

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In recent eras, the role of language has been essential for communication in the 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 services. 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.

In hospitality, there is an area that has not been widely explored, that is the shops which are located in tourist destinations, particularly in Bali. There is a hotel namely Lovina Bali Resort with iconic of dolphin. This resort is one of 4-star resort and this hotel also one of the popular resorts in North Bali which provides for rooms, villas, and apart from that, Lovina Bali Resort also offering the most popular tour, that is Dolphin Watching Tour. The diversity of guests who come to this resort opens up opportunities for one of the outlets provided inside of the resort, that is Gift Shop. The Gift Shop is serving some souvenirs with Balinese culture, local crafts, daily/travel essentials, and keepsakes for guests. Some of the items such as Balinese wood carvings, decorative magnets, handmade local jewellery, t-shirt with name Lovina Bali resort, casual/party dress, coconut oil beauty product (Bali Pure), stamps, postcards, also some snacks, soft drinks and ice cream. According to Pine

and Gilmore's experience economy theory, he stated that in doing business should create memorable experience (Mehmetoglu, 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. In terms of opportunities, apart from Gift Shop located within the resort, this Gift Shop also has 2 experienced attendants for 7 & 2 years until now, which already has sufficient experience in handling customers. So, that is the reasons for researcher choose this Gift Shop as suitable model for doing investigation referring to shop communication, concerning to the use of language functions and expression.

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 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 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. This investigation also aims to contribute for the improvement of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) especially English for customer service in shop environments. So, it will provide insights into the language practices carried out by shop attendants in a tourist destination.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

Related to the use of language in communication, it is important to understand how to interpret language in order to create a welcoming atmosphere with others. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research on the use of language functions as a basis when expressing the language. In this case, there is one field of tourism that needs to be considered, namely shopping areas that must be provided with insights into serving their customers. To uncover this phenomenon, there is one place that can be used as a good sample in interpreting the use of language, and that is the Gift Shop at Lovina Bali Resort. In this Gift Shop, have many customers from various countries, because it exists inside of the resort. There are two attendants responsible for being on standby at the Gift Shop in different shift. The researcher is interested in knowing the operational of this Gift Shop, especially the context of communication by attendants in serving their customers, concerning to the use of language functions and expressions. Incidentally, the researcher also conducted training at this resort for 6 months, and continuing as daily worker in Guest Relation Officer. So, this opportunity will make it easier for researcher to conduct investigations with sufficient time in the Gift Shop.

### 1.3 Research Questions

This research aims to address the following key issues:

1. What are the language functions used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort?
2. What are the language expressions used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort?

### 1.4 Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study:

1. To identify the language functions employed by Gift Shop attendants during customer interactions in Lovina Bali Resort.
2. To identify the language expressions employed by Gift Shop attendants during customer interactions in Lovina Bali Resort.

### 1.5 Significance of the study

The significance of the study gives benefits in theoretically and practically. The following are significance of the study that will be discussed:

#### 1.5.1 Theoretical

This study was carried on with contribution to give a significance benefit, it will improve the theory of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) especially English for customer service in shop environments focuses on the language functions and expressions used by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort.

#### 1.5.2 Practical

##### a. Other Researchers

In terms of practical beneficial, hopefully, this significance of study can be useful to other researchers when conducting their similar study. Then, for the result of this study, they can provide as one of the lists in empirical review.



b. Company source

In addition, hopefully this study can improve performance of Gift Shop attendant in serving the customers, if there is something that needs to be fixed.

## 1.6 The scope of the study

Based on the phenomena that occur, this study will just focus on two points of discussion: first, identifying the language functions employ by Gift Shop attendants in Lovina Bali Resort, and second is identifying the language expression used in the conversations. This study is conducted in the Gift Shop at Lovina Bali Resort. The reason this place was chosen, because this Gift Shop located inside of resort area, which is the Lovina Bali resort has a wide network and many of guests from various countries. Then, there are two experienced attendants for 7 & 2 years which responsible to handle the Gift Shop, and the researcher will examine the interactions between attendants and customers during shopping, and will be concerning to the use of language functions and expressions in terms of polite and impolite language. Furthermore, the data collection will come from the direct opinions and performance of participants involved in the observation. By exploring the language functions and expressions used in Gift Shop at Lovina Bali resort, this research aims to interpret on the role of language to improve communication skills by shop attendants, enhancing guest experience and shopping satisfaction.

## 1.7 Definition of Key Term

In terms of providing clear insight and avoid misunderstanding on what concerned to this study is about the utilize of language functions and expressions. The following are explanation of key terms:

### 1.7.1 Language Function

Nunan (1991) stated that “Language functions refer to the purposes for which language is used”. In this context emphasize about the purposes of communication in several expressions that occur. In communication, the role of language functions is describing what things that the speaker is trying to

achieve through their communication, such as greeting, asking & offering something, requesting, informing, persuading, thanking, or expressing emotion, etc. Then, these language functions will be presented with language expressions through several words and sentences.

Language functions can be used as human tool to communicate ideas, emotions, and information. According to this context, 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.

### **1.7.2 Language Expression**

As a part of language function, language expression is the actual form of words that speaker uses to communicate a particular function. According to Richard (2013), language expression is a sequence of words which is conventionally associated with a particular function, such as apologizing, requesting, or thanking. So, language expressions is the way that is equipped to express for the language with the aim of being understood by other people. It is the form of words combining with phrases to become sentences that will be expressed to another person with feelings and actions. The related study was conducted by Hymes (1972) he said that to be communicatively competent, one must know not only what to say, but also how to say it appropriately, including the use of accepted expressions in social settings. So, it emphasizes on the essential of mastering several expressions in social context, to make good communication.

In the shopping environment, it is important to apply language expressions very well and naturally. Language expressions can convey

politeness, warmth, and professionalism, which significantly impacting customer satisfaction and the overall shopping experience.

### **1.7.3 Gift Shop in Lovina Bali Resort**

The Gift Shop is one of the outlets provided within the Lovina Bali Resort, 4-star resort in North of Bali. This Gift Shop is a shopping store which offering for some souvenirs with Balinese culture, local crafts, daily/travel essentials, and keepsakes for guests. Some of the items such as Balinese wood carvings, decorative magnets, handmade local jewellery, t-shirt with name Lovina Bali resort, casual/party dress, coconut oil beauty product (Bali Pure), stamps, postcards, also some snacks, soft drinks and ice cream. According to Pine and Gilmore's experience economy, in business should to create memorable experience. In particular, the Gift Shop serves as a convenient place for guests to purchase items that represent Balinese culture or commemorate their stay in Bali.

Gift Shop Attendants who work in a shopping area, they assist customers in selecting and purchasing products. Attendants play a vital role in customer interactions directly. The related location that able to attracts customers is in Lovina Bali Resort. It serves as the focal point which has a picturesque and vibrant nuance, highlighting the unique context that offers special tours, namely dolphin watching tours, which are not available elsewhere. So, it has big chance to acquire diverse of guests, including both International and local guest.