ever-evolving field of food and beverage services, effective communication is undeniably a cornerstone of success. The ability to accurately convey one’s thoughts and ideas in an articulate and professional manner is paramount in ensuring the smooth operation of any establishment. In particular, for individuals working in this industry, mastering the English language can be the key to unlocking boundless opportunities for career advancement and providing exceptional customer experiences.

The hospitality industry is known for its diverse and multicultural clientele. From tourists to locals, customers hail from all corners of the globe, each with their unique language and cultural background. Therefore, English facilitating efficient and seamless interactions among food and beverage professionals and their customers. Effective English communication skills enable food and beverage professionals to understand their customers’ needs and preferences with greater precision. Whether it’s taking orders, suggesting menu options, or addressing any concerns or dietary restrictions, proficiency in English allows professionals to cater to a wider range of clientele. This not only enhances customer satisfaction but also contributes to the overall reputation and success of an establishment.

Moreover, mastering the language of service goes beyond simply understanding and responding to customers’ requests. Clear and concise communication also plays a pivotal role within the team of food and beverage professionals themselves. From the kitchen staff to the front-of-house team, effective English communication fosters seamless coordination and collaboration. This ensures that orders are executed precisely, tables are served promptly, and any potential issues are swiftly resolved.
Proficiency in English also opens doors to career advancement and professional development within the food and beverage industry. Multinational companies often seek individuals with excellent English communication skills for managerial positions, as these professionals are capable of effectively communicating with diverse teams and stakeholders. Furthermore, mastery of the English language can lead to exciting opportunities abroad in countries where English is the dominant language.

Fortunately, there are numerous ways for food and beverage professionals to enhance their English communication skills. Engaging in language courses or workshops specific to the industry can prove immensely beneficial. Additionally, reading relevant literature, watching educational videos, and practicing with native speakers are all effective methods to gain confidence and proficiency in English.

It is important to note that mastering the language of service is an ongoing process. Language is fluid and constantly evolving, and it is essential for professionals to remain up-to-date with the latest industry terminology and customer preferences. This can be achieved through continuous learning and engagement with colleagues and customers alike.

1. The Importance of English Communication in F&B, (a) Customer Interaction, Understanding the diverse needs and preferences of customers is vital for F&B professionals. Strong English communication skills empower servers, chefs, and staff to provide personalized and exceptional service. (b) Team Collaboration, Effective communication within the team ensures seamless operations. From the kitchen to the front of the house, clear and concise English communication fosters collaboration and boosts overall efficiency.

2. English Language Essentials for F&B Professionals, (a) Vocabulary and Terminology, Explore the specific vocabulary and terminology relevant to food and beverage services. From menu items to culinary techniques, mastering industry-specific language enhances communication accuracy. (b) Politeness and Etiquette, Examine the importance of politeness and etiquette in customer interactions. A polite and well-spoken staff creates a positive and welcoming environment, influencing customer satisfaction. (c) Listening and Comprehension Skills, Highlight the significance of active listening and comprehension in F&B settings. Professionals need to accurately interpret customer orders and requests to ensure a seamless dining experience.

3. Overcoming Language Barriers, (a) Multicultural Customer Base, Discuss strategies for overcoming language barriers in a multicultural customer environment. Training staff to handle diverse linguistic challenges contributes to customer satisfaction and loyalty. (b)
Employee Training Programs, Explore the implementation of language training programs for F&B staff. Investing in language proficiency not only improves customer service but also enhances the career prospects of employees.

4. Real-life Applications and Success Stories, (a) Case Studies, Share real-life examples of how improved English communication skills have positively impacted F&B establishments. Highlight success stories, emphasizing the direct correlation between language mastery and business success. (b) Testimonials from Professionals, Include testimonials from industry professionals who have experienced the benefits of enhanced English communication skills. Personal narratives add credibility and inspire others to invest in language improvement.

Besides, as a tourist destination, English also needs to be considered to support the success of communication with foreign tourists, English is an essential aspect of communication. English exists as a global language. Therefore English is widely regarded as a global language (Anggayana et al., 2016). It is even known as an international language (Asriyani et al., 2019a). English is an example of a language regarded as a foreign language in Indonesia (Anggayana, 2023). It is done to minimize errors in grammar or English grammar aspects, such as the use of tenses in sentences (Lindawati et al., 2018).

The skills and components of the language contained in them are still general and less relevant to the needs of student (Sudipa et al., 2020). Grammar is a set of rules contained in certain languages (Lindawati et al., 2018b). It is possible to develop their communicative competence in four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Asriyani et al., 2019b). The primary energy source in terms of language sounds is the presence of air through the lungs (Anggayana et al., 2021). Languages studied can contribute to the Language Development and another researcher around the world (Anggayana et al., 2020). Even though Indonesia consists of various dialects, it is not an obstacle (Anggayana et al., 2013).

Speaking English has become a conversation that is often done by foreign tourists (Anggayana et al., 2019). In these services, facilities, and service quality spearhead in terms of giving a good impression of service (Anggayana & Sari, 2017). Produces rules relating to the use and use of language on hospitality students. It uses theories and other disciplines related to the use of language is essential (Anggayana, 2022b). In the cultural tourism industry is included (Redianis et al., 2019). Since Balinese people conduct many cultural
and religious activities (Budasi et al., 2021). The tourism sector can provide economic, social and cultural benefits for all stakeholders of tourism stakeholders (Osin et al., 2019).

One of the developments in tourism is to open opportunities for the millennial generations to conduct tourism in tourism village synergizing different parties, namely, the community and the Government (Osin et al., 2021). Observing the growth and development of world tourism which continues to move dynamically and the tendency of tourists to travel in various different patterns is an opportunity as well as a challenge for all destinations (Suarthana et al., 2020). It is not surprising that the tourism industry is an important economic sector, where most people work in the tourism industry (Budasi & Anggayana, 2019). Bali is the center of tourism in Indonesia and one of the world’s leading tourist destinations (Yanti & Anggayana, 2023).

Many language expressions can be used to greet and offer help to the customers. In using those expressions, choosing the proper expression that suits the situation and the degree of the formality is essential (Anggayana, 2022a). The interests of tourism began to explore the potential of the region and as much as possible to package it into alternative tourism products (Suryawati et al., 2021). The existence of the tourism industry today has increased significantly both in quantity and quality, which is able to make an economic contribution to the country’s foreign exchange (Osin et al., 2020). Everyday hospitality students on campus attend lectures and practice according to their respective majors. There are still many found that errors in writing. This is very important to study, considering that hospitality students will often communicate with foreign guests, using English (Anggayana & Wartana, 2022). Technology in this era is increasingly growing, advanced and modern. This requires the existence of quality human resources. Qualified humans are expected to be able to participate in the development of a country (Sengkey et al., 2022).

**METHOD**

This research is descriptive qualitative research. Braun & Clarke state that qualitative research is about the application of qualitative techniques within a qualitative paradigm including words (written and spoken language) used as data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). It also seeks to understand and interpret more meanings which richly descriptive. This research use document. Gomez-Galan states that a document might be textual content, a visual
representation, or an item (Gomez-Galan, 2016). Official educational reports, circular letters, personal papers, internet documents, books, images, videos, and any other mechanism that gives information on the study subject are examples of documents. This study were in the form of Research and Development. Sugiyono’s research and development methodology was used in this research (Sugiyono, 2013). As stated by Sugiyono Research and Development research is a research method that is used to create a product and test efficacy of the product.

The steps of using Research and Development are as follows: (1) potential and problem, (2) data collection, (3) product design, (4) design validation, (5) design revision, (6) product testing, (7) product revision, (8) empirical testing, (9) product revision, and (10) massive production (Sugiyono, 2013). During the first step, potential and problems are identified. After that, data is collected. Based on the obtained data, the product is designed. When it has been finished, the product is validated. Then, it is revised and tested. After product testing, revision is again done. The revised product is then empirically tested. When the empirical testing has been carried out, final product revision is done. Finally, the final product can be produced massively and used. The document used in this research is taken from the twenty students of Indonesian Hospitality Management Community Academy to find out from an educational perspective the appropriate Materials for Food and Beverage Professionals.

Techniques of Need Analysis, Robinson further explains that there are several techniques that can be done in order to carry out a need analysis (Robinson, 1991). The techniques can be seen as follows:

a) Questionnaire, Questionnaire can be used to collect data for both TSA and PSA. The strength of using questionnaire is that it can be easily used to analyze a large number of people but it may be a disadvantage when nor many people are willing to fill in the questionnaires given to them.

b) Interview, Interview enables researcher to record the respondents’ answers and explanation and provide them with linguistic clarification when they do not understand the questions.

c) Observation, The result of observation is used to supplement the result of questionnaires and interviews. During observation, data related with successful target-level behavior and students’ present performance. Researcher can also take note on job duties, the details of the environment, and the nature of spoken interaction taking place in relation to the occupation that needs English as medium of communication.
d) Case studies, In case study, one individual is researched in a period of time. Case study can identify difficult linguistic features and also provide information to support a process-oriented definition of needs.

e) Test, Test carried out to the students can reveal which they are capable of doing or performing and where their deficiencies lie. Test allows researcher to accurately measure the students’ initial level of ability.

f) Authentic data collection, This refers to audio or video recordings and printed materials. It helps noting factors as how and for what it is being used and in what kind of situation.

g) Participatory need analysis, This means involving students in discussion or their needs and wants. Therefore there is more information rather than using questionnaire alone.

**FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Effective English communication skills are vital for food and beverage professionals in their pursuit of excellence within the industry. Mastering the language of service not only enables professionals to better understand and cater to their customers’ needs but also opens doors to exciting career advancements and opportunities. Through continuous learning and practice, food and beverage professionals can elevate their skills and ensure that their establishments thrive in the ever-competitive landscape of the hospitality industry.

Developed material for tourism sectors. Therefore (a) competence unit, (b) elements of competence was created based on the result of the need analysis as the basis. The materials can be seen on the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>COMPETENCE UNIT</th>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Verbal Communication Competence</td>
<td>1. Pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Clarity and Articulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Tone and Pitch Control</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Expressiveness in Speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vocabulary and Terminology</td>
<td>1. Mastery of Food and Beverage-related Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Knowledge of Menu Descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Understanding Culinary Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Listening and Comprehension Skills</td>
<td>1. Active Listening Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Understanding Customer Orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Clarification Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Politeness and Etiquette</td>
<td>1. Greetings and Welcoming Phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Polite Responses to Customer Queries</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Handling Customer Complaints Professionally</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 1: Materials for Food and Beverage Professionals

The importance of English cannot be denied. Technological advances from time to time increasingly require us to master it (Nasution, 2018). Implementing the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) approach to meet students’ needs for practical and applied English (Simarmata & Budiana, 2023). With appropriate textbooks, educators can explore the beliefs of using textbooks to teach English to vocational students (Ramazani, 2013). A combination
of linguistic and contextual approaches can produce more in-depth findings (Flowerdew & Wan, 2010). English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has not been studied very much (Gimeno-Sanz, 2015). Campuses around the world rely heavily on textbooks to disseminate knowledge and guide pedagogical choices. Textbooks have been proven to function as instruments of national policy, carrying the curriculum and becoming a global agenda (Shah, 2023).

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, mastering the language of service is a non-negotiable aspect of success for food and beverage professionals. English communication skills not only contribute to customer satisfaction but also elevate the overall standard of service, creating a lasting impact on the industry. Mastering the language of service is an essential skill for food and beverage professionals. Effective communication in English not only allows professionals to cater to a diverse clientele but also paves the way for career advancement. By dedicating time, effort, and genuine interest in improving their language skills, professionals can enhance customer experiences and open doors to new opportunities. So, whether you're a waiter, a bartender, or a chef, remember that the language of service is your key to success in the dynamic world of food and beverage. Therefore, 15 Competence units, 46 elements of competence. This article is limited to currently only knowing (a) Competence units, (b) elements of competence. Need detail materials. This article opens up opportunities for further research.

**REFERENCES**


