

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

The topic of this term paper is based on my internship at ASTON Primera Pasteur Hotel & Conference Center. During my internship, I had a position in the Front Office Department as a Telephone Operator trainee. I did my internship for three months, starting from June 12 to September 12, 2014. My duties in my internship were to receive incoming and outgoing calls, write memos, receive guests' phone calls requests, and basically I was expected to provide good service for the guests. Barrows, Powers, and Reynolds admit that service is "the ability to provide assistance in the way that it has been implicitly promised, service also performed for the guest by people or by system" (513).

For a telephone operator, good listening skills are important when providing service to the guests. As the job of a phone operator is to communicate with guests, listening skills will determine whether the phone operator can or cannot communicate with guests well. Nneka maintains in

his research that Yagang defines listening as “the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker’s accent and pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary and grasping his meaning” (qtd. in Nneka 40). From the quotation, it is suggested that having skills in listening is not just having the ability to hear what a speaker is saying, but also understand what the speaker means. Thus, listening serves as the basis of communication. If one is not good at listening, he or she will not be able to communicate effectively. Thomas maintains that “poor listening skills top the list when it comes to barriers to communication” (par. 1). Darnioji Daudiakalbysté states “Listening is one of the most basic areas of communication skills and language development” (par. 3). He also says that listening “is not only the first of the language arts skills developed, it is also the skill most frequently used in both the classroom and daily life” (par. 3).

Based on my experience as a telephone operator, listening by phone is more difficult because I cannot see the speakers’ face and their gestures when they are speaking. According to Brounstein, it is stated that “Listening on the telephone is often harder than when you’re listening in person” (45).

During my internship, I found difficulties when listening to foreign guests over the phone, especially when I had to deal with guests from non-English speaking countries such as China, Japan, Korea, and United Arab Emirates. I found it hard to understand what the guests meant, and sometimes I misunderstood what they were saying.

Knowing the importance of listening skills, I decide to choose the topic of handling my difficulties in listening comprehension when communicating by phone with foreign guests from non-English speaking countries at ASTON Primera Pasteur Hotel. I will analyze the topic to find the best way to solve the problem. I think the problem is crucial to discuss because when an operator does not have good listening skills, the guests will complain, either directly, or in writing, in the hotel reviews on the Internet. This will show that the operator cannot provide a good service for the guests.

## B. Identification of the Problem

The problem that I would like to analyze is formulated in the following questions :

1. Why did I have difficulties in listening comprehension when communicating by phone?
2. How did the problem affect my performance as a telephone operator trainee at ASTON Primera Pasteur Hotel?
3. How should I overcome the problem?

## C. Objectives and Benefits of the Study

There are several objectives of this study. The first objective of this study is to explain the causes of handling my difficulties in listening comprehension when communicating by phone with foreign guests from non-English speaking countries. The second is to find the effects of the

problem on my work performance. The last is to find the best potential solutions to overcome my difficulties.

This study will be useful for both the writer and readers. The benefits for both parties is through this study they will get more information about how to handle difficulties in listening comprehension when communicating by phone. The benefit for me as the writer is I can learn how to handle this particular problem and it would be useful for my personal reference in the future.

#### D. Description of the Institution

Based on its company profile, ASTON Primera Pasteur Hotel and Conference Center (henceforth: APPHCC) is a four-star international business hotel. ASTON Primera Hotel has a contemporary and modern concept with conference facilities and high-technology rooms. On December 5, 2009, ASTON Primera Hotel started its business and was inaugurated by the Minister of Tourism and Culture, Mr. Wacik, on its Grand Opening on March 5, 2010.

APPHCC is one of the several hotels managed by Archipelago International Indonesia and is owned by PT. Wisma Resortama Propertindo. ASTON Primera Hotel has 204 deluxe rooms and suites for business or leisure. It also has a strategic location on Jl. Dr. Djunjunan, which is close to the exit from the Pasteur toll road from Jakarta and easy to find due to its location on the main road. It is only about 10 minutes from Husein Sastranegara Airport, 15 minutes from Bandung Train Station, and

10 minutes from Bandung shopping and culinary tourism areas. The vision of APPHCC is to be one of the best conference hotels in town, whereas its mission is to provide sincere dedication in delivering excellent Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions (henceforth: MICE) facilities and services.

## E. Method of the Study

The data for the study was taken from library research and field research. The library research was done to find the supporting theories from books and the Internet to support my analysis. The field research was done through observation from my experience during my internship period and written in an internship journal.

## F. Limitation of the Study

The study is about handling my difficulties in listening comprehension when communicating by phone with foreign guests from non-English speaking countries at APPHCC. The foreign guests are from China, Japan, Korea, and United Arab Emirates who called me, as the telephone operator of APPHCC during my internship from 12 June until 12 September 2014. I, as a telephone operator trainee, am the subject of this study.

## G. Organization of the Term Paper

The term paper starts with the Abstract, which is the summary of the term paper in Bahasa. The second is Acknowledgements and Table of Contents, followed by four chapters, which are Chapter I, Chapter II, Chapter III, and Chapter IV. Chapter I, the Introduction of this term paper includes Background of the Study, Identification of the Problem, Objectives and Benefits of the Study, Description of the Institution, Method of the Study, Limitation of the Study, and Organization of the Term Paper. The subject that will be discussed in Chapter II is the Problem Analysis, which will explain the causes and the effects of the problem. Chapter III consists of the potential solutions and negative and positive effects of each potential solution. Chapter IV, the conclusion, consists of the chosen solutions. Finally, there will be a Bibliography and the Appendices.