

## Exploring Web-Based Resources on Communication Practices: A Breakthrough in English for Hospitality Industry

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**Abstract:** Insofar as communication skills in the hospitality industry remain a major concern in the workplace, a breakthrough is highly paramount and sought-after regarding the barriers in English. Barely in industrial career have the people been equipped with adequate English instructional materials for communication practices. The workplace climate thereby tends to be less enthralling and humdrum. To address this pertinent issue, the internet offers a wide array of invaluable information sources to shape the way out through the World Wide Web. Web-based resources have presently been a prevalent upshot from the recent digital literacy due to the covid-19 pandemic. Accordingly, this paper aims to shed new light on the use of web-based resources to better facilitate communication practices in English for the hospitality industry. The useful websites are put forward regarding some domains in the industry. It is necessarily suggested that those in the related sector be able to take advantage of the proposed information.

**Keywords:** *Web-based resources, communication, English, hospitality industry*

At present, the role of network-based technology is creating a new trend of learning environments anytime and anywhere. Thus, people can easily communicate with each other without any restrictions. They will invest time and space, for example, to participate in online training programs and find suitable practice materials. In the last decade, web-based learning pedagogy has become increasingly dominant in education, both in schools and in institutions of higher education. It helps teachers, professors, and students with new and extensive teaching and learning experiences, such as acquiring information, online information presentation, task-based interactive activities, and effective information dissemination (Nam & Smith-Jackson, 2007). In recent years, the use of educational materials on the World Wide Web (WWW) has increased significantly. Although it is still a super information database that connects the world with an easy-to-use WWW interface, the internet is transforming into a brand-new education model that is applied to almost all business sectors. This trend has even led to changes in human lifestyles. The development of information and communication technologies, especially those related to the internet, has changed the way people learn (Chan *et al.*, 2001).

Good communication is essential to the effective functioning of any organization. Many people will agree that it is the foundation of a successful organization. Therefore, communication skills are very useful for the members of the organization. It is endless because the world is changing rapidly. Appropriate communication has a very compelling impact on the success and survival of the organization (Rudd & Mills, 2015). Communication

skills in English are a fundamental requirement not only to advance to a better position in the modern business world but also to seek and maintain a good job (Marylin, 2006). Competent English oral communication skills can be a successful passport in the international workplace and industry (Srisudaporn, 2006). A study conducted by Prachanant (2012) showed that need analysis plays a vital role in the development of English for specific purposes curriculum. This study investigated the needs, functions, and problems of the use of English in 40 tourism professionals. Using questionnaires and analyzing the data by frequency, percentage, average, and standard deviation, the results of the survey showed that spoken English is the most important, followed by listening, reading, and writing. The three most relevant functions of using English are providing information, followed by providing services, and providing help. That also includes problems with the use of English; inability to use appropriate words, expressions, vocabulary, and lack of grammatical knowledge.

Hospitality is an important industry. It has made significant contributions to the economic development of many countries. In some countries, it relies on it as a catalyst for growth and development. Hospitality is one of the lucrative sectors that will stand up to its evolution by providing recreational services to guest business travelers or tourists. A hotel's consumers or guests cannot be restricted by geographic boundaries as communication plays an essential role in providing services to guests. Staffs with excellent communication skills provide the best service to the guests because they know no limits to their work and English plays an important role in their communication to improve job performance (Madera, Dawsonm, Neal, & Bush, 2012).

## **ENGLISH FOR HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

The hospitality industry is growing rapidly worldwide, making it one of the largest industries in the world. This industry has some unique characteristics. It combines intangible services with product types and is labor-intensive and service-oriented. The industry is supposed to offer the best employment and business opportunities and the greatest employment opportunities of the century. Given these factors, hotel managers today need to understand the importance of multicultural concepts and communication skills to work in a diverse human resources environment. In general, several benefits can be gained by understanding the diverse cultures of the hospitality industry as it improves good relationships with employees in the workplace and overcomes anti-discrimination. When employees can work in harmony with satisfaction, they can provide better service to their customers to ensure guest satisfaction. Therefore, hotel managers are responsible for ensuring

clear and consistent cultural misunderstandings between colleagues, employees, customers, and effectively communicate and interact with people from other cultures (Oktadiana & Djauhari, 2011).

English is very significant for hotel staff. This language is part of the job because it is one of the communication tools in the workplace. Especially in the hotel industry, it should not be taken for granted as it can improve communication efficiency. In this case, the service involves communication between the host and the guest, which is an important business in the hotel industry. To communicate effectively, it is undeniable that hotel employees must have excellent English skills. Research done by Prabhu and Wani (2021) revealed that (1) all hoteliers and the faculty and students of the School of Hotel Management strongly agree that proficiency in English is a prerequisite for engaging in the hotel industry; (2) the attributes, language fluency and self-confidence, personality and supportive body language of fresh graduates are defective, which influence the performance; and (3) the industry and academia are willing and should work together to improve the English communication level of the students to meet industry requirements. The need for learners to the real needs of hospitality in terms of communication skills is of utmost importance (Rahim, 2011). It is appropriate to see an agreement on what capabilities staff (existing and potential), employers, and educators must instill into learners to prepare the hospitality industry. Students with potential careers in the tourism and hotel industries must recognize that communication skills are essential to the work they can hire. There is always a discrepancy between the skill requirements. Identifying and connecting gaps are essential.

Putri, Kher, Rani, and Ramli (2018) revealed that speaking and listening are the most necessary language skills among the four in the hotel and tourism industry. These skills are mainly used to welcome customers (mainly non-native English speakers). In addition, most of the employees of the two companies are required to serve English-based customers. The results of this research are expected to provide valuable information for ESP teachers and course designers to organize ESP courses and teaching materials. Besides, Firharmawan and Andika (2019) showed that skills, from most necessary to least necessary in the hospitality industry, are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Then three main uses of language are providing services, providing information, and providing assistance. Furthermore, problems encountered in using English include limited vocabulary, guessing new words, lack of grammar knowledge, inability to keep up, and lack of confidence.

Grobella (2015) suggested that the hospitality industry creates challenges for learning programs, not only providing students with opportunities to gain knowledge about cultural

differences in real life but also improving language and communication skills and the ability to work in a linguistic and sociocultural environment. Therefore, intercultural appreciation and respect for diversity are the starting points for hospitality students to realize that service contacts must be tailored to the specific needs of foreign guests with culturally sensitive behaviors, which can enrich the intercultural interactive experience. Teaching methods can give students a competitive edge in a hospitality management career. This is supported by Jhaiyanuntana and Nomnian (2020) that academic programs should equip the students with proficiency in foreign languages and cultures, problem-solving skills, and intercultural and interpersonal understanding skills. This will help raise awareness and the need to incorporate cross-cultural communication skills into hotel curricula, which can produce well-equipped graduates prepared for a multilingual and multicultural work environment.

### **COMMUNICATION PRACTICES: BENEFITS AND BARRIERS**

Communication is an influential part of the hospitality industry. Good oral and written communication skills are highly valued and essential skills for hospitality professionals at different levels. Kostic (2011) studied the importance of ideal cooperation of hotel/language teaching plans to make a positive contribution to the development of the hotel industry. He pointed out gaps in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and found American English was more popular than British English. The study concluded that it is necessary to address the weakness of communication skills and invest a lot of effort to improve this weakness, which is the principal for sustainable development. In the workplace, just like the hotel industry, communication plays an immersive role in making the environment peaceful and pleasant. To maintain this environment, the hotel industry most needs communication to achieve high productivity (Iqbal, 2014) because internal employee communication is linked to the performance of hotel employees (Lahap, 'Omahony, & Dalrymple, 2016). It is proven that internal communication capabilities have a positive impact on hotel productivity (Yidiz, 2015). In the hospitality industry, revenue depends on guest satisfaction and service is the key to success. Internal communication plays an indispensable role, and how its performance affects guest satisfaction in the hospitality industry should be examined. Bamporiki (2010) found that information sources (such as newsletters, magazines, books, periodicals, and peers) emphasize the importance of internal communication on guest satisfaction within the hotel organization.

Hence, speaking skills are necessary for language learners all over the world. Without speaking, language becomes pure writing. The use of language is an occupation that occurs

within the limits of the environment. People use language in certain situations. If the speaker can grab the audience's attention and hold it until the information is complete, then the speaker can be considered an effective speaker. Spoken language skills are important to career success, but they are not limited to one's career ambitions. Communication strategy is the way students use to overcome these problems to convey their intended meaning. Strategies used may include paraphrases, substitutions, creating new words, switching to the first language, and asking for clarification. In addition to changing the language, these strategies are also used by native speakers. This may not only be due to the lack of basic grammar and vocabulary, but also the lack of proper communication strategies. People with low ability have difficulty choosing the most appropriate strategy for many communication environments (Srisudaporn, 2006). Based on Disilva and Arun (2017), English communication has always been considered an attribute of hotel industry employees' choice. They are very close to the guests and recognize their concern for service. The study identified communication barriers and recommended regular training and development plans to be implemented as measures to psychologically develop employees to overcome communication barriers.

There are some benefits of effective communication in the hospitality industry. Mendiratta (n.d) highlights that it ultimately helps in team building to ensure the free flow of information. Effective communication helps managers form teams that are highly efficient in their positive correlation with organizational productivity. It also reduces unnecessary competition within the team. Each team member can understand their roles and responsibilities and enhance synergies within the team. Then administrators can bridge the gap between expected and achieved outcomes without a hostile environment. In addition, effective communication helps to improve and strengthen the overall morale of employees. Employees appreciate the effective and clear communication of the Chief Executive Officer. That helps change the workplace into a very healthy work environment to provide quality services since ineffective communication can negatively affect an organization's performance, possibly leading to frustration and confusion among workers.

Besides, effective communication is more important by breaking down different cultural and language barriers. Removing all these barriers is critical to providing quality customer service. Companies can avoid all these differences and confusion by providing quality training to their employees before and after joining the company at regular stages. Business in the hospitality sector is more global than ever. Consequently, the need for effective communication in it is becoming more and more crucial. Managers and employees

must know how to respond and communicate internationally. Due to cultural differences between countries in international business, they need to understand global terms when a company expands its business across borders. Furthermore, effective communication channels can increase the understanding between employees of the organization, thereby generating a positive attitude and thereby improving customer service. Effective communication also helps to better understand the latest technologies used by the enterprise, which will automatically increase productivity.

Generally, there are four types of communication barriers. They are process barriers, physical barriers, semantic barriers, and psychosocial barriers (Eisenberg, 2010). According to Mendiratta (n.d), in terms of effective communication, companies in this industry face certain obstacles every day. The various obstacles that organizations face in the effective implementation of communication include the language barrier. Most management professionals working in the hospitality industry consider language barriers to be one of the most critical challenges. Even if two people use the same language to communicate, there will be language barriers. This is because the recipient may not have a good understanding of the terminology and jargon used by the communicator. The next is the physical barrier which is defined as the distance between sender and receiver. With the development of technology, the face-to-face interaction between employees and customers has decreased to a certain extent. Accordingly, physical barriers have been growing for many years. Researchers classify workplace interior design, noise, technical issues, weather, etc. as physical barriers to effective communication within the organization.

Psychological barriers defined as individual differences between employees can also be taken into account. These obstacles can take many forms, such as stress, accents, and sometimes unfamiliar accents. Some people in the organization cannot handle any pressure in communication, nor can they handle pressure because they cannot control their emotions. People will explode with anger and emotions that may prevent or distort the exchange of ideas. The last is attitudinal barriers. Character conflicts, poor management, resistance to change and even low motivation are some of the attitude barriers in the communication process. Any kind of attitude conflict will make the communication between the sender and the receiver very difficult. Managers must work hard to overcome this.

## THE WEB-BASED RESOURCES

Wen *et al.* (2004) divided the characteristics of the web-based learning environment into technical content and cognitive metacognition. Additionally, Tsai (2004) argued that web-based learning should not only be regarded as a cognitive or metacognitive tool, but also as an epistemological tool as it implies the nature of knowledge and beliefs. Students will gain a great deal of information and knowledge provided by the internet and will need to reflectively assess the quality of the information and knowledge provided. The web-based learning environment provides students with appropriate opportunities to explore the nature or advantages of knowledge in depth. For this reason, it can be regarded as an epistemological tool. Thus, the web-based learning environment can be further classified in certain aspects; the technical aspect, the content aspect, the cognitive aspect, the metacognitive aspect, and the epistemological aspect.

The internal dimensions of the web-based learning environment include cognition, metacognition, and epistemology because the internal dimension focuses on the interaction between the user provided by the system and the activities involved; therefore, it involves the user's cognitive activities, metacognition process, and epistemological thinking promoted by process and environment. Moreover, the exterior dimension of web-based learning environments covers the technical and content aspects as these aspects mainly cope with the interaction between the user and the machine/system. The technical aspect measures the ease of use of the internet learning system. The content aspect explores the characteristics of the information or learning materials contained in the internet environment. The cognitive aspect investigates the cognitive activities and strategies involved in the web-based learning environment. The metacognitive aspect is evaluated and passed the web-based learning environment to promote the possibility of metacognitive thinking. Finally, the epistemological aspect examines the opportunity to explore the nature of knowledge provided by the environment.

The potential value of web-based learning compared to teacher- and textbook-based instruction is to enable learners to acquire appropriate knowledge and skills to support active, self-reflecting, and cooperative learner roles (Govindasamy, 2002; Hamid, 2002). Web-based programs can support and enhance lifelong learning with an emphasis on learner-directed learning and adaptation (Choi & Leem, 2002). Web-based learning tools can mitigate the impact of potential obstacles teachers face when using technology and provide notable features designed to focus on specific concepts which are easier to learn, easier to use, and more attractive for busy educators with little time to learn more complex and advanced

software packages (Gadanidis, Gadanidis, & Schindler, 2003). Also, they are easy-to-use tools that can engage and promote successful learning (Kay, Knaack, & Petrarca, 2009) and have a significant impact on students' achievement (Sengel, 2005).

Web-based learning resources may support students to explore knowledge and enhance the learning environment (Combes & Valli, 2007). Many researchers have investigated the influence of the media in improving oral English skills. YouTube videos can improve important aspects of speaking skills such as fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar (Gunada, 2018). Furthermore, using the internet for teaching speaking can effectively improve students' speaking skills, and they have given positive feedback to this method (Suryana, Hidantikarnillah, & Oktavianti, 2020). Above all, the latest hospitality literature refers to web-based learning resources in a social media context (Kasavana, Nusair & Teodosic, 2010).

According to Katyaryabova (2021), the web-based resources to learn effective communication practices in English for the hospitality industry are as follows.

| No | Domain                                | Resource's Name                                     | Website   |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1  | General English Resources             | Massive Open Online English Course (MOOEC)          | <a href="https://mooc.com/courses">https://mooc.com/courses</a>   |
|    |                                       | Coursera  | <a href="https://www.coursera.org">https://www.coursera.org</a>   |
|    |                                       | FluentU   | <a href="https://www.fluentu.com/english">https://www.fluentu.com/english</a>   |
| 2  | General Hospitality English Resources | Saylor Academy                                      | <a href="https://learn.saylor.org">https://learn.saylor.org</a>   |
|    |                                       | Business English for Cross-Cultural Communication   | <a href="https://www.coursera.org/learn/cross-cultural-communication-business">https://www.coursera.org/learn/cross-cultural-communication-business</a>                             |
|    |                                       | EnglishForMyJob.com                                 | <a href="http://www.englishformyjob.com">http://www.englishformyjob.com</a>   |
| 3  | Hotels                                | Hotel English Vocabulary                            | <a href="https://www.fluentu.com/english/decks/1385/hotel-english-vocabulary">https://www.fluentu.com/english/decks/1385/hotel-english-vocabulary</a>                               |
|    |                                       | Hotel Housekeeping Essential Vocabulary Flashcards  | <a href="https://www.fluentu.com/english/decks/1789/hotel-housekeeping-essential-vocabulary">https://www.fluentu.com/english/decks/1789/hotel-housekeeping-essential-vocabulary</a> |
| 4  | Bars and Clubs                        | DrinksMixer   | <a href="http://www.drinksmixer.com">http://www.drinksmixer.com</a>   |
|    |                                       | Barista Guide                                       | <a href="http://www.baristaguide.com">http://www.baristaguide.com</a>   |
| 5  | Airlines                              | Global Aviation                                     | <a href="http://aviationenglishblog.com">http://aviationenglishblog.com</a>   |
| 6  | Casinos                               | Job Monkey's Casino Glossary                        | <a href="https://www.jobmonkey.com/casino/glossary">https://www.jobmonkey.com/casino/glossary</a>   |
|    |                                       | My English Language-At the Casino                   | <a href="https://www.myenglishlanguage.com/essential-vocabulary/entertainment/casino">https://www.myenglishlanguage.com/essential-vocabulary/entertainment/casino</a>               |
| 7  | Cruise Ships                          | Marlins Maritime English                            | <a href="https://marlins.co.uk/maritime-english">https://marlins.co.uk/maritime-english</a>   |
|    |                                       | Marlins English Language Test for Cruise Ship Staff | <a href="https://www.marlinstests.com/index.php">https://www.marlinstests.com/index.php</a>   |



In addition, the web-based resources for the hospitality industry in general to support the effective communication practices based on Tatti (2016) are below.

| No | Domain   | Resource's Name                  | Website   |
|----|--|----------------------------------|---|
| 1  | Hotel Marketing Advice                         | Hotel Speak                      | <a href="https://www.hotelspeak.com">https://www.hotelspeak.com</a>   |
|    |  | Are Morch                        | <a href="https://aremorch.com/blog">https://aremorch.com/blog</a>   |
|    |  | Little Hotelier                  | <a href="https://www.littlehotelier.com/blog">https://www.littlehotelier.com/blog</a>                                 |
| 2  | Hotel Travel Trends                            | Skift                            | <a href="https://skift.com">https://skift.com</a>   |
|    |  | Ehotelier                        | <a href="https://ehotelier.com">https://ehotelier.com</a>   |
|    |  | TripAdvisor Insights             | <a href="https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/TripAdvisorInsights">https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/TripAdvisorInsights</a>   |
| 3  | Hotel Managing and Training Staff              | The Daily Muse                   | <a href="https://www.themuse.com/advice">https://www.themuse.com/advice</a>   |
|    |  | Customer Service Zone            | <a href="http://customerservicezone.com/db">http://customerservicezone.com/db</a>                                     |
| 4  | Restaurant and Bar Marketing Advice            | Nightclub and Bar                | <a href="https://www.barandrestaurant.com">https://www.barandrestaurant.com</a>                                       |
|    |  | Gourmet Marketing                | <a href="https://www.gourmetmarketing.net/learning-center">https://www.gourmetmarketing.net/learning-center</a>       |
|    |  | Toast Restaurant Management Blog | <a href="https://pos.toasttab.com/blog">https://pos.toasttab.com/blog</a>   |
|    |  | Aaron Allen                      | <a href="https://aaronallen.com/blog">https://aaronallen.com/blog</a>   |
|    |  | Cloudbeds                        | <a href="https://www.cloudbeds.com/blog">https://www.cloudbeds.com/blog</a>   |
| 5  | Restaurant and Bar Food Trends                 | Foodable                         | <a href="https://www.foodabletv.com/blog">https://www.foodabletv.com/blog</a>   |
|    |  | Food Fanatics                    | <a href="http://foodfanatics.usfoods.com/blog">foodfanatics.usfoods.com/blog</a>                                      |
|    |  | Restaurant Hospitality           | <a href="https://www.restaurant-hospitality.com">https://www.restaurant-hospitality.com</a>                           |
| 6  | Restaurant and Bar Managing and Training Staff | The Restaurant Coach             | <a href="https://www.therestaurantcoach.com">https://www.therestaurantcoach.com</a>                                   |
|    |  | The Restaurant Expert            | <a href="https://therestaurantexpert.com/free-resources">https://therestaurantexpert.com/free-resources</a>           |
|    |  | HotSchedules                     | <a href="https://www.fourth.com/blog">https://www.fourth.com/blog</a>   |
| 7  | Marketing in General                           | HubSpot Marketing Blog           | <a href="https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing">https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing</a>                                   |
|    |  | Marketing Profs                  | <a href="https://www.marketingprofs.com/resources">https://www.marketingprofs.com/resources</a>                       |
|    |  | Website Builders                 | <a href="https://websitesetup.org/best-website-builder-tools">https://websitesetup.org/best-website-builder-tools</a> |
| 8  | Email  | Vero                             | <a href="http://www.getvero.com/articles">www.getvero.com/articles</a>  |
| 9  | Social Media                                   | Social Media Examiner            | <a href="https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com">https://www.socialmediaexaminer.com</a>                                 |
|    |  | Hootsuite blog                   | <a href="https://blog.hootsuite.com">https://blog.hootsuite.com</a>   |
|    |  | Go Future Media                  | <a href="http://www.hollyg.com.au">http://www.hollyg.com.au</a>   |
| 10 | Graphic Design                                 | Canva                            | <a href="https://www.canva.com/id_id">https://www.canva.com/id_id</a>   |
| 11 | Copywriting                                    | Neil Patel                       | <a href="https://neilpatel.com/blog">https://neilpatel.com/blog</a>   |
|    |  | Grammar Girl                     | <a href="https://www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl">https://www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl</a>           |
|    |  | Headline Analyzer                | <a href="https://coschedule.com/headline-analyzer">https://coschedule.com/headline-analyzer</a>                       |
|    |  | Moz Title Tag Previewer          | <a href="https://moz.com/learn/seo/title-tag">https://moz.com/learn/seo/title-tag</a>                                 |
| 12 | Events   | Event Planning Blue Print        | <a href="https://eventplanningblueprint.com/">https://eventplanningblueprint.com/</a>                                 |

|  |                    |   |
|--|--------------------|---|
|  |                    | blog  |
|  | Event Manager Blog | <a href="https://www.eventmanagerblog.com">https://www.eventmanagerblog.com</a> |
|  | BizBash            | <a href="https://www.bizbash.com">https://www.bizbash.com</a>                   |

## CONCLUSION

Web-based learning resources provide tremendous opportunities to learn and acquire a wealth of knowledge and information. The rapid expansion of the internet and the increase in software capabilities are affecting the dynamics of teaching at many different levels and sectors. In the hospitality industry, the presence of online resources to strengthen communication practices in English is always helpful, especially during this pandemic. People working in or related to this industry are expected to be able to realize the benefits, overcome the communication barriers, and use the web-based resources to enhance communication practices related to the domains in the hospitality industry.

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