

CHAPTER IV RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of the study on foreign tourists' perceptions of the use of English in tourism services in Yogyakarta. The analysis is based on qualitative data obtained from online reviews written by foreign tourists across several travel platforms.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and interpret how English communication is experienced and perceived by tourists when interacting with tourism service providers. The findings are presented through a thematic analysis process, which involves identifying patterns, codes, and themes derived from the collected data.

This chapter is divided into several sections. The first section provides an overview of the research data and explains the data collection process. The following sections present the coding process, theme development, and interpretation of the findings. Through this analysis, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how English communication influences tourists' experiences and perceptions in tourism services.

4.1 Overview of Research Data

Creswell and Creswell (2018), explain that qualitative research aims to understand human experiences, perceptions, and interpretations related to a particular phenomenon. Flick (2018), states that qualitative data provide deeper insights into how individuals interpret and respond to their experiences. Based on this perspective, the present study uses user reviews as the primary data source to explore tourists' comments experiences and opinions regarding the research object.

In digital environments, user reviews have become an important source of information because they represent authentic feedback from individuals who have interacted directly with a product or service. Hennig-Thurau (2004), describe online reviews as a form of electronic word-of-mouth communication where tourists' comments voluntarily share their experiences. Likewise, Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006), argue that online reviews often reflect honest evaluations that can reveal both positive and negative aspects of a service.

The data used in this research consist of user reviews collected from the selected platform. These reviews contain various types of feedback such as expressions of satisfaction, complaints, suggestions, and evaluations regarding tourists' experiences when interacting with tourism service providers, particularly in relation to English communication. Lincoln and Guba (1985), emphasize that the credibility of qualitative research depends on careful data selection and systematic analysis procedures. Therefore, only reviews that were relevant to the research objectives were included in the dataset.

In total, the researcher collected online reviews from several selected platforms, namely Agoda, Google Maps, TripAdvisor, and Booking.com, within the period of 2020–2025. Although a large number of reviews were available across these platforms, strict inclusion criteria were applied: only reviews specifically detailing direct English communication between foreign tourists and local service providers were selected, resulting in 38 highly relevant data points.

The collected data consist of various types of feedback, including positive experiences, communication difficulties, and evaluations of service quality. By

gathering data from multiple platforms across the 2020–2025 period, the researcher was able to obtain a comprehensive understanding of foreign tourists' perceptions. After the initial collection, the data were further reviewed and filtered to ensure that only relevant and meaningful reviews were included in the final dataset.

Tabel 4. 1 Summary of Collected Data

no	Platform	Tourism category	Number of Reviews	Year Range
1	Agoda	Accommodation (Hotel)	12	2025
2	Google Maps	Attractions & Services	11	2020-2025
3	TripAdvisor	Tour & Travel Services	8	2025
4	Booking.com	Accommodation (Hotel)	7	2024-2025
5	Total		38	2020-2025

As shown in Table 4.1, a total of 38 online reviews were collected across four major travel platforms within the timeframe of 2020 to 2025. To retrieve these specific reviews during the data collection process, targeted English search keywords were applied across the platform search bars and filter engines. These search keywords included combinations such as "English", "English speaking", "communication", "language barrier", "staff English", "front desk English", "tour guide English", and "driver English" in relation to tourism services in Yogyakarta.

In terms of tourism categories, most reviews were related to accommodation services, followed by tourist attractions and tour-related services. This distribution allows the researcher to capture diverse perspectives on English communication across

different types of tourism services.

According to Guest et al. (2020), the process of collecting qualitative data requires careful consideration in order to ensure that the data are relevant to the research objectives. In this study, the researcher collected online reviews from travel platforms where foreign tourists share their experiences after visiting tourism destinations and interacting with tourism service providers. These reviews were chosen because they provide direct insights into how foreign tourists perceive English communication in tourism services.

During the data collection process, the researcher identified reviews that were related to the research topic. Reviews that were unclear, irrelevant, or unrelated to the research objectives were excluded from the dataset. This process was conducted to ensure that the data used in the analysis accurately represent the phenomenon being investigated. Nowell et al. (2021) highlight that careful data selection is essential for ensuring the trustworthiness and rigor of qualitative research findings.



Figure 4. 1 Example of User Review Mentioning English Communication

Source: Agoda Review (2025)

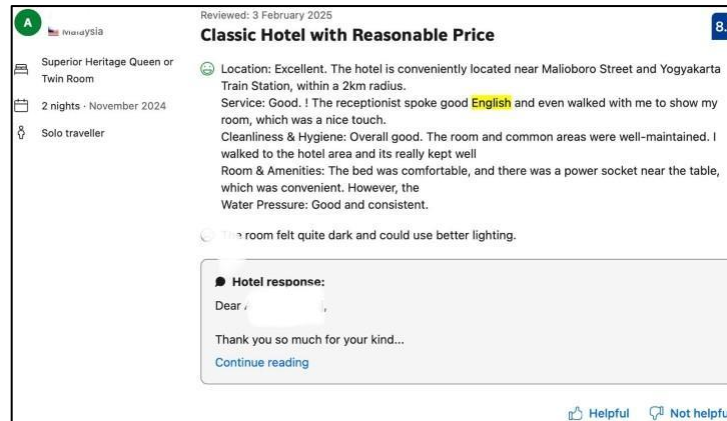


Figure 4. 2 Example of User Review Mentioning English Communication

Source: Agoda Review (2025)

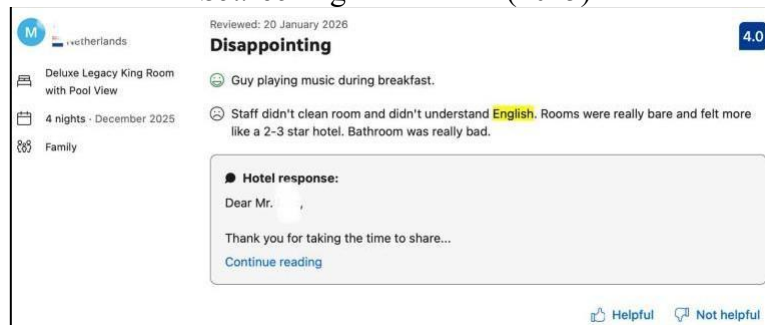


Figure 4. 3 Example of User Review Mentioning English Communication

Source: Agoda Review (2025)

Figures 4.1 to 4.3 present representative examples of raw user reviews collected across the selected platforms, specifically highlighting accommodation feedback from Agoda. These reviews demonstrate how international guests describe their real service encounters when communicating with hotel staff, particularly regarding functional English proficiency. While some reviews illustrate positive communication experiences, others highlight communication difficulties encountered during their stay. These visual examples represent the primary qualitative data compiled in this study, which were subsequently categorized through thematic coding to identify core patterns of English service quality in Yogyakarta.



Figure 4. 4 Example of Tourist Review Reporting Limited English

Source: Google Maps Review (2025)



Figure 4. 5 Example of Tourist Review Mentioning English-Speaking Driver

Source: TripAdvisor Review (2025)



Figure 4. 6 Example of Tourist Review Showing Good English Communication

Source: TripAdvisor Review (2025)

In addition to accommodation reviews from Agoda, the researcher also collected qualitative data from other major travel platforms, namely Google Maps and TripAdvisor. While Agoda captures hotel service interactions, Google Maps and TripAdvisor contain extensive user reviews detailing tourist experiences at local destinations, cultural attractions, and tour services in Yogyakarta. Figures 4.4 to 4.6 illustrate representative review samples from these platforms. These reviews demonstrate how foreign tourists evaluate communication proficiency during daily service encounters with local guides, drivers, and venue staff. Collecting data across multiple platforms provided a broader and more diverse dataset representing comprehensive tourist experiences.

4.2 Familiarizing with the Data

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the first step in thematic analysis involves becoming familiar with the data through repeated reading and careful examination of the dataset. Similarly, Braun and Clarke (2021), emphasize that data familiarization allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the content and context of qualitative data before conducting further analysis. This stage is essential because it enables researchers to identify preliminary patterns and significant ideas that may later form the basis of codes and themes.

During this stage, all collected reviews were systematically examined to understand the users' experiences and identify potential patterns within the dataset. Through rigorous textual analysis, the researcher was able to observe recurring issues, opinions, and experiences expressed by tourists in their reviews. Guest et al. (2020) state that repeated engagement with qualitative data helps researchers recognize meaningful patterns and insights within textual information. In addition, Nowell et al. (2021) highlight that the

familiarization stage plays an important role in ensuring the rigor and transparency of thematic analysis because it allows researchers to develop a comprehensive understanding of the dataset before proceeding to the coding process.



Figure 4. 7 Example of Tourist Review Identified During Data Familiarization

Source: Google Maps Review (2025)



Figure 4. 8 Example of Tourist Review Identified During Data Familiarization

Source: Google Maps Review (2025)

Figures 4.7 and 4.8 present examples of tourist reviews examined during the familiarization stage. At this stage, the researcher repeatedly read the collected reviews to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences described by foreign tourists. Through this process, the researcher began to identify recurring comments related to English

communication between tourists and tourism service providers.

4.2.1 Initial Observations of Tourist Reviews

Through this stage, the researcher was able to identify several recurring patterns in the tourists' comments. Many of the reviews discussed aspects related to tourists' experiences when interacting with tourism service providers, particularly regarding the use of English communication during their visit. Conducting an early examination of qualitative data is important because it helps researchers develop a preliminary understanding of the dataset and recognize meaningful ideas that may later contribute to the coding process and theme development, as explained in qualitative data analysis studies such as those conducted by Guest et al. (2020) and further discussed in qualitative research frameworks presented by Flick (2022).

During this stage, several types of comments appeared repeatedly across different online reviews. Some tourists' comments expressed positive opinions about communication clarity and staff helpfulness, while others reported communication difficulties experienced by tourists when interacting with tourism service providers. These observations indicate that online reviews often contain diverse perspectives reflecting both satisfaction and dissatisfaction among foreign visitors.



Figure 4. 9 Example of Tourist Review Showing Positive English Communication

Source: Agoda Review (2025)

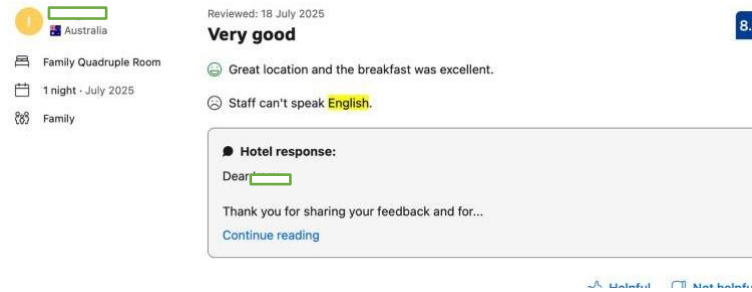


Figure 4. 10 Example of Tourist Review Showing Communication Difficulty

Source: Agoda Review (2025)

Figures 4.9 and 4.10 present examples of user feedback identified during the initial observation stage. These reviews illustrate how foreign tourists describe their experiences when communicating with tourism service providers in Yogyakarta. Some reviews highlight positive experiences where staff were able to communicate effectively in English, while others describe communication difficulties due to limited English proficiency.

In digital platforms, such tourist perceptions are considered valuable because online reviews function as a form of electronic word-of-mouth communication, where individuals voluntarily share their experiences and opinions about a product or service, a phenomenon that has been widely discussed in marketing and information system research including studies by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004). Online review environments also allow tourists' comments to express evaluations that can reveal both strengths and weaknesses of a service, which has been demonstrated in research examining the impact of consumer reviews on product perception and decision-making by Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006).

In addition to identifying common experiences, the early observations also helped the researcher recognize several aspects that required further examination during the coding stage. Recognizing recurring ideas and patterns at this stage enables researchers to organize the data more effectively before conducting deeper analysis. Engaging with the

dataset in this manner contributes to the rigor and transparency of qualitative analysis because systematic interaction with qualitative data helps researchers interpret information more accurately, particularly when thematic analysis is used as the analytical framework as discussed by Braun and Clarke (2021). A similar argument is also presented in methodological discussions on qualitative rigor, where structured analysis procedures are considered important for ensuring transparency and trustworthiness in qualitative research by Nowell et al. (2021).

4.2.2 Preparation of Data for Analysis

Before proceeding to the main stages of thematic analysis, the collected user reviews were organized and prepared in order to facilitate the analytical process. The preparation stage, which involves structuring qualitative data prior to analysis, allows researchers to manage textual datasets more systematically and identify patterns more effectively within the data (Flick, 2018; Guest et al., 2012). Organizing qualitative data also improves the transparency of the analytical process because well-structured datasets allow researchers to trace how interpretations and conclusions are derived from the original data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Nowell, 2017).

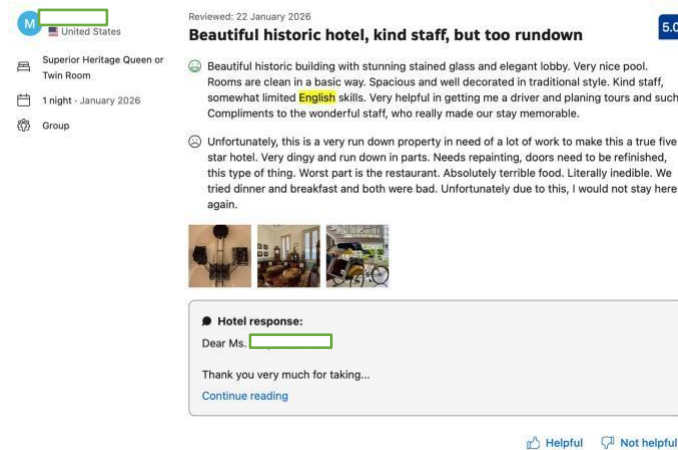


Figure 4. 11 Example of Tourist Review Prepared for Coding

Source: Agoda Review (2025)

Figure 4.11 presents an example of a tourist review that was prepared for the analysis stage. At this stage, identifying information such as usernames and profile photos were removed or blurred in order to protect the privacy of the reviewers. The selected reviews were systematically formatted, cleaned, and compiled into a master dataset before being analyzed through the formal coding process.

During this preparation stage, the researcher reviewed the collected reviews again while categorizing them based on their relevance to the research objectives. Reviews that contained meaningful tourist experiences related to English communication in tourism services were retained for analysis, whereas irrelevant or incomplete comments were excluded from the dataset. The process of reviewing and organizing qualitative data contributes to the credibility of research findings because systematic data management ensures that the dataset accurately reflects tourists' perspectives and experiences (Flick, 2022; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Preparing the dataset before the coding stage also enables researchers to gain a clearer overview of the information contained within the data. Thematic analysis requires researchers to engage closely with the dataset before identifying codes and themes, and this preparation stage ensures that the data are ready to be analyzed systematically. Well-organized qualitative datasets support the identification of patterns and themes because meaningful interpretations can only emerge when researchers interact carefully with the textual data being analyzed (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell et al., 2021).

4.3 Generating Initial Codes

After the familiarization and data preparation stages were completed, the next step in the thematic analysis process involved generating initial codes from the collected online reviews. At this stage, the structured textual dataset was systematically analyzed and labeled using specific codes, such as T1, T2, and T3, to represent key ideas, communication experiences, and service evaluation patterns. Coding represents a crucial stage in qualitative data analysis because it allows researchers to systematically organize large volumes of textual information into smaller analytical units that reflect meaningful ideas within the dataset. According to Braun and Clarke (2021), coding involves identifying segments of data that appear relevant to the research question and assigning labels that capture the essence of those segments. Through this process, raw qualitative data can be transformed into structured categories that facilitate deeper interpretation and analysis.

In qualitative research that relies on textual sources such as online reviews, coding enables researchers to identify patterns of meaning across different participants' responses. Guest et al. (2020) explain that coding functions as a bridge between raw data and thematic interpretation because it helps researchers group similar expressions, opinions, or experiences together. By organizing textual data into meaningful categories, researchers

can systematically examine similarities and differences within the dataset and begin to recognize emerging patterns related to the research topic.

Particular attention was given to statements describing the clarity of English communication, the ability of tourism staff to understand tourists' requests, and any communication challenges experienced during interactions.

The coding process was conducted manually by the researcher through repeated reading of the selected reviews. Manual coding is commonly used in qualitative research because it allows researchers to engage closely with the dataset and interpret meanings directly from participants' narratives (Flick, 2022). Through this careful reading process, the researcher was able to identify key expressions, phrases, and statements that reflected tourists' perceptions regarding English communication within tourism services.

Rather than applying predetermined categories, this study employed an inductive coding approach in which codes emerged directly from the data. Braun and Clarke (2021) explain that inductive coding allows themes to develop naturally from the dataset rather than being imposed by existing theoretical assumptions. This approach is particularly suitable for exploratory qualitative research because it enables researchers to capture participants' perspectives more authentically.

4.3.1 Coding of Tourist Reviews

Rather than applying predetermined categories, this study employed an inductive coding approach in which codes emerged directly from the data. Braun and Clarke (2021) explain that inductive coding allows themes to develop naturally from the dataset rather than being imposed by existing theoretical assumptions. This approach is particularly suitable for exploratory qualitative research because it enables researchers to capture

participants' perspectives more authentically.

According to Nowell et al. (2021), the coding process allows researchers to systematically organize qualitative data while maintaining transparency in how interpretations are derived from the original dataset. Similarly, Creswell and Creswell (2023) explain that coding helps researchers reduce large volumes of narrative data into manageable analytical units that can later be examined more thoroughly.

In this study, each excerpt was assigned a code representing the tourist who wrote the review. In order to protect the privacy of the reviewers, all personal information and usernames were removed from the dataset. Instead, each excerpt was labeled using a code such as T1, T2, T3, and so forth, where "T" represents "Tourist." The use of pseudonyms or coded identifiers is a common ethical practice in qualitative research involving publicly available online data (APA, 2020; Kozinets, 2020).

Tabel 4. 2 Initial Coding of Tourist Reviews on English Communication in Tourism Services

Tourist Code	Platform	Review Excerpt (Data Asli)	Initial Code
T1	Agoda	"The staff were friendly and spoke English which made the check in process much easier."	Staff English fluency facilitating smooth check-in
T2	Agoda	"...the staff doesn't speak a fluent English and they cannot answer to questions relative excursions or suggestions to visit the city..."	Limited English fluency hindering tour assistance
T3	Agoda	"The staff did not speak English well."	Low English communication proficiency
T4	Agoda	"No body knows basic English. A 3 star hotel with only local language is too bad..."	Severe English language barrier in basic service

T5	Agoda	“The staff could speak better English...”	Communication breakdown due to lack of basic English
T6	Agoda	“The staff could speak better English...”	Expectation for higher staff English competence
T7	TripAdvisor	“The tour guide will explain the history to you thoroughly. They could speak few languages, like English, French and Dutch.”	Multilingual tour guide proficiency
T8	Google Maps	“Met a couple of very friendly people... learned English from reading a dictionary and listening to tour guides.”	Inadequate English skills during guided tour
T9	Google Maps	“Met a couple of very friendly people... learned English from reading a dictionary and listening to tour guides.”	Informal English acquisition and friendliness
T10	Google Maps	“...including one construction worker who told us... learned English from reading a dictionary and listening to tour guides.”	Community initiative in learning basic English

As presented in Table 4.2, a representative sample of 10 review excerpts (T1–T10) was systematically analyzed to illustrate the initial coding process, while the complete set of 38 analyzed data points (T1–T38) is provided in Appendix 3. The coding process was conducted inductively by extracting key semantic phrases that reflected foreign tourists' communicative experiences with tourism personnel in Yogyakarta. The generated initial codes demonstrate two primary observational dimensions: positive communication experiences driven by staff fluency, helpfulness, and adaptive digital tools (e.g., T1, T7, T9, T10), and communication barriers resulting from limited English proficiency, reliance on memorized scripts, or complete language gaps (e.g., T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T8). Overall, these initial codes served as the foundational empirical

units for developing broader thematic categories in the subsequent analysis stage.

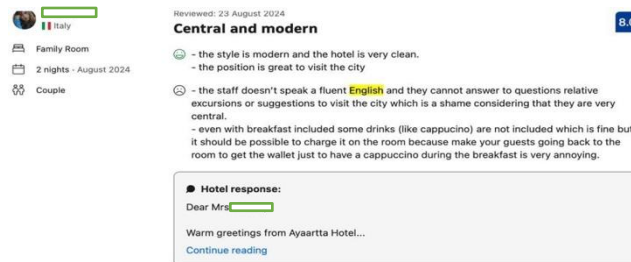


Figure 4. 12 Example of Tourist Review Used in the Coding Process
Source: Agoda Review (2024)

Figure 4.12 presents an example of a tourist review analyzed during the coding stage. In this review, the tourist mentions that the hotel staff did not speak fluent English and were unable to provide information related to excursions or city recommendations. This statement was coded as “limited English fluency hindering tour assistance,” illustrating how specific segments of textual data were identified and categorized during the coding process.

4.3.2 Categorization of Codes

After the initial codes were generated, the next step involved examining the relationships among the identified codes in order to group them into broader conceptual categories. According to Braun and Clarke (2021), this stage involves organizing similar codes together to identify patterns that appear repeatedly across the dataset. Grouping related codes helps researchers recognize broader issues that reflect participants’ experiences and perceptions.

During this stage, several codes that shared similar meanings were grouped together. For example, codes such as “staff able to communicate clearly in English” and “basic

English communication” were categorized under a broader category describing positive English communication experiences. Meanwhile, codes such as “limited English proficiency,” “communication difficulty,” and “lack of English skills” were grouped into categories representing communication challenges experienced by tourists. These conceptual categories directly align with the theoretical framework established in Chapter II regarding communicative competence and language barriers in hospitality services. To provide a clearer illustration of how the codes were grouped, the categorization process is presented in Figure 4.13.

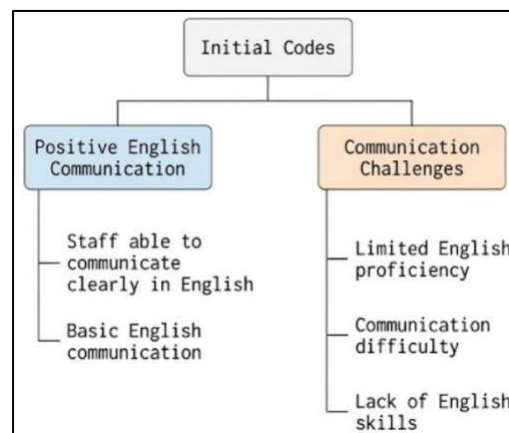


Figure 4. 13 Categorization of Initial Codes

Figure 4.13 illustrates how the initial codes were grouped into broader categories based on their similarities. Codes related to positive communication experiences were categorized as “Positive English Communication,” while codes indicating difficulties or limitations were grouped under “Communication Challenges.” This analytical grouping operationalizes the theoretical dimensions outlined in Chapter II, ensuring a strong theoretical foundation for data interpretation. This categorization process helped organize

the data into meaningful clusters before developing themes

Categorizing codes in this manner allows researchers to move from individual data fragments toward a more structured understanding of the dataset. Guest et al. (2020) explain that this stage is important because it enables researchers to identify relationships among codes and prepare the data for theme development.

4.4 Searching for Themes (Development of Preliminary Themes)

Following the categorization process, the researcher examined the grouped codes in order to identify broader themes that reflected recurring patterns in the dataset. In thematic analysis, themes represent patterns of meaning that capture important aspects of the research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Themes are developed by examining how different codes relate to each other and by identifying underlying ideas that appear consistently across the dataset.

In this study, the analysis of categorized codes revealed several preliminary themes related to foreign tourists' perceptions of English communication in tourism services in Yogyakarta. Some tourists described positive experiences when tourism staff were able to communicate effectively in English, which helped them obtain information and feel comfortable during their visit. However, other tourists reported communication challenges due to limited English proficiency among some tourism workers.

Tabel 4. 3 Development of Themes Based on Categorized Codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Category	Codes	Theme
Positive English Communication	Staffable to communicate clearly in English; Basic English Communication	Effective English Communication
Communication Challenges	Limited English Proficiency; Communication Difficulty; Lack of English Skill	Communication Barriers

Table 4.3 presents the development of themes based on the category “Positive English Communication” was developed into the theme “Effective English Communication,” while the category “Communication Challenges” was grouped under the theme “Communication Barriers.” These themes represent broader patterns that reflect foreign tourists’ perceptions of English communication in tourism services.

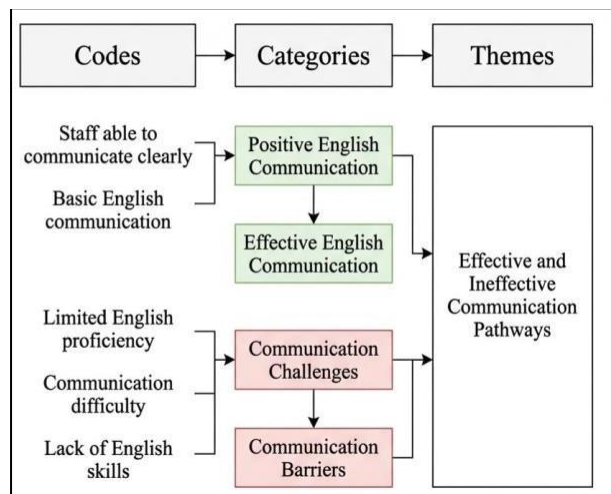


Figure 4. 14 Development of Themes Based on Categorized Codes

Table 4.3 and Figure 4.14 present the development of themes based on the categorized codes. Following Braun and Clarke (2021), themes were identified by examining patterns of meaning across the data. The theme “Effective English Communication” represents positive experiences where tourism service providers were able to communicate clearly in English. In contrast, the theme “Direct Communication Barriers” reflects the challenges faced by tourists due to limited English proficiency. These themes capture broader patterns of tourists’ perceptions regarding English communication in tourism services in Yogyakarta. To further illustrate how the identified themes are reflected in actual data, examples of tourist reviews are presented below.



Figure 4. 15 Example of Tourist Review Representing Effective English Communication

Source: Agoda Review (2025)

Figure 4.15 presents a tourist review that reflects the theme “Effective English Communication.” In this review, the tourist highlights that the hotel staff were able to speak English very well and provide helpful assistance. This indicates that effective English communication can enhance tourists’ comfort and satisfaction during their stay. Such experiences demonstrate how language proficiency contributes positively to service quality in tourism settings.

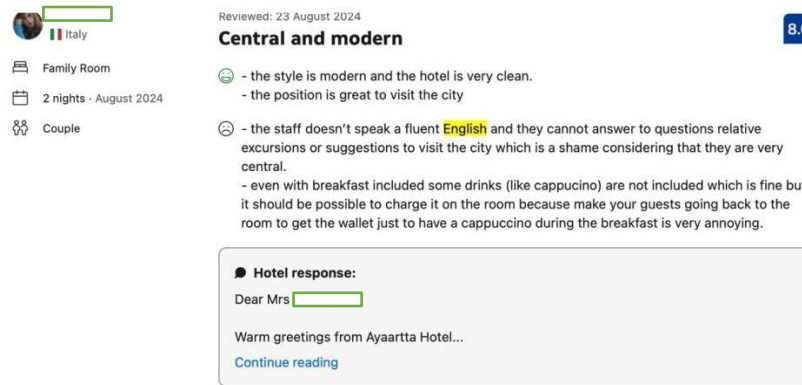


Figure 4. 16 Example of Tourist Review Representing Communication Barriers

Source: Booking.com Review (2025)

Figure 4.16 presents a tourist review that reflects the theme “Communication Barriers.” In this review, the tourist explains that the staff were not able to speak English fluently and were unable to provide information related to excursions or city recommendations. This situation made communication difficult and negatively affected the tourist’s experience. This example highlights how limited English proficiency can hinder effective interaction between tourists and service providers in the tourism sector. In addition, reviews from other platforms are also presented to provide a more diverse representation of tourists’ experiences.

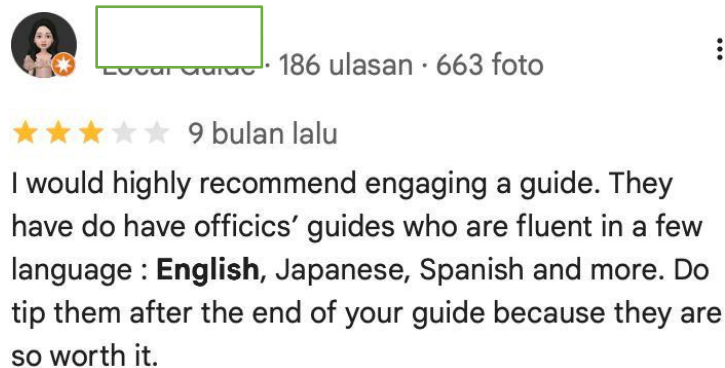


Figure 4. 17 Example of Tourist Review from Google Maps Representing English Communication

Source: Google Maps Review (2025)

The inclusion of reviews from different platforms further strengthens the findings, as it shows that similar patterns of English communication experiences appear consistently across various sources. Identifying these patterns allowed the researcher to begin organizing the dataset into broader thematic structures that represent the main findings of the study. (Braun & Clarke, 2006) emphasize that this stage is essential because it allows researchers to interpret how individual experiences expressed in the larger patterns of meaning. These findings confirm that English communication plays a significant role in shaping foreign tourists' experiences, both positively and negatively, depending on the level of language proficiency demonstrated by tourism service providers. These findings demonstrate that English communication plays a crucial role in shaping foreign tourists' experiences, influencing both their satisfaction and their perception of service quality.

4.4.1 Summary of Coding Results

The coding process provided an important foundation for the thematic analysis conducted in this study. By carefully examining each review and assigning descriptive

codes to relevant statements, the researcher was able to identify several recurring patterns in the tourists' experiences related to English communication in tourism services.

The results of the coding stage indicate that English communication frequently appears as an important aspect of tourists' service experiences. While some tourists reported positive experiences when tourism staff were able to communicate clearly in English, other reviews indicated that limited English proficiency sometimes created communication difficulties. These findings highlight the important role of language skills in facilitating effective interactions between foreign tourists and tourism service providers.

The codes identified in this stage served as the basis for the next stage of thematic analysis, where related codes were further examined and grouped into broader themes representing foreign tourists' perceptions of the use of English in tourism services in Yogyakarta (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Overall, the coding results reveal that English communication is a key factor influencing foreign tourists' experiences in tourism services. The presence of both positive and negative codes indicates that English proficiency among tourism service providers varies, leading to different levels of tourist satisfaction. These findings highlight the need for improving English communication skills in the tourism sector to enhance service quality and support better interactions with international visitor.

4.5 Reviewing Themes

In this stage, the researcher reviewed the initial codes and preliminary themes that had been generated in order to ensure their accuracy, consistency, and relevance to the research objectives. According to Braun and Clarke (2021), reviewing themes is an important step in thematic analysis because it allows researchers to verify whether each

theme appropriately represents the dataset and is supported by meaningful patterns across the data. At this stage, themes are evaluated in relation to both the coded data extracts and the entire dataset to ensure consistency and relevance.

In addition, the researcher identified overlapping and redundant codes that conveyed similar meanings (Flick, 2022). Codes that were found to be repetitive or unclear were either merged into a single, more representative code or revised to improve clarity (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). For example, codes related to positive communication experiences, such as “clear English communication” and “helpful English-speaking staff,” were reviewed to ensure that they consistently reflected similar meanings across different data extracts. Similarly, codes describing communication difficulties were examined to confirm that they accurately represented situations involving limited English proficiency.

This process is essential in qualitative research because it contributes to the rigor and trustworthiness of the analysis. Nowell et al. (2017) emphasize that reviewing codes enhances the transparency of thematic analysis by ensuring that interpretations are grounded in the original dataset. By systematically re-evaluating the codes, the researcher was able to strengthen the analytical framework and ensure that each code was meaningful, relevant, and representative of the collected data.

4.5.1 Reviewing Initial Codes

During this stage, the researcher carefully re-examined each coded segment by comparing it with the original online reviews (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This step was conducted to ensure that the assigned codes accurately captured the intended meaning of the tourists’ statements, particularly those related to English communication in tourism services (Guest et al., 2020). Through this process, the researcher was able to identify

whether certain codes required modification, refinement, or removal (Nowell et al., 2017).

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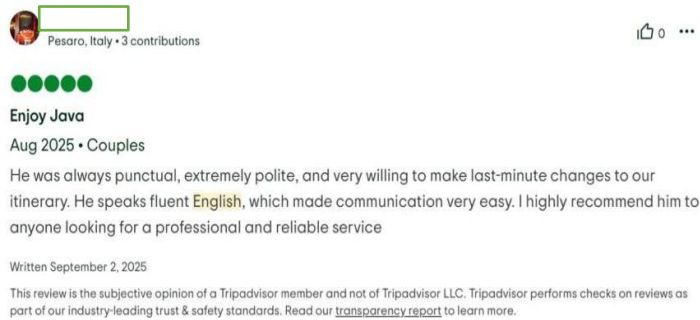


Figure 4. 18 Example of Tourist Review Representing Effective English Communication

Source: Agoda Review (2025)

Figure 4.18 presents an example of a tourist review that was re-examined during the code reviewing stage. The review shows that the tourism staff were able to communicate fluently in English, which made the interaction easier and more effective for the tourist. This example illustrates how the researcher ensured that the assigned codes accurately reflected the meaning of the data. The review supports the code related to effective English communication, which later contributed to the development of broader themes in the analysis.

Overall, the process of reviewing initial codes plays a crucial role in ensuring that the data analysis is accurate, consistent, and reliable. By refining and validating the codes, the researcher was able to establish a strong foundation for the next stages of thematic analysis, particularly in grouping codes into categories and developing meaningful themes.

4.5.2 Reviewing and Refining Themes

Through this analysis, two main themes were confirmed as representing the core patterns within the dataset, namely Effective English Communication and Communication Barriers (Braun & Clarke, 2021). These themes reflect contrasting experiences reported by

tourists, where some interactions were facilitated by clear English communication, while others were hindered by limited language proficiency.

The presence of repeated negative experiences confirms that communication barriers represent a significant theme in this study (Blue & Harun, 2003; Chen & Tsai, 2007). While communication barriers were frequently reported, the data also revealed positive experiences where effective English communication played an important role in enhancing tourists' satisfaction (Leslie & Russell, 2006). In these cases, tourists were able to communicate easily with staff, obtain clear information, and feel more comfortable during their visit. This contrast highlights the importance of English proficiency in shaping tourists' perceptions of service quality (Tsang & Lee, 2023).

Furthermore, the refinement of themes reveals deeper insights into how language functions as a critical element in tourism service interactions (Flick, 2022). The presence of both positive and negative communication experiences indicates that English proficiency is not evenly distributed among tourism service providers in Yogyakarta. This variation in language ability contributes to different levels of tourist satisfaction and highlights inconsistencies in service quality (Zeithaml et al., 2023).



Figure 4. 19 Example of Tourist Review Representing Communication Barriers

Source: Booking.com Review (2024)

Figure 4.19 presents a tourist review that reflects the theme of communication barriers. In this review, the tourist explains that the staff were unable to communicate effectively in English, which created difficulties during the interaction. This example illustrates how limited English proficiency can hinder communication and negatively affect the tourist's overall experience.

In addition to this example, similar patterns were identified across multiple reviews, indicating that communication barriers are not isolated incidents but recurring issues in tourism services. (Braun & Clarke, 2006) emphasize that a valid theme should be supported by multiple data extracts, which strengthens the credibility of the findings.

Therefore, the presence of repeated negative experiences confirms that communication barriers represent a significant theme in this study.

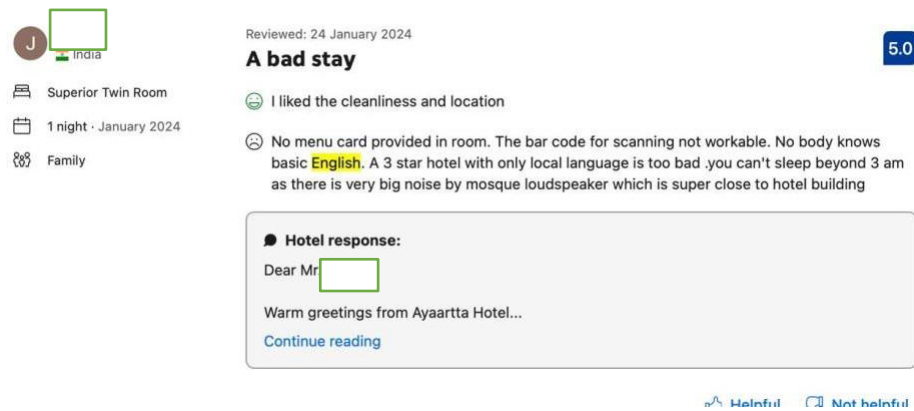


Figure 4. 20 Additional Example of Tourist Review Showing Communication Difficulties

Source: Booking.com Review (2024)

Figure 4.20 provides another example of a tourist review that reflects communication barriers. The review indicates that the staff had limited English proficiency, making it difficult for the tourist to understand the information provided. This example reinforces the pattern identified in the dataset, where language limitations affect the quality of interaction between tourists and service providers.

While communication barriers were frequently reported, the data also revealed positive experiences where effective English communication played an important role in enhancing tourists' satisfaction. In these cases, tourists were able to communicate easily with staff, obtain clear information, and feel more comfortable during their visit. This contrast highlights the importance of English proficiency in shaping tourists' perceptions of service quality.

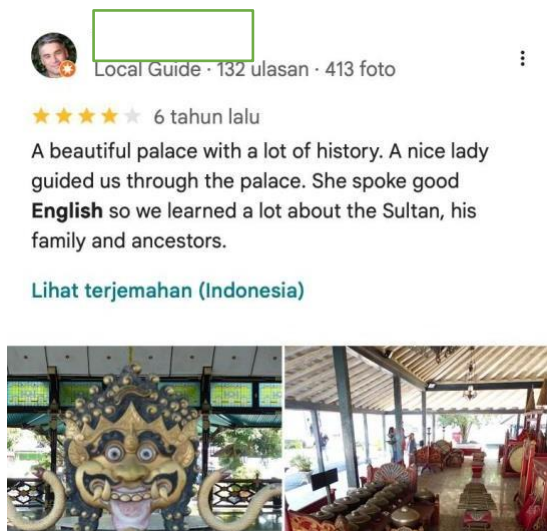


Figure 4. 21 Example of Tourist Review Representing Effective English Communication

Source: Google Maps Review (2020)

Figure 4.21 presents a contrasting example of a tourist review that reflects effective English communication. In this case, the staff were able to communicate clearly in English, which helped the tourist feel more comfortable and satisfied with the service. This example demonstrates how effective communication contributes positively to tourists' experiences and supports the theme of effective English communication.

In addition, the refinement of themes reveals deeper insights into how language functions as a critical element in tourism service interactions. The presence of both positive and negative communication experiences indicates that English proficiency is not evenly distributed among tourism service providers in Yogyakarta. This variation in language ability contributes to different levels of tourist satisfaction and highlights inconsistencies in service quality.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that communication is not only a tool for exchanging information but also a factor that influences tourists' emotional experiences. When tourists are able to communicate effectively with service providers, they tend

to feel more comfortable, confident, and satisfied. Conversely, communication barriers may lead to confusion, frustration, and a sense of inconvenience, which can negatively affect their overall perception of the destination. These findings emphasize that improving English communication skills is essential for enhancing the quality of tourism services. By strengthening language competence among tourism workers, it is possible to reduce communication barriers and create more positive experiences for international tourists.



Figure 4. 22 Example of Tourist Review Representing Effective English Communication

Source: Booking.com Review (2024)

As shown in Figure 4.22, the tourist states that the staff were able to speak English very well and provide helpful and kind assistance. This example clearly reflects effective English communication, where the ability of tourism staff to use English fluently allows tourists to interact comfortably and obtain the information they need. In addition, the positive description of staff behavior indicates that good communication skills are closely related to service quality and tourists' satisfaction. This finding suggests that effective English communication not only facilitates interaction but also strengthens tourists' trust in tourism services.

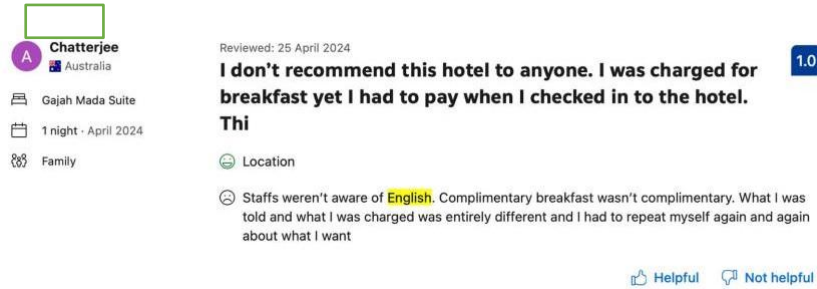


Figure 4. 23 Example of Tourist Review Representing Communication Barriers

Source: Booking.com Review (2024)

As illustrated in Figure 4.23, the tourist reports that the staff were not able to understand English, which created significant communication difficulties during the interaction. The tourist had to repeat their requests multiple times, indicating a breakdown in communication. Furthermore, the misunderstanding regarding the complimentary breakfast resulted in dissatisfaction and confusion. This example demonstrates that communication barriers not only affect interaction but can also lead to service-related problems, ultimately reducing tourists' satisfaction and trust in the service. This case indicates that communication barriers can lead to service failure, where misunderstandings directly affect the quality of service experienced by tourists.

Overall, defining and naming the themes allows the researcher to clearly distinguish between different patterns of tourists' experiences. These themes not only represent recurring issues found in the dataset but also provide a structured understanding of how English communication influences tourists' perceptions. By identifying both positive and negative experiences, the analysis highlights the significant role of language proficiency in shaping the quality of tourism services.

4.5.3 Defining and Naming Themes

After the themes were reviewed and refined, the next stage involved clearly defining and naming each theme. According to Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021), this stage is important to identify the core meaning of each theme and determine what aspect of the data it represents. Defining themes allows the researcher to provide a clear interpretation of the patterns found in the dataset and ensures that each theme captures a distinct concept (Nowell et al., 2017).

In this study, two main themes were identified, namely Effective English Communication and Communication Barriers. These themes represent contrasting experiences reported by foreign tourists when interacting with tourism service providers in Yogyakarta.

The theme Effective English Communication refers to situations where tourism staff were able to communicate clearly and effectively in English. This includes the ability to provide understandable information, respond to tourists' questions, and assist tourists in a helpful manner. Reviews that fall under this theme often describe positive experiences, where tourists felt comfortable, satisfied, and confident during their interactions (Ladhari, 2009).

The theme Communication Barriers refers to situations where limited English proficiency among tourism service providers hindered effective interaction. Tourists reported difficulties in understanding information, expressing their needs, and interacting effectively with staff. In some cases, communication barriers led to misunderstandings and service-related problems, which negatively affected tourists' experiences (Namkung & Jang, 2010).

Overall, defining and naming the themes allows the researcher to clearly distinguish between different patterns of tourists' experiences. These themes not only represent recurring issues found in the dataset but also provide a structured understanding of how English communication influences tourists' perceptions.

4.5.4 Theme Interpretation and Discussion

After defining and naming the themes, the next stage involves interpreting and discussing the themes in relation to the research objectives and the broader context of tourism services. According to (Braun & Clarke, 2006), this stage is important because it allows the researcher to go beyond describing the data and provide deeper insights into what the themes reveal about the phenomenon being studied.

The findings of this study indicate that English communication plays a significant role in shaping foreign tourists' experiences in tourism services in Yogyakarta. The presence of both Effective English Communication and Communication Barriers demonstrates that tourists' experiences vary depending on the level of English proficiency among tourism service providers.

Effective communication enables tourists to obtain accurate information, ask questions, and interact confidently with service providers. This indicates that language skills play an important role in building trust and enhancing tourists' overall perception of service quality. These findings are consistent with recent studies highlighting the relationship between language, service quality, and tourists' emotional experiences. Effective communication, particularly through the use of English, is considered a key element in delivering excellent service in international tourism settings. According to (Ladhari, 2009), service quality is closely associated with emotional satisfaction, where

clear and effective interaction contributes to feelings of comfort, trust, and overall satisfaction. In addition, (Tsang, 2019) emphasize that communication quality plays a significant role in shaping tourists' evaluation of service excellence as well as their overall experience. In this context, English proficiency not only facilitates the delivery of excellent service but also enhances tourists' emotional experiences, such as feeling welcomed, valued, and confident during their interactions with service providers.

In contrast, the theme Communication Barriers reveals that limited English proficiency can create significant challenges in tourism interactions. Tourists may experience misunderstandings, difficulty in obtaining information, and frustration when communication is not effective. In some cases, communication barriers may lead to service-related problems, such as incorrect information or mismatched expectations between tourists and service providers. This finding indicates that communication barriers are not merely linguistic issues but also reflect deeper problems related to service quality and consistency in tourism services. These findings are supported by previous studies which highlight that communication problems in service encounters can negatively affect customer satisfaction and lead to service failure. According to (Zeithaml et al., 2023), ineffective communication in service delivery often results in customer dissatisfaction and perceived service failure. Similarly, (Namkung & Jang, 2010) argue that service failures in hospitality contexts are frequently associated with miscommunication, which can trigger negative emotional responses such as frustration and dissatisfaction among customers.

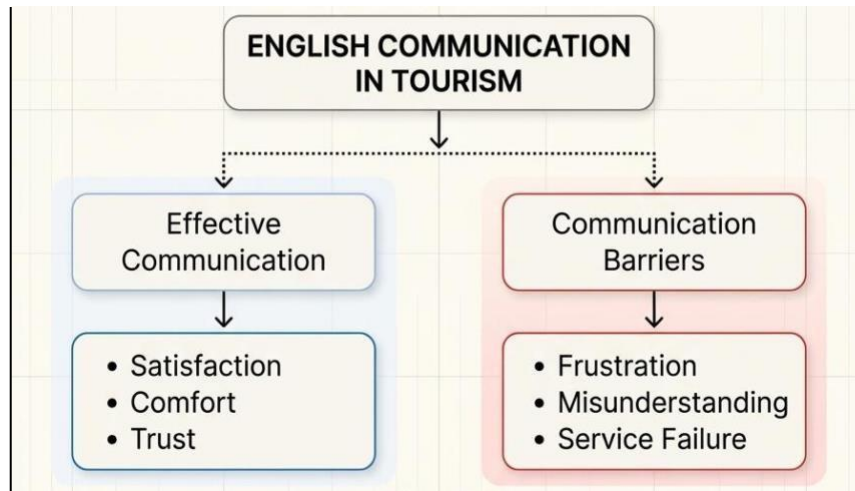


Figure 4. 24 The Relationship Between English Communication and Tourists' Experiences

The relationship between English communication and tourists' experiences is illustrated in Figure 4.24. The diagram shows that English communication in tourism services influences tourists' experiences in two main ways. Effective English communication leads to positive outcomes such as satisfaction, comfort, and trust, while communication barriers result in negative outcomes such as misunderstanding, frustration, and service failure. This relationship indicates that language proficiency plays a central role in shaping both the functional and emotional aspects of tourists' experiences.

This finding also implies that English communication functions as a service standard in international tourism, where the ability to communicate effectively becomes an indicator of professionalism and service reliability. The importance of English as a global language in international tourism has been widely recognized, as it facilitates interaction between tourists and service providers from different linguistic backgrounds. According to (Crystal, 2003), English serves as a global lingua franca that enables communication across cultures, particularly in international settings such as tourism. In addition, (Alananzeh, 2018) emphasize that communication competence is a key factor in ensuring service effectiveness

and enhancing tourists' overall experience in international tourism contexts.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that English communication is a crucial factor in determining the quality of tourism services. The contrast between positive and negative experiences suggests that English proficiency among tourism service providers in Yogyakarta is not evenly distributed. Therefore, improving English communication skills should be considered an important strategy to enhance service quality, ensure consistency, and create more positive experiences for international tourists. This finding is consistent with previous studies which emphasize that effective communication plays a key role in shaping tourists' satisfaction and service quality (Blue & Harun, 2003; Leslie & Russell, 2006).

4.5.5 Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study provide important implications for both tourism practice and academic research. These implications are derived from the identified themes, which demonstrate how English communication influences foreign tourists' experiences in tourism services. The presence of both effective communication and communication barriers indicates that language plays a crucial role not only in facilitating interaction but also in shaping tourists' overall perception of service quality.

4.5.5.1 Practical Implications

Barriers indicates that limited English proficiency can negatively affect service from a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of improving English communication skills among tourism service providers in Yogyakarta. The presence of communication quality, create misunderstandings, and reduce tourists' satisfaction. In some cases, communication problems may also lead to service failure, where tourists

receive incorrect information or experience difficulties in expressing their needs.

Therefore, tourism stakeholders should consider implementing structured training programs, workshops, and continuous language development initiatives to enhance the English-speaking abilities of tourism workers. These programs should not only focus on basic language skills but also emphasize practical communication in real tourism contexts, such as handling guest inquiries, providing clear explanations, and responding to tourists' requests effectively.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that English communication should be treated as a standard component of service quality in international tourism. Effective communication enables tourism staff to deliver services more efficiently, reduce potential misunderstandings, and ensure that tourists feel comfortable during their interactions. In addition, the ability to communicate well in English contributes to building trust and creating a positive impression of the destination.

This finding is consistent with previous studies which emphasize that communication skills are essential in the tourism industry, as they support service delivery and enhance tourists' overall satisfaction (Namkung & Jang, 2010; Tsang, 2019). Therefore, improving English communication skills should be considered a strategic effort to improve service consistency and competitiveness in tourism destinations.

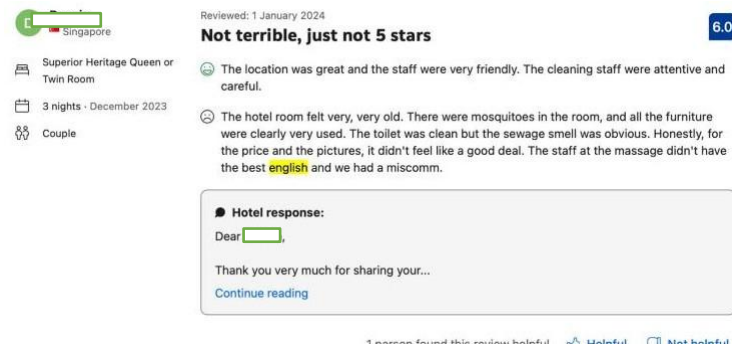


Figure 4. 25 Example of Tourist Review Highlighting the Impact of English Communication on Service Experience

Source: Booking.com Review (2024)

The importance of English communication is further illustrated in Figure 4.25. The review shows that even when other aspects of the service, such as staff friendliness and location, are perceived positively, limited English proficiency can still lead to miscommunication between tourists and service providers. This situation demonstrates that communication plays a central role in ensuring the effectiveness of service delivery.

The review also indicates that communication problems may occur despite the presence of other positive service attributes, suggesting that English proficiency is a critical factor in determining tourists' overall experiences. When communication is not effective, tourists may feel confused, frustrated, or dissatisfied, even if other aspects of the service meet their expectations (Ladhari, 2009; Namkung & Jang, 2010).

This finding implies that English proficiency should not be viewed as a complementary skill, but rather as a fundamental component of service quality in tourism. Improving communication skills can help minimize misunderstandings, enhance service interactions, and create more positive and consistent experiences for international tourists.

4.5.5.2 Academic Implications

The findings support previous research that highlights. From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the field of applied linguistics and tourism by providing empirical evidence on how language use influences tourists' perceptions the importance of communication in tourism services, particularly in facilitating interaction and enhancing service quality.

In addition, this study offers new insights into the specific context of Yogyakarta as a cultural tourism destination, where English communication plays a crucial role in bridging interactions between local service providers and international tourists. The results show that language use is not only related to functional communication but also influences tourists' emotional responses, such as comfort, trust, and satisfaction.

Furthermore, this study expands the discussion on the role of language in tourism by demonstrating that communication barriers can have a direct impact on service effectiveness and tourists' perceptions. This suggests that language competence should be considered an important variable in future tourism research, particularly in studies that focus on service quality and tourist satisfaction. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to explore English communication in tourism using different approaches, such as combining qualitative and quantitative methods or examining other factors that may influence communication effectiveness in tourism services. Overall, these implications highlight the importance of strengthening English communication in tourism services as a key factor in improving both service quality and tourists' experiences.

4.6 Producing the Report

The final stage of thematic analysis involves producing the report, where the findings are presented in a structured and coherent manner. According to Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021), this stage is essential as it allows the researcher to communicate the results of the analysis clearly and link them to the research objectives.

In this study, the findings have been presented through a systematic process that includes coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation. Each theme is supported by data extracts in the form of online reviews written by foreign tourists, ensuring that the analysis remains grounded in real experiences. The inclusion of figures and examples of tourist reviews further strengthens the credibility of the findings by providing direct evidence from the dataset, which is an important aspect of qualitative research (Nowell et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the results of this study have been interpreted to explain how English communication influences tourists' perceptions of tourism services in Yogyakarta. The analysis highlights that English proficiency plays a significant role in shaping both positive and negative experiences among foreign tourists. As emphasized by Braun and Clarke (2006), the reporting stage should not only present themes but also provide meaningful interpretation of the data.

The findings also address the research questions by demonstrating that foreign tourists' perceptions of English communication vary depending on the level of language proficiency among tourism service providers. Effective English communication contributes to positive experiences, while communication barriers create challenges that may negatively affect tourists' satisfaction.

Overall, the report presents a comprehensive understanding of how English communication functions within tourism services. By integrating data analysis with interpretation, this study provides meaningful insights into the role of language in shaping tourists' experiences and perceptions.

4.7 Discussion

To comprehensively fulfill the research objectives, this study synthesized 38 user generated review extracts (labeled sequentially as T1 to T38) collected across four major online travel platforms: Agoda, Google Maps, TripAdvisor, and Booking.com. To maintain qualitative research standards and structural clarity, each review extract was assigned a standardized alphanumeric code where 'T' stands for 'Tourist'. These codes correspond directly to the sequential order of data extraction from the online platforms. The methodological rationale for employing this coding system is twofold: first, to adhere to online qualitative research ethics by ensuring participant anonymity and masking personal usernames (Kozinets, 2010); and second, to establish a transparent audit trail that allows seamless cross-referencing between the narrative discussion in Chapter IV, the initial coding matrix (Table 4.2), and the complete dataset in Appendix 2. Overall, these 38 dataset items represent authentic, unprompted post-consumption feedback from foreign tourists regarding their direct communicative interactions with local workers across accommodations, heritage attractions, tour services, and private transport in Yogyakarta.

Based on the initial coding and thematic categorization process, the 38 review extracts are quantifiably divided into 17 positive extracts representing the theme Effective English Communication (T1, T7, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T15, T22, T24, T25, T31, T32, T33, T34, T35, T36, T38) and 21 negative extracts representing the theme Communication

Barriers (T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T8, T14, T16, T17, T18, T19, T20, T21, T23, T26, T27, T28, T29, T30, T37).

A detailed qualitative examination of these extracts reveals distinct operational issues across both positive and negative encounters. In the 17 positive extracts, foreign tourists praised service providers who demonstrated spontaneous fluency, clarity, and helpfulness. The primary positive aspects highlighted include seamless check-in and reception processes (T1, T15, T22, T25, T35, T36), effective historical and cultural interpretation during guided tours (T13, T34), high flexibility in making on-the-spot itinerary adjustments (T31, T33), and multilingual capabilities (T7, T12). Furthermore, tourists expressed appreciation for local personnel who combined functional English with patience and adaptive digital translation tools (T38). Conversely, the 21 negative extracts highlight critical operational breakdowns caused by language gaps. The primary negative issues identified include severe miscommunications regarding room billing, double charges, and unfulfilled complimentary services (T18), unhandled housekeeping requests (T28), and miscommunication in wellness or spa services (T30). Additionally, tourists pointed out a prevalent structural issue regarding personnel who rely strictly on memorized phrases but completely fail when faced with unscripted or complex inquiries, as explicitly articulated in T19 ("knew a few lines by heart but once you ask them something they don't understand"). Other critical challenges include a total absence of basic English comprehension during check-in, late-night emergencies, or transport services (T3, T4, T5, T17, T21, T29), unmet expectations in higher-tier accommodations charging premium rates (T4, T26), and inconsistent English proficiency among staff members within the same establishment (T37).

Analyzing the impact of these positive and negative issues illustrates how language interactions directly alter tourist satisfaction and behavior. When interactions fall under the 17 positive extracts, the outcome is an immediate elevation of perceived service quality, where tourists gain psychological comfort, feel welcomed, and express trust in the local service providers. Clear communication allows tourists to fully appreciate local cultural heritage and navigate their trips without stress. On the other hand, when service encounters fall under the 21 negative extracts, the outcome leads directly to service failure. Language barriers convert simple operational tasks into sources of guest frustration, financial misunderstandings, and inconvenience. This dynamic proves that communication gaps do not merely cause temporary confusion, but actively damage guest satisfaction and undermine the destination's reputation.

The empirical findings from the 38 data points strongly corroborate and extend the theoretical frameworks and previous studies established in Chapter II. The findings align directly with tourist perception theories established by Chen and Tsai (2007) and Zeithaml et al. (2018), which assert that tourist perception is formed through direct service encounters where language clarity functions as a core dimension of perceived service quality. The 17 positive extracts validate Zeithaml et al. (2018) by proving that communicative clarity fosters emotional satisfaction, trust, and psychological comfort. In contrast, the 21 negative extracts support Chen and Tsai (2007) by demonstrating that language barriers act as direct service failures that diminish guest comfort and trigger customer dissatisfaction. Furthermore, these results validate previous studies in hospitality communication, particularly Alananzeh and Tarhini (2020) and Tsang and Lee (2021), who argued that frontline language competence directly mitigates service errors and shapes

positive tourist impressions. The issue of surface-level or "scripted English" identified in T19 strongly reinforces the arguments of Blue and Harun (2003) and Leslie and Russell (2006), who emphasized that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in hospitality requires task-oriented, spontaneous fluency rather than memorized routines. Finally, in line with Sulistyawati and Halili (2023) regarding communicative gaps in Indonesian destinations, the higher prevalence of negative extracts (21 out of 38 data) proves that English competence among tourism service providers in Yogyakarta remains unevenly distributed across sectors.

Synthesizing these empirical patterns and theoretical linkages directly answers the two core research questions. In response to Research Question 1 regarding how foreign tourists view the use of English, the data demonstrates that international visitors view English not as an optional luxury, but as an indispensable standard of service quality that directly governs operational convenience and emotional satisfaction. Effective communication (17 extracts) fosters guest trust, security, and deeper engagement with local heritage, whereas communication barriers (21 extracts) convert routine service touchpoints into operational breakdowns that cause financial frustration and dissatisfaction. In response to Research Question 2 regarding how foreign tourists evaluate service providers' English speaking ability, the analysis reveals that tourists evaluate local language competence as highly variable. While specialized private drivers and official tour guides frequently exhibit high fluency or multilingual capabilities, frontline hotel staff and general workers often display a significant competency gap by relying either on memorized scripts or lacking basic comprehension.

In summary, this empirical investigation demonstrates that language proficiency in Yogyakarta's tourism ecosystem extends far beyond simple verbal exchanges; it directly defines the boundary between memorable hospitality and service failure. While the presence of articulate, multilingual, and adaptable local personnel proves that high quality service interactions are already happening across the region, the remaining operational gaps marked by scripted responses, unhandled requests, and complete language breakdowns continue to hinder the destination's full potential. Addressing these communicative discrepancies through targeted language training and standardized service benchmarks is therefore essential to bridge the gap between international tourist expectations and local service delivery, ultimately ensuring that Yogyakarta maintains its reputation as a world-class cultural destination.