Communication within the Tourism industry in Hong Kong

In cooperation with:
Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Research Centre for Professional Communication in English

Submitted to:
Professor Winnie Cheng, of Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Professors Stanley Selkow, Jeanine Skorinko, of Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Submitted by:
Lindy Bowen
Francisco Diaz
James Tsai
Kevin Yee

Date of Submission: February 16, 2009
Abstract

The tourism industry is a significant contributor to Hong Kong’s economy. Since one of Hong Kong’s official languages is English, Hong Kong attracts many English speaking tourists to Asia. Although tourism is important to Hong Kong, and English communication is necessary within the tourism industry, there is very little past linguistic research about tourism. The aim of this project is to collect descriptions and observe trends in English interactions within the tourism industry, to help fill this gap. Interactions that occurred naturally between tourists and tourism staff were recorded using Hymes’s (1974) S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model and were rated on level of Formality and English level. Observations were performed at nineteen hotels, eleven shops, and six museums and over eighty three interactions were recorded. Results show that the price range of the hotels influenced the level of English spoken and also found the staff’s position (e.g. concierge, front desk staff, and doorman) had an effect on English level. By collecting information about interactions and analyzing them, a better understanding of English used in the tourism industry was gained.
**Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank our sponsor, Professor Winnie Cheng of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, for providing us with the opportunity to work on this project and for her support, guidance, and patience throughout the course of the project.

We would also like to thank our advisors; Professors Jeanine Skorinko and Stanley Selkow of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, who helped us throughout the course of our project. We appreciate their patience editing our paper and their consistent assistance and support.

Finally, we would like to thank our writing tutor Charles Mezak for helping us write our IQP proposal. We would also like to thank him for sharing information about his past experience with IQP and insights about IQPs in general with us.
Executive Summary

The tourism industry is of great importance to Hong Kong, as it accounts for approximately 3.2% of Hong Kong’s GDP, or HK$45.3 billion (Census and Statistics Department, 2008). Hong Kong attracts tourists from all over the world, including the US, Europe, Australia and mainland China. Because tourism is so economically important and there is substantial diversity among tourists, effective communication with people of different cultural backgrounds is extremely important to the tourism industry. In order to effectively improve communication with tourists, a collection of descriptions of interactions between tourism staff and tourists is necessary.

Although Hong Kong has two official languages, English and Cantonese, we will focus on English. Most Hong Kong residents, who speak English, speak it as a second language, and many tourism interactions occur in English. Exploring communicative abilities in a second language that a country’s tourism industry relies is very important. Also exploring language abilities in Cantonese, the native language of most Hong Kong residents, would not be as worthwhile, because speakers will generally be very proficient in their native language. Furthermore, linguistics and tourism studies about communication in any language have not been sufficiently performed in Hong Kong. As a result, our first goal was to collect and record everyday English interactions within the tourism industry. Observation of interactions between tourism staff and tourists were made in museums, hotels, and shops in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. Six museums, nineteen hotels, and eleven shops were observed. All interactions were observed through naturalistic observation and each interaction involved at least one tourism employee and at least one customer.
Notes about each interaction were taken using Hymes’s (1974) S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, which helps identify and organize important characteristics of speech. Once notes were collected about the interactions, level of English and level of Formality for each interaction were determined using two standardized rubrics. Level of English ratings were made using a rubric that was based on the TOEFL’s (Test of English as a Foreign Language) speaking rubric and included five aspects of effective speech: vocabulary, pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, flow, and ability to engage in meaningful conversation. Level of Formality was determined based on four criteria: degree of honorifics (e.g., sir madam), use of slang and colloquial terms, jokes, and percent of talk related to business. Notes were also taken about the price range of the hotels and the position (e.g., sales associate, concierge, front desk employee) of the tourism staff involved in the interaction.

Once all interactions were evaluated for level of English and level of Formality, statistical analysis was used to identify trends in the interactions. Significant relationships were discovered between English level and price range of hotels and between English level and the position of the tourism staff. Employees at more expensive hotels were more likely to have a higher level of English. Concierges, museum tour guides and front desk workers (at both hotels and museums) were found to speak with higher levels of English, while restaurant staff and direction assistants were found to speak with the lower levels of English.
Authorship Page

Lindy Bowen observed interactions at museums and electronics shops. She wrote the Abstract and Executive Summary with Kevin and the Introduction with Francisco and Kevin. She researched and wrote sections 2.2 Language in Hong Kong and 2.3 Linguistic studies and section 2.7 Conclusion in the literature review. She wrote the three rubrics for classification of various aspects of interactions (figures 1-3), and section 3.2 Museums Methods. She also wrote section 5.5 Recommendations for Future Research. Lindy edited, compiled, and formatted all sections of the paper, and put together the references pages.

Francisco Diaz observed interactions at hotels and shops. He wrote the Introduction with Kevin and Lindy. He researched and wrote sections 2.4 Communication, 2.5 Communicative competence, and 2.6 Models and measures of Communicative competence, including 2.6.1 Canale & Swain’s model in the Literature Review. Francisco researched and wrote about the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model in the methods section. He performed a majority of statistical analyses for the group, and wrote sections 5.1 Description of Job Positions and English Level, 5.2 English and Price Range, and 5.3 Level of English and Types of Responses and Initiations. Francisco edited Appendix C: Complete interaction records with Kevin.

James Tsai observed interactions at hotels and shops. He researched and wrote section 2.6.2 TOEFL in the literature review, and researched section 2.1 Importance of Tourism, including all subparts of the section. James helped with statistical analysis, wrote section 4 Results, and compiled all graphs included in the section. James wrote Appendix A: Sponsor Organization and Appendix B: Cost Benefit Analysis.

Kevin Yee observed interactions at hotels and shops. He wrote the Abstract and Executive Summary with Lindy and the Introduction with Francisco and Lindy. He wrote section 2.1 including subparts 2.all subparts of the section. Kevin wrote most of section 3 Methods, with the exception of the three figures included, information about the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G mode, and section 3.2 Museums Methods. Kevin also wrote section 5.4 Limitations. Kevin edited Appendix C: Complete interaction records with Francisco.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... ii  
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................................ iii  
Executive Summary ........................................................................................................................... iv  
Authorship Page ............................................................................................................................... vi  
Table of Contents .............................................................................................................................. vii  
List of Figures ................................................................................................................................... viii  
List of Tables ...................................................................................................................................... ix  
1. Introduction ..................................................................................................................................... 1  
2. Literature Review ............................................................................................................................ 2  
   2.1 Importance of Tourism .............................................................................................................. 2  
      2.1.1 Importance of Shopping ................................................................................................. 3  
      2.1.2 Importance of Hotels ................................................................................................... 4  
      2.1.3 Importance of Museums ............................................................................................... 5  
2.2 Languages in Hong Kong ............................................................................................................ 5  
2.3 Linguistic studies ....................................................................................................................... 7  
2.4 Communication ........................................................................................................................... 8  
2.5 Communicative competence ....................................................................................................... 9  
2.6 Models and measures of Communicative competence .............................................................. 10  
   2.6.1 Canale & Swain’s Model ................................................................................................. 11  
   2.6.2 TOEFL .......................................................................................................................... 11  
2.7 Conclusion .................................................................................................................................. 12  
3. Methods ......................................................................................................................................... 13  
3.1 Shopping Methods ...................................................................................................................... 18  
3.2 Museums Methods ..................................................................................................................... 19  
3.3 Hotels Methods .......................................................................................................................... 20  
4. Results .......................................................................................................................................... 22  
5. Discussion ...................................................................................................................................... 32  
   5.1 Description of Job Positions and English Levels ................................................................... 32  
   5.2 English and Price Range ......................................................................................................... 38  
   5.3 Level of English and Types of Responses and Initiations ...................................................... 40  
   5.4 Limitations .............................................................................................................................. 42  
   5.5 Recommendations for Future research .................................................................................. 42  
   5.6 Conclusion .............................................................................................................................. 44  
Appendix A: Sponsor Organization .................................................................................................. 46  
Appendix B: Cost Benefit Analysis .................................................................................................... 47  
Appendix C: Complete Interaction Records ..................................................................................... 48  
References .......................................................................................................................................... 147
List of Figures

Figure 1: Levels of English................................................................................................................... 16
Figure 2: Levels of Formality .................................................................................................................. 16
Figure 3: Types of initiations and responses........................................................................................ 18
List of Tables

Table 1: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 1 vs. Researcher 2 ................................................................. 22
Table 2: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 1 vs. Researcher 3 ................................................................. 23
Table 3: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 2 vs. Researcher 3 ................................................................. 23
Table 4: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 2 vs. Researcher 4 ................................................................. 24
Table 5: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 3 vs. Researcher 4 ................................................................. 24
Table 6: Means and Standard Deviations English Level Vs Price Range ..................................................... 25
Table 7: Means and Standard Deviations English Level Vs Position ......................................................... 26
Table 8: Comparison of the mean English level for different positions of staff ............................................ 27
Table 9: Means and Standard Deviations English level Vs Branch .............................................................. 28
Table 10: Means and Standard Deviations English Level Vs Locations ..................................................... 28
Table 11: Means and Standard Deviations English Level Vs Formality ...................................................... 29
Table 12: Means and Standard Deviations Formality Vs English level ...................................................... 29
Table 13: Means and Standard Deviations Formality Vs Location .............................................................. 30
Table 14: Means and Standard Deviations Formality Vs Price Range ......................................................... 30
Table 15: Means and Standard Deviations Formality Vs Position .............................................................. 31
Table 16: Concierges: English level, formality, and number of languages spoken ....................................... 32
Table 17: Front Desk: Formality and level of English ..................................................................................... 35
Table 18: Sales Assistants: formality and English level .................................................................................. 37
Table 19: English level and Types of responses and initiations used ............................................................ 41
1. Introduction

In today’s world of near-instant communication and global travel, communication between individuals from different cultures is a daily occurrence. The ability to communicate and do business with one another is essential, a necessity in the everyday lives of many people. Many businesses need to communicate effectively with individuals from other cultures in order for the business to grow and prosper (Kluver, 2000). As a result, being able to communicate across language barriers is extremely important for many people worldwide.

In the business world, intercultural communication has a very significant impact on the tourism industry. This is especially true in Hong Kong. In 2007, approximately 28 million people traveled to Hong Kong (World Tourist Organization, 2008). These individuals include Americans, Australians, Taiwanese, Mainland Chinese, and citizens of the United Kingdom and Europe. A majority of these individuals speak English either as a first or second language. Spending by these individuals has accounted for 3.2% of Hong Kong’s GDP in 2006, and the tourism industry employs 176,300 Hong Kong residents. These factors make tourism one of the four key industries in the Hong Kong economy (Census and Statistic Department, 2008).

Tourism is very important to Hong Kong, but studies investigating communication between English speaking tourists and tourism staff in this city do not yet exist. Some studies of intercultural communication have been conducted in Hong Kong (Cheng, 2003; Cheng and Mok, 2008; Selmer and Louis, 1999); however, they have focused on communication between coworkers or friends. Since
research about communication between tourists and tourism staff has not yet been conducted, common challenges that occur within intercultural communication have not been identified and solutions have not been proposed or implemented. In order to correct this problem, research had to be done to develop a working description of the communication that takes place in the tourism industry.

Given the importance of the tourism industry in Hong Kong and the lack of empirical investigation on the effectiveness of communication within this field, we set out to examine the communication between tourists and Hong Kong’s tourism staff. As a first step in better understanding the communication in the tourism industry, we conducted naturalistic observations to develop descriptions of the interactions tourism staff carry out in order to better understand how the level of competence in English varies within the tourism industry.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Importance of Tourism

Tourism is a driving force for economic growth in Hong Kong. Tourism provides employment for Hong Kong residents and brings money into the economy. In 2008, tourism revenues accounted for 3.2% of Hong Kong’s GDP, or HK$45.3 billion (Census and Statistics Department, 2008). Currently, there are approximately 176,300 Hong Kong residents employed within the tourism industry, 5.2% of the total work force of Hong Kong (Census and Statistics Department, 2008).
Although the tourism industry includes both inbound and outbound tourism, inbound tourism has a much greater effect within Hong Kong. Outbound tourism activities that affect Hong Kong are generally limited to the use of travel agents and airlines, because other monetary spending and cultural experiences occur at the destination. Overall, outbound tourism is only responsible for 22% of tourism related spending in Hong Kong (Census and Statistics Department, 2008).

In contrast, inbound tourism includes a much greater range of economic activities in many different industries, such as shopping, restaurants, transportation, hotels, and personal services. Inbound tourists experience the culture of Hong Kong and affect individuals living in the city by interacting with them. These activities shape many areas of Hong Kong, and overall have a much greater effect on the city than outbound tourism activities. Inbound tourism alone generates HK$35.0 billion, which accounts for 2.5% of Hong Kong’s GDP (Census and Statistics Department, 2008). Overall, inbound tourism is economically and culturally important to Hong Kong. Some of the types of businesses that play prominent roles in this industry and their specific impacts are discussed below.

2.1.1 Importance of Shopping

One type of inbound tourism activity that is important to Hong Kong is shopping. “For sheer variety of products and brands in all price ranges, Hong Kong is a unique shopping experience (Hong Kong Tourism Board, Shopping in Hong Kong, 2009).” Shopping is a significant factor in the economy and a significant employer, and many shopping areas in Hong Kong exist to cater to tourists. Almost 50% of the money spent by tourists during their time in Hong Kong is for shopping (Choi, 1999). In 2006, shopping generated HK$8.3 billion, and accounted for 0.6% of Hong Kong’s GDP (Census and Statistics
Department, 2008). The shopping industry alone employed over 63,900 people, 1.9% of Hong Kong’s total employment (Census and Statistics Department, 2008).

However, the effects of shopping are not limited to direct economic impacts. Additionally, shopping is a primary reason why many visitors travel to Hong Kong (Choi, 1999). Shopping draws in tourists, who spend money at other businesses within Hong Kong’s inbound tourism industry, such as hotels and restaurants.

2.1.2 Importance of Hotels

Since more than half of all tourists stay for longer than a day in Hong Kong (Hong Kong Tourism Board, Press Release, 2009), hospitality is also an important component of the tourism industry. According to a Hong Kong Tourism Board report, an average of 86% of rooms in hotels and guesthouses were occupied in 2007 (Tourism Commission, 2008). And, hotels generated HK$11.4 billion and accounted for 0.8% of Hong Kong’s 2007 GDP (Census and Statistics Department, 2008).

Hotels are not only essential because of their economic contribution, but are an important factor in attracting customers. “Room rates have long been considered as the prime factor that adds to the cost of a trip” and greatly influences the tourist’s decision to visit Hong Kong (Choi, 1999). And the cost of staying in a hotel is the factor that most affects tourism in Hong Kong and has previously “contributing[ed] to tourism downturn” (Choi, 1999). With Hong Kong’s economy dependent on tourism, hotels play an important role in bringing customers to Hong Kong and bringing business to other industries.
2.1.3 Importance of Museums

Cultural sites, within Hong Kong, primarily museums and temples, also attract many tourists. The Hong Kong government invests a significant amount of money on a yearly basis to the upkeep of museums, and to preserving cultural artifacts. In 2004, the Hong Kong government spent HK$368 million on museums in general, HK$51 million of which was spent on exhibitions and artifacts (Legal Cultural Service Department, 2006). This shows that the government highly values museums, and makes significant efforts to preserve cultural artifacts, which are an important part of the heritage of Hong Kong. In addition, museums are important to society, “not only because of their irreplaceable collections, but also because of their educational, social, and cultural value: the contribution that they make to improving people’s lives and to the understanding of unfamiliar cultures and viewpoints” (Lang, Reeve, and Woollard, 2006). Museums help tourists experience the culture of Hong Kong through educational exhibits and through displayed artifacts that help tell the story of the historical legacy of Hong Kong.

2.2 Languages in Hong Kong

“Part of the reason for Hong Kong’s success as an international city has been the ability to bridge the gap between the English-speaking, global business community and the Chinese-speaking merchants and traders in Hong Kong and the mainland of China. Being bi-literate and trilingual has been our competitive advantage.” (Hong Kong: Standing Committee on Language Education and Research, 2003, pp3). In order to better understand inbound tourism, which is economically and culturally important to Hong Kong, the communication that takes place between Hong Kong residents and tourists needs to be understood. Hong Kong has two official languages: English and Cantonese, although Putonghua, also
called Mandarin, is spoken by nearly as many Hong Kong residents as English (Census and Statistics Department, 2008).

Hong Kong is a popular tourist destination, in part because 44.7% of the population can speak English, and 40.2% can speak Putonghua (Census and Statistics Department, 2006). With approximately 1.5 billion speakers each (Crystal, 2003), Putonghua and English are the two most spoken languages worldwide, and combined allow communication with the greatest number of people. This allows Mainland Chinese, and Taiwanese tourists to speak Putonghua while visiting Hong Kong, while European, Australian, and North American tourists can speak English while visiting.

The total number of tourists to Hong Kong in 2008 from Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas was 4,541,979 (Hong Kong Tourism Board, 2009). These groups are all more likely to speak English than Cantonese or Putonghua. Tourists from countries with English as their official language – New Zealand, Australia, the United States, and Canada – will almost all speak English. Also, in Europe, for example, in 19 out of 29 countries surveyed, English was the most common second language spoken (European Commission, 2006). Additionally, most of the Hong Kong English speakers have learned English as a second language (Census and Statistics Department, 2006). This means that many tourism interactions that occur in English are between two people who have each learned English as a second language. These interactions will be unique and deserve attention from linguists and discourse analysts, which they have not started to receive until recently.
2.3 Linguistic studies

Cultural hybridization is the process by which new unique cultures form as multiple cultures combine together (Jamal and Hollingshead, 2001). Hong Kong is an excellent example of a location that has undergone significant cultural hybridization between the traditional Chinese culture and the imperial British culture, and is now a unique blend of Eastern and Western cultures. Hong Kong’s cultural hybridization was due mostly to its status as a British colony, which resulted in the contact between the two cultures over a period of many years. In general, however, many cultural interactions that cause cultural hybridization are due to tourism activities. Understanding how this process occurs is important to understanding global interactions. However, tourism interactions have not been thoroughly studied from a linguistic point of view.

As discussed by Rojek and Urry (1997), tourism has changed considerably in past years. Tourism interactions once primarily took place in resorts, theme parks, and spas. These locations were created entirely for the purpose of attracting tourists and did not reflect the culture of the area the tourists had traveled to. These ‘manufactured’ locations allowed tourists to visit other parts of the world and essentially, experience different climates, but very little else about the destination country. Interactions that did occur with tourists in these locations were controlled interactions with the staff of the resort, or hotel, or spa, and carried little cultural content. Because interactions seemed essentially unrelated to the diffusion of culture, they were largely ignored by linguistic researchers. However, tourism has evolved and tourists now search out experiences where they interact with the culture of the region they are visiting. Therefore, tourism now causes genuine, meaningful interactions between cultures. (Rojek and Urry, 1997)
Although tourism has evolved, tourism studies (also called leisure studies) and linguistics have remained very independent of each other. The lack of communication between the two areas of study has resulted in exceptionally underdeveloped social theories about tourism interactions. Social scientists, discourse analysts and linguists in general have, by largely ignoring tourism studies, made the field seem unimportant (Jaworski and Pritchard, 2005).

Since the mid-1990’s, more researchers have begun to pay attention to tourism studies. New journals have been founded (The Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Tourism and Hospitality Research) and books have been written (Jaworski and Pritchard, 2005, Rojek and Urry, 1997). Those who research linguistics and tourism advocate using a variety of methods, including both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Morgan and Bischoff, 2003). This is important if a complete picture of tourism interactions and their effects on cultural hybridization is to be created. It is of great interest to both fields to have a variety of approaches used to conduct tourism research.

2.4 Communication

Communication is a fundamental aspect of tourism that has not yet been researched sufficiently. In order to research communication and tourism, background about effective communication is needed so that evaluations of interactions between tourists and tourism staff can be made accurately. In order to understand what qualifies as effective communication, it is first necessary to define communication.
“Communication is a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior” (Merriam-Webster, 2009).

When communication is defined simply as an exchange of information, many aspects of this complex process are overlooked (Lane, 2000). The shortfall of the previous definition is that it only mentions the absolute minimum requirement for anything to be classified as communication. Communication is not just transferring information, but also “how people use message to generate meanings within and across various contexts, cultures, channels, and media” (Lane, 2000). Communications is the exchange of information, for the purpose of creating meaning that is satisfactorily received and comprehended. But how does one measure how effectively an individual achieves this goal?

2.5 Communicative competence

Measuring how effectively communicative goals are achieved is the topic addressed by researchers in the field of communicative competence. “Communicative competence is the ability of an interactant to choose among available communicative behaviors in order that he (she) may successfully accomplish his (her) own interpersonal goals during an encounter while maintaining the face and line of his (her) fellow interactants within the constraints of the situation” (Wiemann & Backlund, 1980).

When communicating, individuals attempt to achieve certain goals. These goals can generally be classified as self presentation goals, relational goals, or instrumental goals. Self presentation goals relate to using communication in order to define oneself and control self presentation. Relational goals relate
to the management of relationships with other individuals. And instrumental goals relate to the use of power and intellect in communication to facilitate the completion of tasks (Lane, 2000). And in order to achieve any of these goals “effectively in society, [an individual] needs to achieve a certain level of competence in the language and nonlanguage behaviors for the purpose of communication” (Wiemann & Backlund, 1980). In other words, an individual must have a minimum level of control over their use of a language in order to communicate in a way that will effectively achieve their goals.

Whenever a language is used, two versions of the language are created: there is the language that is formed in a person’s mind (cognitive version) and the language that is used in the actual performance (behavioral version). When the language used is a second language, the difference between these two is considerably more noticeable. In the past three decades, linguists have focused on the need to understand the communicative abilities necessary to adequately function within society through the control of these two versions. These abilities are known as communicative competence. (Wiemann & Backlund, 1980) Communicative competence will play a significant role in tourism, especially when two non-native speakers of a language are using it as a means to communicate. This study will work to investigate levels of communicative competence in Hong Kong’s tourism industry.

2.6 Models and measures of Communicative competence

A few models have been created in an attempt to measure the communicative competence of an individual. These models seek to break down overall communication into components that can be more easily defined and observed.
2.6.1 Canale & Swain’s Model

The most popular model of communicative competence is Canale & Swain’s. In 1980, these two linguists divided communicative competence into four categories: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. Grammatical competence involves the “knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology (Theory of language assessment, 2009).” Essentially, grammatical competence is the ability to form individual sentences correctly. Discourse competence relates to the ability to connect sentences and form meaningful strings of utterances. Sociolinguistic competence pertains to the knowledge of societal and cultural rules of language. And strategic competence refers to the “verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or due to insufficient competence” (Theory of language assessment, 2009). Together, these four aspects describe the skills needed to communicate effectively.

2.6.2 TOEFL

One widely used measure of communicative competence is The Test of English as a Foreign Language or TOEFL. The TOEFL is currently required by more than 6,000 colleges and universities throughout the world to determine the English proficiency of applicants from non-English speaking countries (ETS, 2008). The TOEFL is important in the field of second language testing, and has been continually improved since its development in 1963 (Hale, 1984). The TOEFL tests reading, listening, speaking and writing skills. Additionally it tests the ability to integrate these skills together, which creates a better overall picture of the language skills of the test-taker (Zareva, 2005).
Because this study focuses on verbal communication, discussing how the TOEFL evaluates spoken language is relevant. The speaking rubric is based on three criteria; delivery, language use and topic development. The delivery criterion takes into consideration level of fluidity of expression, intonation, and pronunciation of words. The language criterion judges the level of vocabulary structure of sentences. The topic development criterion takes into consideration whether the response is well-developed, and on topic (ETS, 2008).

2.7 Conclusion

Hong Kong is an ideal location to perform a study about communication with tourists because the city is very dependent on tourists, and relies on communication in multiple languages to communicate with them. Three types of businesses where interactions with tourists regularly occur, are hotels, shops, and museums. These businesses are also culturally or economically important to Hong Kong. Because they fulfill these two criteria, these types of businesses are appropriate locations to perform a tourism study. Performing such a study will help fill in the current gap in linguistic research related to tourism and leisure. Only 2.8% of Hong Kong residents speak English as their ‘usual language’; however, 44.7% of all Hong Kong residents do speak English (Census and Statistics Department, 2008). This means that unique intercultural interactions occur in Hong Kong, and they should be studied so that they can be better understood.
3. Methods

In order to better understand how effectively tourism staff are able to communicate in English, we conducted an ethnographic study to examine the English being used by staff in the tourism industry. Investigating the degree of effectiveness of the communication that occurs between tourists and tourism staff was a central goal of this project. In order to do this, we adopted a model to record details and observations about interactions. While many models could have been used to evaluate the various aspects of spoken interactions, most models focus on the grammatical aspects of speech. As we were more interested in the general comprehensiveness of speech, we wanted to focus on the general characteristics of the speech and behavior of the participants. Hymes’s (1974) S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model focuses on these behavioral and communicative characteristics through the analysis of 7 components of an interaction. Since our research will concentrate on the overall effectiveness of communication, Hymes’s model is the most appropriate for our purposes.

Through the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, Hymes (1974) investigates components of speech acts – “utterances that serve a function in communication” (What is a Speech Act? 2008). These components relate to the discourse and behavior observed, and the overall progress of the interaction. Each letter in “speaking” refers to one of the main components as follows:

- **Setting** refers to the time and place of the interaction
- **Participants** refers to the speaker and audience, where audience includes both individuals who are addressed and those not addressed but still listening
- **Ends** refers to the goals and outcomes of the interaction which define the speech events
- **Act Sequence** refers to the procedure of the speech events within the interaction. This component will focus on the presence of greeting, main body, and farewell.
Key refers to the spirit, tone, and attitude of the speech events. In order to avoid imprecise measurements, this was not recorded in our study.

Instrumentalities refers to the level of formality implemented throughout the interaction and the languages used.

Norms refers to the rules governing each speech event throughout the interaction and the different characteristics that spur from behavior. This section will also be used to describe the overall details of the interaction.

Genre refers to the type of interaction that took place according to the traditional characteristics recognized in linguistics such as poem, myth, tale, lecture, commercial, editorial, form letter, etc...

Key will not be recorded since recording tone and attitude are difficult to assess accurately. By focusing on the other seven of these components, it was possible to identify how the different language and communication skills of tourism staff affected the outcome of an interaction depending on the setting, customers, languages spoken by the participants, and so on.

All of these trends, and the rules governing the interactions, helped identify the various intercultural issues and what skills are necessary to overcome these obstacles. In order to compare the various tourism staff across the industry, it was necessary to create a standardized way of measuring English level. The Level of English rubric (see figure 1), based on the TOEFL rubric, was created for this purpose.

The rubric is separated into four levels: excellent, proficient, weak, and very weak English. When analyzing the levels of English, five aspects for effective communication were closely observed. These aspects were: vocabulary, pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, flow, and ability to engage in meaningful conversation. For more information see Figure 1.

Excellent English (3) - virtually native level speaking ability, few errors that do not affect meaning
  • **Vocabulary:**
    o Word choice is appropriate. Vocabulary does not limit conversation.
  • **Pronunciation:**
    o Pronunciation and intonation are correct for virtually all words.
  • **Grammatical accuracy:**
There are few grammatical errors. Errors that do occur are minor.

Flow:
- Speech is relatively fluid, and has few disruptive pauses. Pauses or lapses in fluidity that do occur are brief and cause minimal interruption to the conversation.

Ability to engage in meaningful conversation:
- Clear, complete, on-topic answers or explanations are given.
- Clear, complete, on-topic questions are asked.

Proficient English (2) — errors occur and are noticeable, but meaning can still be communicated although it may take more effort

- Vocabulary:
  - Word choice is mostly appropriate. Vocabulary is somewhat limiting to the conversation.

- Pronunciation:
  - Some pronunciation and intonation errors may occur; some repetition may be needed to clarify. This causes some difficulty in understanding, but meaning can still be understood eventually.

- Grammatical accuracy:
  - Some grammatical errors may occur; some repetition may be needed to clarify. This causes some difficulty in understanding, but meaning can still be understood eventually.

- Flow:
  - Disruptive pauses or repetition of words may occur occasionally. This may cause some interruption to the conversation, but meaning can still be communicated.

- Ability to engage in meaningful conversation:
  - Answers and explanations are short and have little detail or may be incomplete or unclear.
  - Questions are simple and short, or may be incomplete or unclear.

Weak English (1) — errors cause difficulty in understanding meaning, significant effort is required to understand

- Vocabulary:
  - Word choice is not appropriate frequently. Vocabulary is very limiting to the conversation.

- Pronunciation:
  - Pronunciation and intonation errors occur frequently. This impedes the conversation, and makes repetition necessary.

- Grammatical accuracy:
  - Grammatical errors occur frequently. This impedes the conversation, and makes repetition necessary.

- Flow:
  - Speech is choppy and words are often repeated. This causes significant difficulty in understanding.

- Ability to engage in meaningful conversation:
  - Most answers and explanations are very basic, incomplete, unclear, or entirely off topic.
  - Questions are very simple or are difficult to understand.

Very weak English (0) — English is barely used

- Vocabulary:
  - Word choice is not appropriate a majority of the time, if enough vocabulary is used to be able to make a judgment. Vocabulary is extremely limiting to the conversation, very few words are used.

- Pronunciation:
  - Pronunciation and intonation errors occur consistently.

- Grammatical accuracy:
  - Grammatical errors occur consistently, if enough speech is attempted to determine.

- Flow:
  - Flow is non existent.

- Ability to engage in meaningful conversation:
Most answers cannot be given
Questions are not asked.

Figure 1: Levels of English

Along with English levels, the level of formality of each interaction was also analyzed and rated in order to compare formality to English levels. The four aspects of formality that were observed were: joking, degree of honorifics, percent of talk related to business, and use of slang or colloquial terms.

Formal (3):
- **Joking**: The staff does not make jokes with the customer
- **Degree of honorifics**: Uses honorifics (sir, madam)
- **Percent of talk related to business**: All responses are related to business (~100%)
- **Slang or colloquial terms**: No slang or colloquial terms are used

Semiformal (2):
- **Joking**: The staff may make occasional jokes with the customer
- **Degree of honorifics**: Occasional use of honorifics
- **Percent of talk related to business**: Some responses may be unrelated to business (~75%)
- **Slang or colloquial terms**: Occasional use of slangs and colloquial terms

Informal (1):
- **Joking**: The staff frequently makes jokes with the customer
- **Degree of honorifics**: No use of honorifics
- **Percent of talk related to business**: An equal number of responses are unrelated and related to business (~50%)
- **Slang or colloquial terms**: Frequent use of slangs and colloquial terms

Figure 2: Levels of Formality
As each interaction was observed, notes were taken about the types of responses and initiations each tourism staff made during the course of the interaction. These interactions were classified into thirteen categories, as described in Figure 3. This was done so that types of responses could be compared to English level.

**Greeting**
- Opening of conversation
- Typically, ‘Hello’, ‘Good morning’, ‘How can I help you?’ or similar phrases
- Beginning a conversation with an inquiry about a topic is not considered a greeting

**Farewell**
- Ending of conversation
- Typically, ‘Goodbye’, ‘Thank you’, ‘Have a nice day.’
- Ending a conversation by answering a question or giving an explanation is not considered a farewell

**Inquiry about________**
- First question about a topic

**Clarifying questions**
- Used to help fix gaps in understanding, clear up miscommunications, or to make questions clearer to the person who they are being asked to
- May be a response to an incomplete, or unrelated answer (see below for definitions of these)

**Follow-up questions**
- Questions related to previous question asking for more detail
- **NOT** Used to help fix gaps in understanding, or to clear up miscommunications

**Complete answer**
- Answers the questions asked
- Provides more information than was explicitly requested

**Basic answer**
- Answers the question asked
- Only provides information that was explicitly requested, no elaboration

**Incomplete Answer**
- Partially answers the question or the answer must be guessed at from the response
- Often follow-up or clarifying questions are needed

**Unrelated answer**
- Does not relate to the question asked
No answer
- No attempt to give a response is given, either verbal or non verbal
- Trying to communicate a lack of understanding is classified as No answer

Non verbal response
- Response is given using body language, such as pointing
- Response is given by showing written information, such as a map or brochure

Explanations
- Information given without a question being asked first
- NOT elaboration while answering a question.
- Independent, unrequested information

Request for clarification
- Method for coping with lack of understanding
- Shows that the speaker has a complete enough understanding of English to articulate their confusion, and ask for clarification

Figure 3: Types of initiations and responses

The study focused on three types of tourism businesses: hotels, shopping, and museums. For all three types, observations were made in Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. All interactions included at least one tourism staff and at least one tourist or customer who is not an employee. All interactions were observed through naturalistic observation and therefore did not require informed consent. The procedure for making these naturalistic observations at each of these types of tourism businesses varied according to the type of business and the limitations that each different environment presented.

3.1 Shopping Methods

Participants

Fourteen (10 males; 4 females) shopping customer service staff were observed. These staff members were observed in shops selling electronic goods and optical goods. Customer service individuals working
at large chain electronic shops (Fortress and Citicall) were observed, as well as customer service staff working at smaller electronics shops (located at the Wan Chai Computer Center and Mong Kok Computer Center). In addition, we observed customer service staff at 3 optical shops (located at Harbour City, The Peninsula Arcade, and the International Finance Center (IFC) Mall).

Design and Procedure

At each store, two researchers entered the establishment together acting as friends and unobtrusively observed the same interactions for 30 minutes. Researchers tried to be inconspicuous by posing as customers shopping for the respective products. As the researchers “shopped”, they each took separate notes on each interaction observed, and the notes were organized in accordance with the modified S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model. In addition, the researchers observed the overall quality of the English being spoken, took notes about features of the English being used, and transcribed quotes when possible. After the 30-minute observation was complete, the researchers initiated a conversation with the staff and asked questions about the products available in the store. This was done to collect information about another interaction, and get additional dialogue that was used to determine the staff’s level of English.

It is important to note that the observations of the interactions (between customer & staff and researcher & staff) focused on the proficiency of the English used by the staff, not their ability to sell their products. After the interactions, each researcher rated the overall English used by the staff using the level of English rubric (see Figure 1.1).

3.2 Museums Methods

Participants
Six museums were observed, including five of the seven major museums – Dr. Sun Yet-Sen Museum, Museum of Art, Museum of History, Museum of Science, Museum of Space and one minor museum-The Museum of Tea Ware. All six museums visited during the study are run by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. In the end, seventeen interactions with museum employees (4 males; 13 females) were observed. Within the museums, tour guides, front desk staff, and guards were observed and interacted with.

**Design and Procedure**

At each museum, one researcher observed interactions. The museums were each visited for two to three hours, and English guided tours were taken at museums where these were available. The researchers tried to be inconspicuous by acting as visitors participating in the tour. Notes about each interaction were taken and organized using the modified S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G method by the researcher. After the interactions were over, an English level was assigned to all staff by the researcher, following the guidelines of the level of English rubric (see Figure 1.1). At each museum, the researcher also asked the employees questions that were used for English competence analysis. These questions related to information that each individual would be likely to know depending on their position in the museum. For example, guards were asked directions, and tour guides were asked information about specific items in the museum. This was done to avoid a potential error of attributing a poorly worded or incomplete response to English competency, when it could have been due to the staff not knowing the answer.

**3.3 Hotels Methods**

Participants
Forty one (33 males; 8 females) hospitality staff at nineteen hotels were observed. Within hotels, front desk staff, concierges, direction assistants, and food & beverage staff were observed. And, a total of thirty three interactions between tourists and hotel staff were observed. The nineteen hotels were selected from the Lonely Planet: Hong Kong & Macau travel guide (2008), which organized these by price and region of location. Hotels were observed in two districts of Hong Kong—Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. In the Kowloon region, ten hotels were visited. On Hong Kong Island, nine hotels were visited. The observed hotels varied in the prices they charged for rooms; eight hotels were in Lonely Planet’s low price range, five were in the mid-range, and six were in the high price range. The low price range was HK$400 to HK$1400 per night, the mid range was from HK$1400 to HK$2500, and the high range was above HK$2500.

**Design and Procedure**

At each hotel, two to three researchers entered the establishment together acting as friends and observed the same interactions for 45-90 minutes. Researchers tried to be inconspicuous by either posing as a visitors waiting for someone in the lobby lounge, or by having a food or beverages at the lobby café. Notes about each interaction were taken and organized using the modified S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G method by each researcher. After the interactions ended, an English level was assigned to all staff by each researcher, following the guidelines of the level of English rubric (see figure 1.1). At the end of this time frame, the researchers asked either the concierge or a front desk staff questions about the number of languages spoken at the hotel and the kinds of customers that regularly stay at the hotel. This data was collected so that possible correlations between price range, target audience, and number of languages spoken at the hotel could be analyzed.
4. Results

The overall goal of this study was to describe how spoken English varies throughout the tourism industry in Hong Kong. English level and level of formality were compared to the price range, position of tourism staff, location, and the type of tourism business to determine which variables had significant relationships.

Reliability

As most interactions were observed by two or more researchers, multiple English levels were given for each interaction. After the researchers discussed the details gathered from the modified S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, a final English level was awarded, which is recorded in all interactions within Appendix C.

A reliability analysis was run between the scores of all researchers who were present at the interactions in order to reassure the standardization of the English levels.

Researcher 1: Kevin Yee
Researcher 2: James Tsai
Researcher 3: Francisco Diaz
Researcher 4: Lindy Bowen

Table 1: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 1 vs. Researcher 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Processing Summary</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases Valid</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.
According to the reliability test run in SPSS, scores by researchers 1 and 2 are reliable (α = 0.980) and assure the compatibility of the English Levels rubric.

**Table 2: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 1 vs. Researcher 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases Valid</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded(a)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(a\). Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

According to the reliability test run in SPSS, scores by researchers 1 and 3 are reliable (α = 0.986) and assure the compatibility of the English Levels rubric.

**Table 3: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 2 vs. Researcher 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases Valid</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded(a)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>84.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(a\). Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

According to the reliability test run in SPSS, scores by researchers 2 and 3 are reliable (α = 0.987) and assure the compatibility of the English Levels rubric.
Table 4: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 2 vs. Researcher 4

According to the reliability test run in SPSS, scores by researchers 2 and 4 are reliable (α = 1.000) and assure the compatibility of the English Levels rubric.

Table 5: Reliability Analysis for Researcher 3 vs. Researcher 4

According to the reliability test run in SPSS, scores by researchers 3 and 4 are reliable (α = 0.970) and assure the compatibility of the English Levels rubric.

Since Researchers 1 and 4 did not observe any interactions together, there is no data to assess the scores awarded between the two researchers.
English Level and Price Range

In order to examine if the price range of a hotel influenced the level of English spoken by the staff, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the price range of the hotel had a significant influence on the English level, $F(2, 45) = 5.64, p = 0.01$. More specifically, an LSD post-hoc analysis showed that staff at low price range hotels ($M = 0.86, SD = 0.29$) spoke with a lower English level than at mid price range hotels ($M = 2.13, SD = 0.27$), $t(45) = 3.23, p = 0.00$. Also, staff at low price range hotels ($M = 0.86, SD = 0.29$) spoke with a lower English level than staff at high price range hotels ($M = 1.83, SD = 0.25$), $t(45) = 2.56, p = 0.01$. The difference in English level between the mid and high price range hotels was not statistically significant, $p = 43$. These results suggest that overall a lower level of English is more likely to be spoken at lower price range hotels.

**Table 6: Means and Standard Deviations English Level Vs Price Range**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price Range</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English level VS Positions

In order to examine if the position of an employee influenced the level of English he or she spoke, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the positions had a significant influence on the English level, $F(6, 76) = 4.31, p = 0.001$. For more specific information about which positions had statistically significant different average English levels, an LSD post-hoc analysis showed which positions had significantly different mean English levels. See table 3 for the results of this post-hoc analysis.
### Table 7: Means and Standard Deviations English Level Vs Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Staff</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Assistant</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8: Comparison of the mean English level for different positions of staff

Dependent Variable: English Level (0 = Minimal, 1 = Simple, 2 = Proficient, 3 = Excellent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Mean Difference (L-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>1.55¹</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>1.40¹</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.386</td>
<td>.435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>-.40</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>-1.55¹</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>-1.15¹</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>-.80¹</td>
<td>.537</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>-1.16¹</td>
<td>.383</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>-1.95¹</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>1.15¹</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>1.64¹</td>
<td>.387</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>1.50¹</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>-1.40¹</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>-1.50¹</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>-1.02</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>-1.30¹</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>-.38</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>.335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>1.16¹</td>
<td>.383</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>-.48</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>-.78</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>1.95¹</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td>.567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>Restaurant Professional</td>
<td>1.80¹</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on observed means.

¹: The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
English Level VS Branches

In order to examine if the branches of the tourism industry influenced the level of English spoken by the staff, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the branches of the tourism industry did not have a significant influence on the English level, $F (2, 80) = 0.16, p = 0.86$.

**Table 9: Means and Standard Deviations English level Vs Branch**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formality</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English Level VS Locations

In order to examine if the locations between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon influenced the level of English spoken by the staff, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the locations of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon did not have a significant influence on the English level, $F (1, 81) = 3.04, p = 0.85$.

**Table 10: Means and Standard Deviations English Level Vs Locations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kowloon</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Island</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
English Level VS Formality

In order to examine if the Formality of the interaction influenced the level of English spoken by the staff, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the Formality of the interaction did not have a significant influence on the English level, $F(1, 59) = 3.47, p = 0.07$

**Table 11: Means and Standard Deviations English Level Vs Formality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formality</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-formal</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formality</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Formality VS English Level

In order to examine if the English level influenced the level of Formality, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the English level of a staff did not have an overall significant influence on the Formality of the interaction, $F(2, 58) = 2.65, p = 0.08$. However, when looking more specifically, an LSD post-hoc analysis showed staff with Excellent English ($M = 2.46, SD = 0.51$) are, on average, less formal than staff with Proficient English ($M = 2.76, SD = 0.44$), $t(58) = 2.14, p = 0.04$. These results suggest that staff with excellent English tend to speak less formally than staff with proficient English.

**Table 12: Means and Standard Deviations Formality Vs English level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formality</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formality VS Locations

In order to examine if the locations of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon influenced the level of Formality, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the locations of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon did not have a significant influence on the Formality, \( F(1, 59) = 0.24, p = 0.63 \)

**Table 13: Means and Standard Deviations Formality Vs Location**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kowloon</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Island</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Formality VS Price Range

In order to examine if the price range of a hotel influenced the level of Formality, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the price range of the hotel did not have a significant influence on the Formality, \( F(2, 33) = 1.24, p = 0.30 \).

**Table 14: Means and Standard Deviations Formality Vs Price Range**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formality</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formality VS Positions

In order to examine if the position of an employee influenced the level of Formality he or she spoke, we conducted a one-way ANOVA. The results showed that the positions did not have a significant influence on the Formality level, $F(6, 54) = 1.13, p = 0.36$.

**Table 15: Means and Standard Deviations Formality Vs Position**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concierge</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.670</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction Assistant</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doorman</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.750</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Desk</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.560</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Staff</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Assistant</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.470</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.800</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.620</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Discussion

5.1 Description of Job Positions and English Levels

Upon the completion of the naturalistic observations, general communicative patterns different tourism staff positions were identified. These descriptions focus on the similarities found between interactions where the participants held similar positions. Although responsibilities varied depending on the setting – hotel, shops, and museums – the communicative skills required by these individuals were generally consistent. We only observed individuals that personally interacted with customers on a daily basis as part of their usual job responsibilities, because they are part of the daily service the tourism industry provides.

Concierge

The role of the concierge in the tourism industry is to provide customers with information about local attractions, goods and services. The concierge acts as the link between the customer and local businesses. Since this responsibility requires a high level of language competence, most concierges had either proficient or excellent English levels (33% excellent; 44% proficient), and all of them claimed to speak a minimum of three languages (i.e.: English, Cantonese, and Mandarin) as seen in Table 1.

Table 16: Concierges: English level, formality, and number of languages spoken

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Formality</th>
<th>English Level</th>
<th>Languages Spoken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royal Plaza Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Park Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concierges had a mean English level of 2.00. This English level allowed concierges to understand customers’ questions and requests and answered successfully 83.87% of the time through complete and basic answers. Concierges with excellent English used the language more freely by making small talk and jokes, and generally interacting in a semi-formal manner in all three interactions observed. Concierges with lower English levels interacted in a formal, business-oriented, manner as seen in Table 1. Out of the 10 observed interactions, concierges greeted customers 90% of the time and said goodbye 70% of the time. Since concierges will most likely be approached by customers seeking information, efficient communication skills are necessary to provide a high standard of service.

**Direction Assistant**

Other tourism staff, such as direction assistants, relay more basic information to customers. Direction assistants are individuals that are present in public areas within tourism businesses in order to assist customers with directions and general questions, maintain order in these public areas, and in some cases are also security personnel. It was found that the communication skills of direction assistants are lower than those of other tourism staff.
In fact, spoken language was used in only 26.67% of the interactions with direction assistants. As a result, the mean English level for direction assistants was 0.45. Direction assistants skipped greetings and farewells 81.81% and 63.64% of the time, respectively, and tended to keep their spoken interactions concise. In the interactions observed, where customers seemed to be looking for something or in need of something, direction assistants tended to approach customers to offer help. These interactions were often initiated through eye contact or other non-verbal acknowledgement. Unlike concierges, direction assistants generally had limited knowledge of business outside of their place of employment. Direction assistants were generally found to act as quick sources of information for basic knowledge about the tourism businesses they worked for.

**Doorman**

The doormen, as inferred from their title, are responsible for opening doors for customers entering and exiting a business and helping them with luggage. Communication skills of doormen were found to be similar to those of direction assistants. The four doormen observed had a mean English level of 1.60. Because of the small sample size of interactions with doormen (n=5), more detailed communicative patterns could not be identified. This is because doormen tended not to approach customers, unless they arrived in a vehicle to the location. As a result, direction assistants are often approached instead of doormen. This led to a low number of interactions with doormen.

**Front Desk**

One of the most important positions in the tourism industry is the front desk staff. A member of the front desk staff is the first employee a customer will interact with as they enter the business and buy tickets for a museum or check into a hotel. Often the front desk staff is the only employee of a business a customer will interact with, and the impression they make on the customer represents the business as
Front desk staff is expected to handle payments from customers, give information, and generally help customers as best they can. Effective communication skills are needed to successfully fulfill these responsibilities, and the interactions observed demonstrated that front desk staff generally did have the higher levels of English needed. As seen in Table 12, more than half of the Front desk staff observed had an excellent English level, and the mean English level for front desk staff is 2.10.

Table 17: Front Desk: Formality and level of English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Formality</th>
<th>English Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Kings Hotel</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Plaza Hotel</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorsett Seaview Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express by Holiday Inn</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Pacific Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Inter-Continental</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley Hong Kong Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Park Hotel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empire Hotel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Seasons Hotel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langham Place Hotel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marco Polo Hong Kong Hotel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peninsula Hotel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Park Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langham Place Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin Oriental</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peninsula Hotel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the 21 front desk interactions observed, half of the staff communicated in a formal, business-oriented manner, ensuring that the customer was satisfied and received the high standard service that was expected. On the other hand, 39% of the front desk staff, who in general spoke with higher levels of English (all excellent, except for one), used small talk and their sense of humor to make the customers feel at home and more comfortable with the staff. Front desk staff individuals used greetings and farewells 71.43% and 76.20% of the time, respectively. In addition, they answered questions successfully 75% of the time through complete and basic answers. Front desk staff members are an essential component of the tourism industry. Their employers depend on their communication skills to relay the businesses’ mission and services, by communicating efficiently with customers.

**Restaurant Staff**

Restaurant staff is in charge of providing food and beverages to customers, and were observed in cafes and restaurants in hotels. In three of the five interactions, a host who spoke with a very weak level of English was observed. The host used non-verbal communication and eye contact to communicate with the customers. The other two observations included a waiter whose English level was weak and a buffet host who spoke proficiently. Due to the low number of interactions, no general patterns were discovered.

**Sales**

Another important job position in the tourism industry is the sales assistant. Shopping is one of the key attractions in Hong Kong, and requires communication with customers in order to keep the business running. In the 26 interactions observed, the mean English level was 1.62.
Table 18: *Sales Assistants: formality and English level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Formality</th>
<th>English Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Museum of Space</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Museum of Space</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Center Mall Electronics</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chung Yuen Electronics</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chung Yuen Electronics</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comdex Computer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Museum of Science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-Tech Systems Ltd.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foresoon Engineering Co. Ltd</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortress</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Museum</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chung Yuen Electronics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Museum</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Museum of History</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foresoon Engineering Co. Ltd</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comdex Computer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leo Optic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Optical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Optical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Museum of Art</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum of Tea Ware</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyedontist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Optical</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Optical</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A trend was observed between the locations of the shops and English level. Shops present in high end locations such as Harbour City, the IFC mall, and the Peninsula Arcade, used an excellent level of English,
while shops outside of these high end locations, such as the Wan Chai and Mong Kok computer centers, did not. Formality levels varied among the sales assistants, most often depending on the customer’s attitude. Regardless of their English level, in 84.62% of interactions observed sales assistants were eager to help and used whatever communicative skills they had to assist customers. This clearly shows that, although sales assistants have a lower average English level than some other positions within the tourism industry; they put forth considerable effort to achieve the most effective communication possible.

**Tour guides**

The last position that was observed was the tour guide. Since only 2 museums that were visited offered guided tours, only 5 interactions with 4 different tour guides were observed. All tour guides had either a proficient or excellent level of English, which was necessary to communicate effectively with tour members. Since there was a small sample size of interactions, tours were different lengths of time, and each tour guide had a significantly different style of leading the tour, no consistent patterns were observed.

**5.2 English and Price Range**

A clear relationship was discovered between the English level of tourism staff members and the price range of the hotels where they worked. English levels in low price range hotels are significantly lower that those in both mid and high price range hotels. Lower priced hotels focus on offering accommodation to those with a tighter budget. Possibly because they do not stress maintaining a high
standard of service, lower communication skills are common in low price range hotels. The proverb “you get what you pay for” is another way of explaining the situation.

On the other hand, high price range hotels not only focus on offering high-class accommodation with luxury options, but also offering a high standard of service. In today’s competitive business arena, companies continue to elevate their standards in order to give their customers the best service possible. Through higher standards of service, hotels build a base of loyal customers who stay at the hotel when in Hong Kong. Most employees at these venues are required to possess higher levels of English than those in low price range hotels. The difference between the high-range and low-range hotels’ missions and goals accounts for the significant difference in their English levels.

Interestingly, the mid-range and high-range hotels do not significantly differ in their English levels. This implies that, although the prices are different for both of these hotels, the standard of service is no different. High price range hotels provide facilities, luxuries, and benefits that mid price range hotels do not offer, which is one possible reason why customers will pay a higher price. Mid price range hotels receive customers that are still paying a substantial amount, and therefore expect these high standards. In order to meet these, mid-range hotels must match, if not surpass, the English levels of the high-range hotels in order to compete with these more luxurious competitors.
5.3 Level of English and Types of Responses and Initiations

As seen in Table 14 below, trends were seen when the total number of each type of response and initiation was tabulated for staff at each English level. For details about classifications of types of initiations and responses, see Figure 3 on p. 17-18. For this project, incomplete, unrelated, and no answer responses are considered unsuccessful, because they do not answer customers’ questions.

Those with a very weak English level tended to use non-verbal responses most often, 44.4% of the time. They also had slightly more no answer responses than any other level of English. Non-verbal responses may successfully answer a question, but they do not demonstrate ability to speak English. Staff with very weak English levels did not use any complete answers. When they did answer both verbally and successfully, they used basic answers. Overall this shows that staff classified as having very weak English skills tend not to speak in English, and when they do, they are more likely to answer unsuccessfully than other levels of English.

Staff who had a weak English level answered questions verbally and successfully 55% of the time. Most of these answers were basic answers, which show that, although the employee could answer a question, they tended to answer only exactly what they were asked without any elaboration. Two responses from those with weak English levels were complete answers, but these only represented 6.5% of total responses. Those with weak English levels had fewer non-verbal responses than those with very weak English levels, showing that there is a difference in ability to respond verbally.

Employees with proficient English levels respond with complete answers almost one quarter of the time, and almost half the time with basic answers. These staff members did respond with incomplete,
unrelated or non-verbal answers a total of 15.7% of the time, which shows that they do have some trouble speaking English. However, they also offered explanations 13.7% of the time and complete answers 21.6% of the time. Both types of responses show that they understand what the customer needs, and are able to give information without being asked for it specifically.

Those with excellent English used explanations, complete answers, and basic answers a total of 96.6% of the time. Staff who speak with an excellent English level are the only group who give more complete answers than basic answers. These individuals are consistently able to answer questions, often give more information they are specifically asked for by elaborating with complete answers or explanations.

**Table 19: English level and Types of responses and initiations used**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Level</th>
<th>Very Weak</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses and Initiations</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-verbal</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4 Limitations

One limitation of this study was that for four of the six museums visited, only one group member made observations. This decreased the reliability for these interactions. However, effort was made to ensure all group members were as consistent as possible in grading interactions by setting very clear standards and by discussing interactions that all group members observed to help calibrate standards.

Another limitation was that the background noise levels during some of the interactions impaired the researchers’ ability to hear interaction between tourists and tourism staff. Generally noise level issues could be managed by visiting the site at times when the business had fewer customers, and by gathering observations over a longer period of time. The researchers also initiated conversations themselves, when noise level made observing interactions infeasible. These interactions have the limitation that the researchers were not blind to the research topic; however they did provide many valuable examples of speech from tourism staff.

When potential sites for observations were contacted, all sites refused to consider allowing voice recording. Voice recordings would have allowed for transcriptions that could have been used for a more in depth analysis. However, notes were taken on interactions, and some examples of utterances were included in these notes.

5.5 Recommendations for Future research

Data collection for this study was limited because only natural observation could be used, and audio recording was not possible. It would be useful if a future study could audio record interactions between tourists and tourism staff, transcribe the interactions, and analyze the transcriptions. This would allow
researchers to investigate aspects of speech with more detail and identify specific characteristics of speech that either help or hinder communication.

While performing observations at one of the shops, one researcher spoke with an employee about the business’s customer service policy. The employee reported that at the shop there are two sales strategies, one for Eastern customers and one for Western customers. When an Eastern customer enters the store, an employee must approach the customer immediately and stay with the customer for the entire time that the customer stays in the store. Multiple sales associates may assist an Eastern customer at the same time. When a Western customer enters the business, only one sales associate may speak with the customer for the entire time the customer spends in the store. The sales associate must greet a Western customer and offer help, and then let the customer browse without assistance, unless he or she requests help.

The owner of the shop believes that because the expectations of Eastern and Western customers are very different, they should be treated differently. Research should be done to determine if other businesses use a similar strategy. Additionally, research should be done to determine if treating these two groups of customers differently is an effective sales strategy. Research investigating cross-cultural differences in self identification shows that Easterners and Westerners perceived themselves differently (Murphy-Berman and Berman, 2001). However, research has not investigated if this difference in self-identification applies to preferences in sales situations; therefore, future research could examine this phenomenon.
Previous studies (Valero-Garces, 2007) show that mediators, individuals who acts as a link between parties, have an effect on communication and negotiations, even when they are expected to be impartial. Through our observations, we did observe a few instances where a sales person and customer spoke to each other through a mediator. In interactions where a mediator facilitated communication, the sales person had to convince the mediator of the sale before the customer could be convinced. This meant that the sales person had to sell to the mediator, not the customer. Although a complete study of what sales strategies are most effective in situations where a mediator translates for a tourist would be helpful to determine how sales associates can most effectively make sales in mediated tourism interactions, such studies have not yet been performed. Research about this subject would be valuable for the tourism industry, and should be examined.

5.6 Conclusion

As the number of tourists around the world continues to rise, intercultural interactions are becoming more common than ever before. Tourism in Hong Kong, one of the pillars of Hong Kong’s economy, is a clear demonstration of this. With English, Cantonese, and Mandarin speaking residents, Hong Kong is an attractive destination for tourists from around the world. English specifically has become a primary language used for communication between customers and tourism staff. The communicative competence of the tourism staff has become a crucial component in determining the success of these interactions and in the end affects the tourism industry itself.

After observing 84 interactions between customers and tourism staff to measure these communicative skills, descriptions and trends about certain aspects of the tourism industry in Hong Kong were
discovered. English levels of tourism staff were found to be significantly different between the low price range hotels and the mid and high price range hotels. English levels also varied depending on the responsibilities of different job positions. Each individual working in the tourism industry used different strategies according to their communication skills and responsibilities. In the end, descriptions discovered some of the developments and underdevelopments of the tourism industry in managing intercultural barriers.
Appendix A: Sponsor Organization

Our sponsor, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University’s English Department, was founded in 1937 and seeks “to provide Applied English Language Studies to meet the staff needs of the Hong Kong people. (The Department of English, 2008)”. The English Department generally recognizes that English communication is very important for all HKPU students, and seeks to help students develop the English skills necessary for students to succeed both at HKPU and in their lives after university.

With over 1000 academic and research staff, and 28090 students, Hong Kong Polytechnic University is one of the largest government funded institutions in Hong Kong. Within the Department of English, there are 22 academic staff, 12 research staff, and 13 support staff. The academic staff includes the Head Department of English, professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers, language instructors, and visiting lecturers.

Winnie Cheng is a professor in the HKPU English Department who guided us during the research period of our project. She is the Director of the Research Centre for Professional Communication in English, the mission of the research centre is: “To pursue applied research and consultancy so as to deepen our understanding of professional communication in English and better serve the communication needs of professional communities”. Prof. Cheng is interested in discourse analysis and communicative competence, subjects that are both related to our project work.
The most recent paper written by Prof. Cheng was written in 2008, and was titled “Discourse process and products: Land surveyors in Hong Kong”. This paper analyzed written and spoken language used in a land surveying office in Hong Kong. She also wrote a book “Intercultural Conversation” in 2003. This book is a study of naturally-occurring English conversations between Hong Kong Chinese and their native English friends and colleagues contributed new information to research on intercultural communication.

Appendix B: Cost Benefit Analysis

The primary costs associated with this project were not costs that can be measured monetarily. The amount of the time that was spent on this research was the most major cost of this project. We worked with Prof. Winnie Cheng of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and Prof. Stanley Selkow and Prof. Jeanine Skorinko of Worcester Polytechnic Institute and the use of their time and our time were the most significant costs associated with this project. Other minor costs associated with this project included the cost of office space, any supplies necessary, and the cost of transportation. This project had essentially no cost to any of the tourism staff observed, as they were unaware of their participation in the study.

The major benefit to this project was that it allowed the academic world in general and Hong Kong Polytechnic University in particular to have a more complete understanding of communication in Hong Kong. This project added more information to the knowledge base the researchers of intercultural communication have at their disposal. This may assist in advancing theories about communication between Hong Kong residents and tourists to the area specifically and about communication between people of different cultures in general.
Appendix C: Complete Interaction Records

Hotels

Central Park Hotel (Central) .................................................................................................................. 49
Dorsett Seaview Hotel (Yau Ma Tei) ...................................................................................................... 49
Empire Hotel (Wan Chai) ........................................................................................................................ 57
Express by Holiday Inn (Causeway Bay) .................................................................................................. 61
Four Seasons Hotel (Central) .................................................................................................................. 63
Hotel Inter-Continental Hong Kong (Tsim Sha Tsui) ............................................................................. 67
Island Shangri-La Hong Kong (Admiralty) ........................................................................................... 69
Langham Place Hotel (Mong Kok) .......................................................................................................... 71
Mandarin Oriental (Central) ................................................................................................................... 74
New Kings Hotel (Yau Ma Tei) ............................................................................................................... 79
Newton Hotel Hong Kong (Fortress Hill) ............................................................................................... 80
Park Hotel (Tsim Sha Tsui) ..................................................................................................................... 81
Peninsula Hong Kong (Tsim Sha Tsui) ................................................................................................... 83
Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel (Tsim Sha Tsui) ............................................................................................ 90
South Pacific Hotel (Wan Chai) ............................................................................................................. 93
Stanford Hotel (Mong Kok) .................................................................................................................. 98
Royal Plaza Hotel (Mongkok) ............................................................................................................. 100
Wesley Hong Kong Hotel (Wan Chai) ................................................................................................. 103

Electronic Shops ................................................................................................................................ 105

Bank Center Mall Electronics (Mong Kok) .......................................................................................... 105
Broadway (Causeway Bay) ..................................................................................................................... 106
B-Tech Systems Ltd. (Wan Chai) ........................................................................................................... 107
Chung Yuen Electronics (Mong Kok) .................................................................................................... 108
Chung Yuen Electronics (Causeway Bay) ............................................................................................... 110
Comdex Computer (Wan Chai) ............................................................................................................ 112
Foresoon Engineering Co. Ltd (Wan Chai) ............................................................................................ 115
Fortress (Causeway Bay) ....................................................................................................................... 118

Optical Shops ..................................................................................................................................... 119

Eyedentist (Causeway Bay) .................................................................................................................. 119
Leo Optic (Central) .............................................................................................................................. 120
Victoria Optical (Tsim Sha Tsui) ........................................................................................................... 121

Museums .............................................................................................................................................. 128

Dr. Sun Yet-Sen Museum (Mid-levels) .................................................................................................. 128
Hong Kong Museum of History (Hung Hom) ....................................................................................... 130
Hong Kong Museum of Science (Hung Hom) ...................................................................................... 136
Hong Kong Museum of Space (Tsim Sha Tsui) ...................................................................................... 138
Hong Kong Museum of Art (Tsim Sha Tsui) ......................................................................................... 141
Museum of Tea Ware (Admiralty) ......................................................................................................... 145
Hotels

Central Park Hotel (Central)

Interaction #H1
Hospitality – Central Park Hotel

Date/Time:  
February 9th, 2009  
Start: 1:00 PM  
End: 1:03 PM

Setting and Scene:  
Lobby  
Central Park Hotel  
Central

Participants:  
Kevin  
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends:  
Asked for time  
Easily understood the question and gave the correct time

Act Sequence:  
Greeting  
- No verbal greeting (simple nod for acknowledgement)
Main Body  
- Customer: Inquiry about time ("Excuse me, what time is it?")  
- Staff: Basic answer ("Right now its about 1:00")
Farewell  
- C: ("Thanks")  
- S: ("Welcome")

Instrumentalities:  
Formal  
Excellent English  
Slight Cantonese accent  
English only

Norms:  
Deals with many Westerners at the hotel  
No hesitation when answering the question

Genre:  
Inquiry
Interaction #H2
Hospitality – Central Park Hotel

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 1:03 PM
End: 1:05 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Central Park Hotel
Central

Participants: Western man
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Customer asked to use the phone
Front desk understood and let the customer use the phone

Act Sequence: Greeting
● Staff: (“Hi, how may I help you?”)

Main Body
● Customer: Inquiry about using the phone (“I’m looking for *[customer’s name]*”)
● S: Basic answer (“No problem, I’ll call her room”)

Farewell
● C: (“Thanks”)
● S: (“Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-Formal
Excellent English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Quickly understood the question and served the customer
No hesitation

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H3
Hospitality – Central Park Hotel

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 1:10 PM
End: 1:15 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Central Park Hotel
Central

Participants: James
Concierge (Male)

Ends: Asked for restaurants nearby
Recommendations were given

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Customer: (“Hi”)
- Staff: (“Hi”)
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about restaurant (“Just wondering if there are any good restaurants nearby?”)
- Staff: Complete answer (“Oh, good restaurants. (shown on a map) Here is SOHO which is 10 minute walk from our hotel”)
- C: Follow up question (“Can you show me the hotel on the map as well”)
- S: Basic answer (“Here is our hotel”)
- C: Follow up question (“Are there any places to shop as well?”)
- S: Follow up question (“Do you mean by… (Pause) dressing and fashion?”)
- C: Basic answer (“Yes”)
- S: Complete answer (“You can go to Landmark or IFC mall.”)
- C: Follow up question (“Where are your customers from?”)
- S: Basic answer (“(takes a while to understand)…..Hong Kong”)
Farewell
- C: (“Thank you”)
- S: (“Welcome”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Confused the word clothing with dressing.
Had trouble understanding the last question.

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H4

Hospitality – Central Park Hotel

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 1:18 PM
End: 1:20 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Central Park Hotel
Central

Participants: Kevin
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Asked if there were any busses to Causeway Bay
Front desk staff gave clear directions to the bus stop

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- No verbal greeting (nod for acknowledgement)
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about buses (“Just wondering, are there any busses to Causeway Bay?”)
- Staff: Basic answer (“Yes, bus 26”)
- C: Inquiry about directions (“How do I get to the bus stop?”)
- S: Complete answer (“It’s pretty easy. Just go outside and it’s on the corner”)
Farewell
- C: (“Thanks”)
- S: (“No problem”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-Formal
Excellent English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only

Norms:
- Gave detailed directions
- Easily answered the questions

Genre:
- Inquiry
Dorsett Seaview Hotel (Yau Ma Tei)

Interaction #H5
Hospitality – Dorsett Seaview Hotel

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 10:30 AM
End: 10:33 AM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Dorsett Seaview Hotel
Yau Ma Tei

Participants: James
Front Desk Staff (Female)

Ends: Asked about the hotel’s clients and the languages the staff speaks
Information was given

Act Sequence: Greeting
- No verbal greeting
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about information (“Just wondering, what kind of clients do you have?”)
- Staff: Basic answer (“Tourist”)
- C: Follow up question (“Where are your customers from?”)
- S: No answer (Does not understand the question)
- C: Clarifying question (“Where are your customers from? For example China…”)
- S: Basic answer (“China”)
- C: Follow up question (“How many languages do you speak?”)
- S: Basic answer (“3”)
- C: Follow up question (“Is it Cantonese, Mandarin and English?”)
- S: Basic answer (Yes)
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: Formal
Weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Tried to answer questions quickly without elaborating
Not very polite
Speaks Mandarin, Cantonese, English
Did not always answer questions directly
Had difficulty understanding questions

**Genre:** Inquiry
Interaction #H6
Hospitality – Dorsett Seaview Hotel

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 11:35 AM
End: 11:36 AM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Dorsett Seaview Hotel
Yau Ma Tei

Participants: James
Direction assistant (Male)

Ends: Asked where the bathroom was
Staff answered quickly

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- No verbal greeting
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about location ("Do you know where the bathroom is?")
- Staff: Basic answer ("15th Floor")
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: N/A
Very weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Incomplete sentences
Staff does not pay much attention to customers

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H7
Hospitality – Dorsett Seaview Hotel

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 11:45 AM
End: 11:47 AM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Dorsett Seaview Hotel
Yau Ma Tei

Participants: 2 Mandarin tourists
Direction assistant (Male)

Ends: Bellboy asked in English if tourist needed a ride to Kowloon station
A quick answer was given

Act Sequence: Greeting
- No verbal greeting
Body
- Staff: Inquiry on transportation (“Do you need a ride to Kowloon station?”)
- Customer: Basic answer (“No”)
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: Formal
Weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Bellboy’s English is very choppy (one word at a time)

Genre: Inquiry
Empire Hotel (Wan Chai)

Interaction #H8
Hospitality – Empire Hotel, Wan Chai

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 11:35 AM
End: 11:37 AM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Empire Hotel
Wan Chai

Participants: Lindy
Direction assistant (Male)
Doorman (Male)

Ends: Asked for the time the lobby café opened
Information was received

Act Sequence: Greeting
• No verbal greeting
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry about hours (“What time does the café open?”)
• Direction assistant: No answer (did not understand the question)
• Doorman: Non verbal response (eye contact and comes over to help translate)
• Staff speak in Cantonese, both look at watches, both appear confused
• C: Clarifying question (“What time does the café open?”)
• DM: Basic response (“Oh, 12 O’clock.”)
Farewell
• C: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Weak English
Asian accent
English and Cantonese used

Norms: Direction assistant did not use any English
Not all members of the staff understood English
Doorman saw customer speaking to Direction Assistant and came to help

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H9
Hospitality – Empire Hotel

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 12:01 PM
End: 12:05 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Empire Hotel
Wan Chai

Participants: Western man
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Checking out
Successful check-out

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Customer: (“How are you?”)
- Staff: (“Good, how are you?”)

Main Body
- C: Basic Answer (“Fine, thanks. 510”)
- Staff begins check out process
- S: Inquiry about bags (“Do you need help with your bags?”)
- C: Basic answer (“No, I’m ok, thanks. I’ll take them later”)
- S: Request for signature (“Sign here, and here please”)
- C: Inquiry about envelope (“Could I get this in an envelope?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Of course”)

Farewell
- C: (“Thanks”)
- S: (“Bye Bye”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
Asian accent
English only

Norms: Friendly
Good flow of conversation
Staff understood even though western man spoke fast at times
When customer said 510, staff automatically understood it as room 510 checking out

Genre: Check-out
Interaction #H10
Hospitality – Empire Hotel

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 12:05 PM
End: 12:07 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Empire Hotel
Wan Chai

Participants: Asian woman
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Inquiring about guest
Phone number given

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- C: (Greeting in Chinese)
Main Body
- Staff and Customer began speaking in Chinese
- Staff: follow-up question (“And the name is?”)
- Customer was given a phone number
Farewell
- C: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: N/A
 Very weak English
 Asian accent
 Chinese and English are used

Norms: Staff switched from Cantonese to English to ask what the guest’s name was
 Thank you instead of Chinese farwell
 Appeared to be joking in Cantonese
 Customer was laughing

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H11  
Hospitality – Empire Hotel

**Date/Time:** February 9th, 2009  
Start: 12:07 PM  
End: 12:14 PM

**Setting and Scene:** Lobby  
Empire Hotel  
Wan Chai

**Participants:** Western woman  
Front Desk Staff (Male)

**Ends:** Leave key card at the front desk  
Stored until she comes back

**Act Sequence:** Greeting  
- Staff: (“Hello”)

Main Body  
- Customer: Inquiry about service (“Hi, can I leave my card here?”)  
- S: Clarification question (“I’m sorry?”)  
- C: Explanation (“I’m going running so I want to change my card”)  
- S: Basic answer (“Sorry, we don’t do that”)  
- Customer starts to walk away  
- S: Clarifying question (“Oh, you want to leave your card here until you come back?”)  
- C: Basic answer (“Yes”)  
- S: Inquiry about customer’s room number (“What’s your room number?”)  
- C: Basic answer (“Um... it’s [Room number]”)  
- S: Explanation (“Ok. We’ll leave note here and give you card back when you come back”)

Farewell  
- C: (“Ok. Thanks”)

**Instrumentalities:** Semi-Formal  
Excellent English  
Asian accent  
English only

**Norms:** Misunderstood request  
Managed to understand last minute and helped the customer  
Confident enough to correct himself, very important

**Genre:** Inquiry
Express by Holiday Inn (Causeway Bay)

Interaction #H12
Hospitality – Express By Holiday Inn

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 5:00 PM
End: 5:05 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Express by Holiday Inn
Causeway Bay

Participants: James
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Asked good restaurants around the area
Explanation and map was given

Act Sequence: Greeting
• Customer: (“Hi”)
• Staff: (“Hi”)
Main Body
• C: Inquiry about restaurants (Asking for good restaurants nearby)
• S: Follow up question (“What kind of food would you like?”)
• C: Basic answer (“Any kind”)
• S: Complete answer (A restaurant is suggested and the description is given from the map)
• C: Follow up question (“Are there any other places?”)
• S: Complete answer (Suggested the food court in Time Square)
• C: Follow up question (Question about where customers are from)
• S: Unrelated answer (Talked about the customer in Pizza Hut)
• C: Clarifying Question (Question is asked again about where customers are from)
• S: Basic answer (“Customers are from Taiwan, China, Australia, America and Europe”)
• C: Follow up question (“How many languages do you speak?”)
• S: Basic answer (Cantonese, Mandarin and English)
Farewell
• S: “Bye”

Instrumentalities: Formal
Weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only
Norms: Customers from Taiwan, China, Australia, America, Europe
Speaks English, Mandarin, Cantonese
Misunderstood one of the questions

Genre: Inquiry
Four Seasons Hotel (Central)

Interaction #H13
Hospitality – Four Seasons Hotel

Date/Time: January 15th, 2009
Start: 11:00 AM
End: 11:03 AM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Four Seasons Hotel
Central

Participants: James
Front Desk Staff (Female)

Ends: Asked about the clients
A clear elaborate answer was given

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Staff: (Greeting in Mandarin)
- Customer: (“Hi”)
- S: Changes to English (“Hi how may I help you?”)

Main Body
- C: Inquiry about information (Asks about hotel’s clients)
- S: Complete answer (All types of customers)
- C: Follow up question (“Where are they from?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Our customer are from everywhere in the world”)
- C: Follow up question (Asks for elaboration and examples)
- S: Basic answer (“Europe, Middle East, Mainland, Thailand, America”)
- C: Inquiry about languages spoken (Asks how many languages staff speaks)
- S: Basic answer (6 languages)
- C: Follow up question (Asks about how many languages are fluent)
- S: Complete answer (“I am fluent in 3 of them. Mandarin, Cantonese and English.”)
- C: Follow up question (Asks if other members of the staff speak as many languages)
- S: Basic answer (“Yes, they speak more or less 6 languages”)

Farewell
- C: (“Thank you very much for your information”)
- S: (“No problem, have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities:
Semi-Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English and Mandarin

Norms:
- Greeted James in mandarin
- Speaks 6 languages
- Receives both tourists and business clients
- Front desk staff studied abroad and did not take lessons to help reduce accent

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H14
Hospitality – Four Seasons Hotel

**Date/Time:** January 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
Start: 11:33 AM
End: 11:35 AM

**Setting and Scene:**
Lobby
Four Seasons Hotel
Central

**Participants:**
Kevin
Doorman (Male)

**Ends:**
Asked for the time
Time was given

**Act Sequence:**
Greeting
  - Staff: (“Hello, sir”)
Main Body
  - Customer: Inquiry about time (asked what time it is)
  - S: Basic answer (Gives the time)
  - C: Inquiry about nationality (Asks where staff is from)
  - S: Basic answer (“I’m from Nepal, sir”)
Farewell
  - S: (“Have a nice day”)

**Instrumentalities:**
Formal
Proficient English
Nepal accent
English only

**Norms:**
Answers without hesitation

**Genre:** Inquiry
Interaction #H15
Hospitality – Four Seasons Hotel

Date/Time: January 15th, 2009
Start: 11:50 AM
End: 11:53 AM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Four Seasons Hotel
Central

Participants: Kevin, James
Direction assistant (Male)

Ends: Asked about places to eat around the area
Gave places around the hotel

Act Sequence: Greeting
  • Staff: (“Hi, do you need help?”)
Main Body
  • Customer: Inquiry about service (Asks about the restaurant in the hotel)
  • S: Complete answer (Describes each restaurant in detail)
Farewell
  • S: (“Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English
Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Hesitated when responding
Sounded unsure

Genre: Inquiry
Hotel Inter-Continental Hong Kong (Tsim Sha Tsui)

Interaction #H16
Hospitality - Hotel Inter-Continental Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 14th, 2009
Start: 2:06 PM
End: 2:10 PM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
Hotel Inter-Continental Hong Kong
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Lindy
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Asked for availability of rooms during Chinese New Year
Directed to hotel website for further information

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: (“Hello, how can I help you?”)
Main Body
- Customer: Inquire about service (“Are you booked through Chinese New Year?”)
- S: Clarifying question (“Excuse me?”)
- C: Inquiry about service (“Are you booked through Chinese New Year?”)
- S: Basic answer (“No, not yet”)
- C: Explanation (“I have a friend coming from out of town”)
- S: Explanation (Suggested using internet booking)
Farewell
- S: (“Bye bye”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-formal
Proficient in English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Repetition of questions needed
Front desk was able to make a request for clarification which is an effective strategy
Recommended visiting hotel website for addition information

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H17
Hospitality - Hotel Inter-Continental Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 14th, 2009
Start: 2:20 PM
End: 2:21 PM

Setting and Scene: Buffet
Hotel Inter-Continental Hong Kong
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Francisco
Restaurant Staff (Female)

Ends: Request to look at food available in the buffet
Allowed to enter and look around

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: (“Hi”)
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about service (Asked to look at buffet)
- S: Basic answer (“Please go ahead”)
Farewell
- C: (“Thank you”)
- S: (“Bye”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient in English
British accent
English only

Norms: Used colloquial term “no problem”
More casual greeting “Hi”

Genre: Inquiry
Island Shangri-La Hong Kong (Admiralty)

Interaction #H18
Hospitality – Island Shangri-La

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 2:00 PM
End: 2:02 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Island Shangri-La
Admiralty

Participants: James
Doorman (Male)

Ends: Asked what time it was
Staff was unable to answer, but got a manager who could tell the time

Act Sequence: Greeting
• Customer: (“Hi”)
• Staff: (“Hi”)
Main Body
• C: Inquiry about time (“Do you know what time it is?”)
• S: Basic answer (“Sorry, I do not have a watch”)
Farewell
• S: (“Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only

Norms: Understood the question easily
Helped customer and got question answered

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H19
Hospitality – Island Shangri-La Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 2:15 PM
End: 2:22 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Island Shangri-la Hong Kong
Admiralty

Participants: Kevin
Concierge (Male)

Ends: Asked for good restaurants
Suggested restaurants around the area

Act Sequence:
- Greeting
  - S: (Greeting in Cantonese)
- Main Body
  - Customer: Inquiry about restaurants around the area
  - Staff: Complete answer (suggested several places around the hotel and gave a map)
  - C: Follow up question (“What kind of restaurants that you like?”)
  - S: Complete answer (Described different restaurants and made a joke)
  - C: Inquiry about consumers (“What kind of clients do you get around here?”)
  - S: Complete answer (Described where majority of customers are from)
  - C: Inquiry about languages (“How many languages do you speak?”)
  - S: Complete answer (Elaborates what languages spoken as well)
- Farewell
  - S: (“No problem, have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities:
- Semi-Formal
- Excellent English
- No accent
- Cantonese and English

Norms:
- Speaks Thai, Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese, English
- Very good grammar

Genre: Inquiry
Langham Place Hotel (Mong Kok)

Interaction #H20
Hospitality - Langham Place Hotel

Date/Time: January 14th, 2009
Start: 11:10 AM
End: 11:19 AM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Langham Place Hotel
Mong Kok

Participants: Man from United States (Customer) and Asian woman
Front Desk Staff (Female)

Ends: Discussed hotel policies and rates
Final arrangement to be discussed further

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Staff: (“Good morning, [customer’s name]”)

Main Body
- S: Inquiry about purpose of conversation (“You wanted to discuss the rates of our rooms?”)
- Customer: Complete answer (“Yes, we will be holding a series of workshops here in Hong Kong”… “A number of executives from around Asia will be present”… “We will need about 20 rooms and would like to discuss what packages you could propose for our purposes”… Not all phrases were recorded)
- S: Request to wait (“One moment, please”)
- Staff goes to front desk office, returns with folder, papers, and business card
- S: Explanation & Request (“For these events, we have some packages to offer” The manager will be able to help them finalize all of the details. He is currently unavailable… “but if you’d like to, please look over the information and call us to set up an appointment”)

Farewell
- C: (“Sounds great, we’ll be in contact them. Thank you so much for your help”)
- S: (“No problem, sir. We’re happy to help you”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-Formal
Excellent English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only
**Norms:** Since the customers arrived without an appointment, it seems as though in order to allow rates other than those stated in the brochure, the manager must be present. Although the staff had no power in establishing the final details, she made sure to give the customers as much information as possible and all of the contact information they needed.

**Genre:** Sales Meeting
Interaction #H21

Hospitality - Langham Place Hotel

Date/Time: January 14th, 2009
Start: 11:22 AM
End: 11:25 AM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
Langham Place Hotel
Mong Kok

Participants: Western couple around 30 years old
Front Desk Staff (Female)

Ends: Checking out
Check-out successful and luggage stored

Act Sequence:
Greeting
• Staff: (“Checking out, sir?”)

Main Body
• Customer: Basic answer (“Yes”)
• S: Inquiry about bill (“Would you like to review the bill, sir?”)
• C: Basic answer (“No, I’ve already checked it. Thank you”)
• S: Inquiry about mini bar (“Did you take anything from the mini bar, sir?”)
• C: Basic answer (“No”)
• S: Inquiry about luggage (“Would you like us to hold your luggage until your 5:30 flight?”)
• C: Basic answer (“Yeah, that would be great”)
• S: Request for signature (“Please sign here”)

Farewell
• S: (“Thank you for staying at Langham Place”)

Instrumentalities:
Formal
Excellent English
Hint of Asian accent
English only

Norms:
Very good flow
Made sure the customers had everything they needed and made sure all check out procedures were completed in a very polite manner

Genre:
Checkout
Mandarin Oriental (Central)

Interaction #H22
Hospitality – Mandarin Oriental

Date/Time: January 15th, 2009
Start: 3:05 PM
End: 3:06 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Mandarin Oriental
Central

Participants: James
Doorman (Male)

Ends: Asked for the time
Slow progress, but time was given

Act Sequence: Greeting
- No verbal greeting
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about time (Asked for the time)
- Staff: No answer (Does not understand the question)
- Customer: Clarifying question (Asked for the time again and use body language)
- Staff: No verbal response (Pointed at his watch)
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: N/A
Very weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Had trouble understanding the question
Doorman was polite and smiled

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H23

Hospitality – Mandarin Oriental

Date/Time: January 15th, 2009
Start: 3:15 PM
End: 3:20 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Mandarin Oriental
Central

Participants: James
Front Desk Staff (Female)

Ends: Asked about clients
A clear answer was given

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: (“Hi, how may I help you?”)

Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about clients (Asked about the hotel’s clients)
- S: Follow up question (Asking for more detail)
- C: Clarifying question (“Are the customers in your hotel here for business or tourist?”)
- S: Complete answer (“Mainly business, because the hotel is located in Central, which is the financial area”)
- C: Follow up question (“Where are the customers from?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Everywhere in the world”)
- C: Follow up question (“For example?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Europe, Mainland, Japan…”)
- C: Inquiry about languages spoken (“How many languages do you speak?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Two”)
- C: Follow up question (“Cantonese and English?”)
- S: Complete answer (“No, Japanese and English”)
- C: Follow up question (“Oh, so you are from Japan”)
- S: Basic answer (“Yes”)

Farewell
- Non-verbal farewell (Smile and nod)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only
Norms: Front desk person spoke Japanese and English but no Chinese
Hotel dealt mostly with English speakers traveling for business purposes

Genre: Inquiry
Marco Polo Hong Kong Hotel (Tsim Sha Tsui)

Interaction #H24
Hospitality – Marco Polo Hong Kong Hotel

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 3:30 PM
End: 3:31 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Marco Polo Hong Kong Hotel
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Kevin
Direction assistant (Male)

Ends: Asked for the time
Staff simply showed his watch

Act Sequence:
Greeting

Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about time (“What time is it?”)
- Staff: No answer (did not understand the question)
- C: Non-verbal response (Signaled wrist)
- S: Non-verbal response (Showed watch)

Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: N/A
Very weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
No spoken language

Norms: Had to use hand motions in order to communicate

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H25
Hospitality – Marco Polo Hong Kong Hotel

Date/Time:
January 16th, 2009
Start: 3:40 PM
End: 3:42 PM

Setting and Scene:
Front Desk
Marco Polo Hong Kong Hotel
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants:
2 Western men
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends:
Customer asked about available rooms
Booked a room at the front desk

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Staff: (“How may I help you?”)
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about booking rooms
- S: Complete answer (offered all the available options and made a joke)
- C: Inquiry about specific options.
- S: Complete answer (gave a description of the room)
- C: Complete answer (booked the room)
Farewell
- S: (“Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities:
Semi-formal
Excellent English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only

Norms:
Slight jokes from the front desk
Very fluid speech, no hesitations

Genre:
Inquiry
New Kings Hotel (Yau Ma Tei)

Interaction #H26
Hospitality – New Kings Hotel

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 12:00 PM
End: 12:05 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
New Kings Hotel
Yau Ma Tei

Participants: Front Desk Staff (Female)
James

Ends: Asked about the hotel’s clients and the languages spoken by the staff
Staff had trouble understanding and did not answer the questions directly

Act Sequence: Greeting
• No verbal greeting (nods and looks at the customer)
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry about clients (Asks about clients)
• Staff: No answer (Does not seem to understand the question)
• C: Clarifying question (Speaks more slowly: “What kind of customers do you have? Tourists or businessmen?”)
• S: Incomplete answer (“Tour” (meant “tourists”, was understood))
• C: Follow up question (Asked three times where customers are from)
• S: Basic answer (“Chinese” Customers are from China)
Farewell
• C: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: N/A
Very weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Grammatical errors
Confused ‘tours’ with ‘tourists’
Did not make eye contact
Seemed concerned about her own work
Had to repeat three times and simplify language

Genre: Inquiry
Newton Hotel Hong Kong (Fortress Hill)

Interaction #H27
Hospitality – Newton Hotel

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 6:00 PM
End: 6:05 PM

Setting and Scene: Concierge
Newton Hotel Hong Kong
Fortress Hill

Participants: James
Concierge (Male)

Ends: Asked for good restaurants and shopping areas
Explanation and map were given

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Customer: (“Hello”)
- Staff: (“Hi”)

Main Body
- C: Inquiry about restaurants (Asking for good restaurant nearby)
- S: Complete answer (No good restaurant nearby. Suggested to go to the food court in Time Square)
- C: Inquiry about shopping areas (Asking for places to shop)
- S: Basic answer (Suggested Time Square, IFC and Harbor City)
- C: Inquiry about customers (“Do a lot of Europeans come to your hotel?”)
- S: Unrelated answer (“You’ll find more in Tsim Sha Tsui”)

Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities:
Formal
Proficient English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms:
Not confident in English ability
Misunderstood one of the questions

Genre:
Inquiry
Park Hotel (Tsim Sha Tsui)

Interaction #H28
Hospitality – Park Hotel

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 12:50 PM
End: 12:55 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Park Hotel
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Kevin, James
Direction Assistant (Female)

Ends: Asked for good restaurants
Directed customer to the concierge

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Customer: (“Hi”)
- Direction Assistant: (“Hi”)
Main Body
- C: Inquiry about locations (Asking for good restaurants around)
- DA: Incomplete answer (Directed to the concierge)
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: N/A
Very weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Did not answer the question
Directed customer to the concierge

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H29
Hospitality – Park Hotel

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 1:00 PM
End: 1:05 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Park Hotel
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Kevin, James
Concierge (Male)

Ends: Asked for good restaurants
Concierge gave a very descriptive answer

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Customer: (“Hi”)
- Staff: (“Hi, may I help you?”)

Main Body
- C: Inquiry about restaurants (Asked about restaurants nearby)
- S: Follow up question (“What kind of food?”)
- C: Basic answer (“Local food”)
- S: Complete answer (A local restaurant is suggested and the location is given from the map)
- C: Follow up question (“What is the price range of this restaurant?”)
- S: Basic answer (Gives a price range for the restaurant and makes a joke)
- C: Follow up question (“Any other suggestions?”)
- S: Complete answer (Another local restaurant is suggested in Cantonese and the location is given from the map)

Farewell
- C: (“Thank you very much for your suggestions”)
- S: (“You are welcome, bye”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-formal
Excellent English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Gave map, names, explanation, and location of restaurants
Little or no grammatical errors
Rule breaking switched to Cantonese and made a joke

Genre: Inquiry
Peninsula Hong Kong (Tsim Sha Tsui)

Interaction #H30
Hospitality - Peninsula Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 13th, 2009
Start: 2:05 PM
End: 2:11 PM

Setting and Scene: High Tea Lobby
Peninsula Hong Kong
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Kevin, James, Francisco
Restaurant Staff (Male)

Ends: Ordered tea
Received tea

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Customer: (Non verbal response, eye contact and hand motion made requesting service)

Main Body
- C: Ordered tea (“Hi, we would like a pot of Oolong tea and this Green tea”)
- Staff: Follow-up question (“And you, sir?”)
- C: Inquiry about recommendation (Asked for suggestion)
- S: Incomplete answer (“The Peninsula Afternoon is very popular”)
- C: Follow-up question (“What's the difference between the Peninsula Afternoon and the Peninsula Classic?”)
- S: Unrelated answer (“Um…the Peninsula Afternoon is…For high tea, the Peninsula afternoon is very nice.”)
- C: Request for tea (Ordered tea)
- S: Explanation of order (“So your order is Oolong tea, Green tea, and Peninsula Afternoon.”)

Farewell
- S: (“Ok…”)

Instrumentalities:
Formal
Weak English used
Asian accent
English only

Norms:
Couldn’t speak very well or clearly, responses were slow and unclear
Difficulty explaining difference between teas

Genre: Food & Beverage Service
Interaction #H31  
Hospitality - Peninsula Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 13th, 2009  
Start: 2:25 PM  
End: 2:28 PM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk  
Peninsula Hong Kong  
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Francisco  
Front Desk Staff (Female)

Ends: Asked for restaurants available at Peninsula Hong Kong  
Received brochure rather than verbal explanations

Act Sequence: Greeting  
• Staff: (“Good afternoon, sir”)

Main Body  
• Customer: Inquiry about restaurants in the hotel  
• S: Nonverbal response: Brochure is handed to customer  
• S: Explaining purpose of brochure (“You can find all of the information in here”)

Farewell  
• C: (“Thank you”)  
• S: (“Have a nice day, sir”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-formal  
Excellent English  
British Accent  
English only

Norms: Staff avoided conversation in English, even though excellent in the language  
Although staff was very formal, the handing of the brochure made it bad service as the customer felt the lack of willingness to help and no room for further questions/requests of suggestions.

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H32
Hospitality - Peninsula Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 13th, 2009
Start: 3:40 PM
End: 3:42 PM

Setting and Scene: High Tea Lobby
Peninsula Hong Kong
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: 3 Japanese Women
Restaurant Staff (Male)

Ends: Requested table for 3 for high tea
After 2 minutes, table was offered

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- S: No verbal greeting (eye contact was made)
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about table (Showed that 3 seats were needed at a table by holding up three fingers)
- Staff: Non verbal response (after 2 minutes, host came back and gestured “follow me” with his hands)
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities:
No spoken language

Norms: Customer just showed number of fingers for number of guests and no further communication took place until guests took seat

Genre: Food & Beverage Service
Interaction #H33
Hospitality - Peninsula Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 13th, 2009
Start: 3:47 PM
End: 3:48 PM

Setting and Scene: High Tea Lobby
Peninsula Hong Kong
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: 2 Westerners, couple, male and female
Restaurant Staff (Male)

Ends: Requested table for 3 for high tea
Table offered immediately

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Customers smiled at host
Main Body
- Host Staff: Non verbal response (Gestured “follow me“ with his hand immediately)
Farewell
- Information Not Available

Instrumentalities: No spoken language

Norms: Host used body language to signal a “follow me” command in order to give the couple a table

Genre: Food & Beverage Service
Interaction #H34
Hospitality - Peninsula Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 13th, 2009
Start: 3:50 PM
End: 3:51 PM

Setting and Scene: High Tea Lobby
Peninsula Hong Kong
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: 2 Chinese people, couple, male and female
Restaurant Staff (Male)

Ends: Requested table for 2 for high tea
Table offered immediately

Act Sequence: Greeting
- No verbal greeting
- Customers smiled at host
Main Body
- Host Staff: Explanation (“Please follow me...”)
Farewell
- Customer: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: N/A
Very weak English used
Asian accent
English only

Norms: When ordering tables, body language is extremely common
Throughout Peninsula Food & Beverage Services, body language plays a major role

Genre: Food & Beverage Service
Interaction #H35
Hospitality - Peninsula Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 13th, 2009
Start: 4:31 PM
End: 4:35 PM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
Peninsula Hong Kong
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Francisco
Front Desk Staff (Female)

Ends: Asked for a tour of the hotel, if possible
Business card was received to contact manager in about a tour

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: “Hello, good afternoon”
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about hotel tour (Asked if this was possible)
- S: Request to wait (“One moment please” as staff dials the phone), Staff checks with a manager a few steps away
- S: Explanation (“I’m sorry to inform you, but in order to take a tour of the hotel, you must call Public Relations and they will be able to help you at a later time.” Business card is given to customer)
- C: Clarification (restating explanation)
- S: Basic answer (“Correct, sir”)
Farewell
- C: (“Thank you”)
- S: (“Sorry for the inconvenience.”)
- S: (“Have a good day”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
Hint of a British English, no Asian accent
English only

Norms: Very polite. No matter how difficult it is to get a tour of the hotel, the staff still made sure the customer received information that would be helpful.
Effort shown by checking with two managers

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H36
Hospitality - Peninsula Hong Kong

Date/Time: January 13th, 2009
Start: 4:40 PM
End: 4:44 PM

Setting and Scene: Concierge
Peninsula Hong Kong
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Francisco
Concierge (Female)

Ends: Asked for shoe repair business
Instructions were given to the nearest shoe shop

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: (“Good afternoon, how may I help?”)

Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about shoe shops (“Hello, do you know where I could get my dress shoes fixed?”)
- S: Complete answer (“Certainly sir. There’s a place just a few blocks away. Just inside the MTR you will find a shoe shop. Do you need directions to the MTR Station?”)
- C: Basic answer and follow-up questions (“No thank you, where is it inside the station?”)
- S: Complete answer (“Once you arrive at the station, it is situated in the middle of the shops near exit D. Is there anything else I can help you with, sir?”)

Farewell
- C: (“That’s all. Thank you very much”)
- S: (“No problem, sir. Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-Formal
Excellent English used
British accent
English only

Norms: Throughout the conversation, the staff was smiling and was extremely friendly while managing to keep all of her actions and answers very formal. Seemed extremely interested in helping

Genre: Inquiry
Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel (Tsim Sha Tsui)

Interaction #H37
Hospitality – Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers

Date/Time: January 14th, 2009
Start: 12:30 PM
End: 12:41 PM

Setting and Scene: Concierge
Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Chinese man, most likely born in the United States
Concierge (Male)

Ends: Asked about attractions and restaurants around Hong Kong
Received a map with instructions and a few detailed suggestions

Act Sequence:
Greeting
• Staff: (“Good afternoon, sir”)
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry about nearby locations (“Yes, hi, I was wondering
where I could find a good restaurant nearby”)
• S: Follow-up question (“Yes, sir…Any type of restaurant you’re looking
for?”)
• C: Basic answer (“I was looking for some good local food in fact”)
• S: Explanation (“There’s a good Cantonese restaurant really close” Map
is used for directions, “Right here”)
• C: Follow-up question (“Any more restaurants nearby?”)
• Staff asks coworker in Cantonese right next to him. Turns to map and
points again
• C: Inquiry about other attractions in the Tsim Sha Tsui area
• S: Basic answer (points out two attractions that are popular)
Farewell
• C: (“Sounds great. Thank you”)
• S: (“Thank you.”)

Instrumentalities:
Formal
Proficient English used
Cantonese accent
English used with customer, Cantonese used with co-worker

Norms:
Took some time to answer questions, although no clarification was needed
Answers were also slow and sometimes not satisfying to the customer although
they answered the basic aspects of his questions
Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H38
Hospitality - Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers

Date/Time: January 14th, 2009
Start: 12:51 PM
End: 1:05 PM

Setting and Scene: Concierge
Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Man from the United States
Concierge (Male)

Ends: Directions to restaurant in Mody Road
Instructions where to get a taxi and few directions

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Customer: (“Hi. I was wondering if you could help me?”)
- Staff: (“Of course”)

Main Body
- C: Inquiry about specific restaurant (“I’m looking for this restaurant in Mody Road, the Outback Steakhouse, and I need to get there today at 7 PM”)
- S: Acknowledgement (“Ok”)
- C: Follow-up question (“Is it hard to get there?”)
- S: Incomplete answer (“You can take taxi from ground floor to get there.”)
- C: Follow-up question (“Is there any chance I could reserve a taxi for that time? It’s a corporate meeting and I need to be there on time”)
- S: Complete answer (“I’m sorry sir, but you can not. But do not worry, it’s just a few blocks down the road”)
- C: Follow-up question (“So I can walk there?”)
- S: Complete answer (“Yes, it’s about 15 minutes”)

Farewell
- C: (“Sounds great, thanks”)

Instrumentalities:
Formal
Proficient English
Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Staff did not answer the question “is it easy to get there?” right away, but he did later on in the conversation.

Genre: Inquiry
South Pacific Hotel (Wan Chai)

Interaction #H39
Hospitality – South Pacific Hotel

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 2:00 PM
End: 2:03 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
South Pacific Hotel
Wan Chai

Participants: Kevin
Doorman (Male)

Ends: Asked for time
Staff quickly gave time

Act Sequence: Greeting
• No verbal greeting (nod for acknowledgement)
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry about busses (“Excuse me, what time is it?”)
• Staff: Basic answer (“It’s about 2:00 (shows watch) ”)
Farewell
• C: (“Thanks”)
• S: (“Welcome”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-formal
Proficient English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Slight pause before giving time
Used “Welcome” instead of “You’re welcome”

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H40
Hospitality – South Pacific Hotel

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 2:10 PM
End: 2:17 PM

Setting and Scene: Concierge
South Pacific Hotel
Wan Chai

Participants: James
Concierge (Female)

Ends: Asked for restaurants recommendation
The locations and directions are given

Act Sequence:

Greeting
- Customer: (“Hi”)
- Staff: (“Hello”)

Main Body
- C: Inquiry about restaurants (“Just wondering if there are any good restaurants nearby?”)
- S: Follow up question (“Do you like Chinese food or Western food”)
- C: Basic answer (“Chinese food”)
- S: Follow up question (“Have you try this one? (Pointed at a restaurant behind) ”)
- C: Basic answer (“No”)
- S: Explanation (“You can try. It’s a Shanghai style”)
- C: Follow up question (“Do you have a map?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Just a while (Hands a map) ”)
- C: Follow up question (“Can you show me some other restaurants?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Yes (Handed a card of a restaurant)”)
- C: Follow up question (“Can you show me the location on the map?”)
- S: Basic answer (had to check with other employee first in Cantonese “Here is the restaurant.”)
- C: Follow up question (“By the way, are there any pharmacies nearby”)
- S: Complete answer (“Yes, it’s in that direction (Pointed)”)
- C: Follow up question (“Can you tell me the name of the pharmacy?”)
- S: Basic answer (“It’s also called South Pacific”)

Farewell
- C: (“Thank you”)
- S: (“You’re welcome. Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English
Strong Cantonese accent
English and Cantonese

Norms: Used Cantonese when communicating with other staff.
Used “just a while instead” of “just a moment”
Some grammatical errors

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H41
Hospitality – South Pacific Hotel

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 2:18 PM
End: 2:20 PM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
South Pacific Hotel
Wan Chai

Participants: James
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Asked for room rate
Information given

Act Sequence:
- Greeting
  - Staff: (“May I help you?”)
- Main Body
  - C: Inquiry about rooms (“Just wondering, how much does it cost per night?”)
  - S: Basic answer (“$660HK”)
  - C: Follow up question (“Standard room?”)
  - S: Basic answer (“Yes”)
- Farewell
  - C: (“Thank you”)
  - S: (“You’re welcome”)

Instrumentalities:
- Formal
- Proficient English
- Slight Cantonese accent
- English only

Norms:
- No hesitation
- No grammatical errors
- Basic response no elaboration

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H42
Hospitality – South Pacific Hotel

Date/Time: February 9\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
Start: 2:25 PM
End: 2:26 PM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
South Pacific Hotel
Wan Chai

Participants: James
Direction Assistant (Male)

Ends: Asked for bathroom
Directions were given

Act Sequence:

- Greeting
  - No verbal greeting (Eye contact)

Main Body

- Customer: Inquiry about bathroom (“Hi, do you know where the bathroom is?”)
- Staff: Clarifying question (“Huh?”)
- C: Basic answer (“Bathroom”)
- S: Basic answer (“Oh it’s at the first floor. (Pointed at the stairs)”)

Farewell

- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities:

- Formal
- Weak English used
- Strong Cantonese accent
- English only

Norms:

- Did not understand the question initially, but answered after clarification

Genre: Inquiry
Stanford Hotel (Mong Kok)

Interaction #H43
Hospitality - Stanford Hotel

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 2:10 PM
End: 2:15 PM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
Stanford Hotel
Mong Kok

Participants: French woman
Front Desk Staff (Male, Asian descent)

Ends: Checking out
Check-out successful

Act Sequence:
- Greeting
  - N/A
- Main Body
  - Staff: Request for signature (“Please sign here”)
  - Customer: Inquiry about bill (“But this is much more. I was told another final bill”)
  - S: Explanation (“One moment” check computer, “Excuse me Madam, our system shows that it wasn’t fully paid”)
  - C: Explanation (“I paid it all”)
  - S: Nonverbal response (Staff talks with co-worker in Cantonese)
  - C: Explanation (“Here...here is the paper... see another rate”)
  - Customer shows the staff the paper with the rate
  - S: Request to wait (“One moment”)
  - Staff talks with co-worker in Cantonese again

Farewell
- S: (“Ok. So sorry ma’am”)
- C: (“Ok. Thank you”)

Instrumentalities:
- Formal
  - Weak English used
  - Strong Cantonese accent
- English with customer; staff used Cantonese with co-worker to clarify problems

Norms:
- Difficulty progressing throughout interactions
- Both participants were ESL; this made the interaction a lot more difficult and harder for the problems to be solved

Genre: Check out
Interaction #H44  
Hospitality - Stanford Hotel

Date/Time:  
January 16th, 2009  
Start: 2:20 PM  
End: 2:23 PM

Setting and Scene:  
Concierge  
Stanford Hotel  
Mong Kok

Participants:  
James  
Concierge (Male)

Ends:  
Asked about the clients  
Information was given

Act Sequence:  
Greeting  
• Customer: (“Hello”)  
• Staff: (“Hello”)  

Main Body  
• C: Inquiry about information (“Just wondering, where are your customers mainly from?”)  
• S: Explanation (“Depend on different seasons”)  
• C: Follow up question (“How about peak seasons?”)  
• S: Basic answer (“China, Australia, Europe”)  
• C: Follow up question (“How many languages do you speak”)  
• S: Basic answer (“Three”)  
• C: Follow up question (“Which three languages?”)  
• S: Basic answer (“Cantonese, Mandarin and English”)  

Farewell  
• C: (“Thank you very much for your information”)  
• S: (“You are welcome”)

Instrumentalities:  
Formal  
Weak English used  
Strong Cantonese accent  
English only

Norms:  
Took a while to answer questions  
Grammatical errors  
Poor pronunciation  
Very choppy sentences

Genre:  
Inquiry
Royal Plaza Hotel (Mongkok)

Interaction #H45
Hospitality – Royal Plaza Hotel

Date/Time: January 15th, 2009
Start: 11:00 AM
End: 11:01 AM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
Royal Plaza Hotel
Mong Kok

Participants: James
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Asked about the time
Did not understand the questions and then answered in Mandarin

Act Sequence: Greeting
• No verbal greeting (Eye contact)
Main Body
• Customer: (“What time is it?”)
• Staff: Nonverbal response (Does not understand and redirects customer to the front desk in Mandarin)
Farewell
• No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: No English
Mandarin only

Norms: Directed to another person who also did not speak English

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H46
Hospitality – Royal Plaza Hotel

Date/Time: January 15th, 2009
Start: 10:50 AM
Start 10:51 AM

Setting and Scene: Lobby
Royal Plaza Hotel
Mong Kok

Participants: James
Direction Assistant (Male)

Ends: Asked about the clients
Did not understand the questions and then answered in Mandarin

Act Sequence: Greeting
- No verbal greeting (Eye contact)
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about clients
- Staff: Speaks in Mandarin
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: No English used, Mandarin only

Norms: N/A
Did not understand the question asked

Genre: Inquiry
Interaction #H47  
*Hospitality – Royal Plaza Hotel*

**Date/Time:** January 15th, 2009  
Start: 10:55 AM  
End: 10:56 AM

**Setting and Scene:** Concierge  
Royal Plaza Hotel  
Mong Kok

**Participants:** James  
Concierge (Male)

**Ends:**  
Asked about the clients  
Did not understand the questions and then answered in Mandarin

**Act Sequence:**  
Greeting  
- No verbal greeting (Eye contact)  
Main Body  
- Customer: Inquiry about clients  
- Concierge: Answered in Mandarin  
Farewell  
- No verbal farewell

**Instrumentalities:**  
Semi-formal  
No English used, Mandarin only

**Norms:**  
Did not understand the question

**Genre:** Inquiry
Wesley Hong Kong Hotel (Wan Chai)

Interaction #H48
Hospitality – Wesley Hong Kong Hotel

Date/Time: January 21st, 2009
Start: 4:30 PM
End: 4:35 PM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
Wesley Hong Kong Hotel
Wan Chai

Participants: James
Front Desk Staff (Male)

Ends: Asked for good restaurants nearby
Gave a map with a description of restaurants

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: (“Good afternoon”)

Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about restaurant (“Would you please show me some good restaurants nearby?”)
- S: Follow up question (“What kind of food would you like?”)
- C: Basic answer (“Chinese food”)
- S: Complete answer (A Chinese restaurant is suggested and the location is shown on the map)
- C: Follow up question (Asking the price range of the restaurant)
- S: Basic answer (Price range was given)
- C: Follow up question (“Are there any cheap restaurants nearby?”)
- S: Complete answer (A local restaurant is suggested and the location is shown on the map)
- C: Follow up question (“Where are your customers from?”)
- S: Basic answer (“China and Europe”)
- C: Follow up question (“How many languages do you speak?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Cantonese, Mandarin and English”)

Farewell
- S: (“Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only
Norms: Slight pause before speaking English
Used filler words like “uh”
Speaks Mandarin, Cantonese, English

Genre: Inquiry
Electronic Shops

Bank Center Mall Electronics (Mong Kok)

Interaction #S1
Shopping – Electronics – Bank Center Mall

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 1:05 PM
End: 1:08 PM

Setting and Scene: Bank Center Mall Electronics
Mong Kok

Participants: Francisco, James
Sales (Male)

Ends: Shopped for a digital camera
Bad service, left store

Act Sequence: Greeting
• No verbal greeting
Main Body
• Customer waited for 3 minutes, by watch, and then left
Farewell
• No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: N/A
N/A
N/A
N/A
No English used

Norms: Sales assistant avoids English speakers
Bad service, doesn’t seem to care about customers

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Broadway (Causeway Bay)

Interaction #S2
Shopping – Electronics – Broadway

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 3:00 PM
End: 3:05 PM

Setting and Scene: Broadway
Times Square
Causeway Bay

Participants: Kevin, James
Sales (Male)

Ends: Asked for a laptop cooler
Understood the question but did not have product

Act Sequence:
Greeting
• No verbal greeting
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry about a product (“Do you have a laptop cooler?”)
• S: Non verbal response (hand signal to wait)
• Staff speaks in Cantonese to coworker
• S: Basic answer (“No, sorry we don’t”)
Farewell
• No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities:
Semi-Formal
Proficient English
Slight Cantonese accent
English and Cantonese

Norms:
No grammatical errors
No pause in between questions

Genre: Sales Inquiry
B-Tech Systems Ltd. (Wan Chai)

Interaction #53
Shopping – Electronic Stores – B-Tech Systems Ltd.

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 11:18 AM
End: 11:23 AM

Setting and Scene: B-Tech Systems Ltd.
Wan Chai Computer Center
Wan Chai

Participants: Portuguese man
Sales (Male)

Ends: Was buying camera memory card
Successful purchase

Act Sequence: Greeting
  • No verbal greeting
Main Body
  • Customer: Inquiry (“This one, 4 Giga, Extreme 3, one please”)
  • Staff: Clarifying question (“4 Giga?”)
  • C: Basic answer (“4 Giga”)
  • S: Follow-up question (“Ok. Any one else?”)
  • C: Basic answer (“No thanks”)

Farewell
  • S: (“Bye bye”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-formal
Weak English used
Asian accent
English only

Norms: Very limited vocabulary
Body language is critical when both participants speak English as their second language
Since both participants are ESL, explanations were avoided as much as possible to keep the interaction simple and successful for both

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Chung Yuen Electronics (Mong Kok)

Interaction #S4
Shopping – Electronics – Chung Yuen

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 12:45 PM
End: 12:50 PM

Setting and Scene: Chung Yuen Electronics
Mong Kok

Participants: Francisco, James
Sales (Male)

Ends: Shopped for a digital camera
Bad service, left store

Act Sequence: Greeting
• No verbal greeting
Main Body
• Customer attempts to speak with assistant
• Staff is not busy and ignoring customer
• Customer leave
Farewell
• No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: N/A
N/A
N/A
No English used

Norms: Sales assistant avoids English speakers
Staff is very rude

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Interaction #55

Shopping – Electronics – Chung Yuen

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 1:20 PM
End: 1:26 PM

Setting and Scene: Chung Yuen Electronics
Mong Kok

Participants: Francisco, James
Sales (Male)

Ends: Shopping for a digital camera
Bad service, left store

Act Sequence: Greeting
- No verbal greeting
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about digital cameras (The difference between two camera sensors)
- Staff: Basic answer ("No difference")
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: N/A
Very weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Somewhat friendly
Short, concise answers
 Doesn’t seem to care about sale

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Chung Yuen Electronics (Causeway Bay)

Interaction #S6
Shopping – Electronics – Chung Yuen

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 3:45 PM
End: 3:50 PM

Setting and Scene: Chung Yuen
Times Square
Causeway Bay

Participants: Kevin, James
2 Sales (Male)

Ends: Asked for a laptop cooler
Understood the question but did not have product

Act Sequence:
Greeting
• No verbal greeting
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry about a product (“Do you sell laptop coolers?”)
• Staff: Clarification question (“LG?”)
• C: Clarification (“Laptop cooler”)
• S1: Clarification question (“Laptop?”)
• C: Clarification (“Cooler”)
• Staff speaks Cantonese to co-worker
• S1: Inquiry about product (“Which model?”)
• C: Clarification question (“What?”)
• Staff speaks Cantonese to co-worker again
• S2: Clarification question (“Do you mean a stand?”)
• C: Basic answer (“Yes”)
• C: Inquiry about product model (“Is this the only model?”)
• S2: Complete answer (“Yes, we sell mostly computers not accessories. You can go to Wan Chai computer center or a smaller store”)

Farewell
• C: (“Okay thanks”)

Instrumentalities:
Semi-Formal
Very weak English (S1)
Proficient English (S2)
Slight Cantonese accent
English and Cantonese
Norms: Misunderstood the questions asked
Needed clarification twice

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Comdex Computer (Wan Chai)

Interaction #S7
Shopping – Electronics – Comdex Computer

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 11:19 AM
End: 11:25 AM

Setting and Scene: Comdex Computer
Wan Chai Computer Center
Wan Chai

Participants: Lindy
2 Sales (Male)

Ends: Looked around for electronic products
Purchased a wireless mouse

Act Sequence:
Greetings
- Sales Assistant 1 (“Hello, can I help you”)
- Customer (“Thank you, but I’m just looking”)
- About 2 minutes later Sales Assistant 2 (“Hello, can I help you?”)

Main Body
- C: Inquiry about recommendation (“Which wireless mouse do you recommend?”)
- SA2: Complete answer (“This one (indicates), or this one (indicates) is cheaper. Logitech.”)
- C: Follow-up question about color (“Does it come in other colors?)
- SA 1: Basic Answer (“Uh…let me check. Yes, it comes in silver color.” Shows silver colored mouse)
- C: Explanation (“Ok, I’ll take the silver one.”)
- SA 2: Explanation (“For $185”)
- C: Nonverbal response (gives cash)
- SA 2: Inquiry about packaging (“Do you need a bag?”)
- C: Basic Answer (“No that’s alright”)

Farewell
- SA 2 (“Thank you”)
- C: (“Thank you”)
- SA 2: Explanation (“You can return it for seven days if there is any problem”)

Instrumentalities: Semi formal
Excellent English
Light Cantonese accent
English only
**Norms:**
- Friendly, but not overbearing, helpful answers
- Understood questions
- Offered information

**Genre:**
- Sales Inquiry
Interaction #58
Shopping – Electronic Stores – Comdex Computer

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 10:54 AM
End: 10:59 AM

Setting and Scene: Comdex Computer
Wan Chai Computer Center
Wan Chai

Participants: Western man, Chinese woman
Sales (Male)

Ends: Bought computer component
Successful purchase

Act Sequence:

Greeting
- N/A

Main Body
- Explanations would be given between salesman and woman in Chinese, and every once in a while, the woman would explain certain things to the man.
- The Western man only nodded and said “OK”
- The only other line from the Western man was “I’ll take that one... no no, not that one, that one, right”

Farewell
- Western man used Cantonese

Instrumentalities:
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- No English used

Norms:
The role of the translator is crucial in making the purchase take place

Genre:
Sales Inquiry
Foresoon Engineering Co. Ltd (Wan Chai)

Interaction #S9
Shopping – Electronics – Foresoon Engineering Co. Ltd

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 11:05 AM
End: 11:08 AM

Setting and Scene: Foresoon Engineering Co. Ltd
Wan Chai Computer Center
Wan Chai

Participants: Lindy
2 Sales (Male)

Ends: Looked for a storage drive
Purchased a USB drive

Act Sequence:
Greeting
• Customer: (“Excuse me”)
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry about item (indicated item and asked to see it)
• Sales Assistant 1: Spoke to other sales assistant in Cantonese
• SA 1: Explanation (“It only in black” the display was red)
• C: Follow-up question about price (“It’s $98?”)
• SA 1: Basic Answer (“Yes” gives the item to SA 2)
• SA 2: Cantonese (gives price)
• C: Nonverbal response (gives cash)
• SA 2: Inquiry about packaging (“Do you need a bag?”)
• C: Basic Answer (“Yes please”)
Farewell
• SA 2 (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-Formal
Weak English
Strong Cantonese accent
English and Cantonese used

Norms:
Had to ask for attention even though 2 sales assistants were not busy
Short answers
Don’t seem to care about the sale

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Interaction #510
Shopping – Electronic Stores – Foresoon Engineering Co. Ltd.

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 11:01 AM
End: 11:15 AM

Setting and Scene: Foresoon Engineering Co. Ltd.
Wan Chai Computer Center
Wan Chai

Participants: Western man
Sales (Male)

Ends: Was buying a wireless router
No purchase

Act Sequence: Greeting
● Staff: (“Hello”)
Main Body
● Customer: Inquiry about routers (“Hi, I’m looking for a router”)
● S: Explanation (“This way”)
● S: Follow-up question (“Wireless?”)
● C: Basic answer (“Yes”)
● C: Inquiry about brand (“Is this brand any good?”)
● S: Indirect answer (“Yes, it’s made in Taiwan”)
● C: Acknowledgement (“Ok.”)
● C: Inquiry about other brand (“And where is this brand made?”)
● S: Basic answer (“In Germany”)
● C: Follow-up question (“So I guess this company is very big?”)
● S: Basic answer (“Popular, yes sir”)
● C: Inquiry about router (“So how many USB drives in this one?”)
● S: Basic answer (“4 USB drives”)
● C: Inquiry about terminology (“What is WPA mean?”)
● S: Unrelated answer (“It has a button”)
● C: Repeat question (“What? What does WPA mean?”)
● S: Basic answer (“For protected access”)
Farewell
● C: (“Ok thanks”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English used
Asian accent
English only
Norms: A little bit lost when answering certain questions
Not sure what the customer was looking every once in a while
Repetition or clarification needed even the question is simple

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Fortress (Causeway Bay)

Interaction #S11
Shopping – Electronics – Fortress

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 3:15 PM
End: 3:20 PM

Setting and Scene: Fortress
Times Square
Causeway Bay

Participants: Kevin, James
Sales (Female)

Ends:Asked for a laptop cooler
Understood the question but did not have product

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- No verbal greeting (Eye contact)
Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about a product (“Do you have laptop coolers?”)
- S: Basic answer and request to wait (“No...wait one second”) 
- Staff speaks in Cantonese to coworker
- S: Basic answer (“No”)
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: Semi-Formal
Weak English
Slight Cantonese accent
English and Cantonese

Norms:
No grammatical errors
No pause in between questions
Simple answers

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Optical Shops

Eyedontist (Causeway Bay)

Interaction #S12
Shopping – Optical Stores – Eyedontist

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 3:30 PM
End: 3:35 PM

Setting and Scene: Eyedontist
Times Square
Causeway Bay

Participants: Kevin, James
Sales (Female)

Ends: Asked for men’s sunglasses
Saleswoman offered selection of glasses

Act Sequence: Greeting
• Customer: (“Hi”)
Main Body
• C: Inquiry about glasses (“Do you sell sunglasses for men?”)
• Staff: Follow up question (“Yes, which brand?”)
• C: Follow up question (“Which brands do you have?”)
• S: Basic answer (“Armani, Coach, Gucci…”)
• C: Unrelated answer (“We have to ask our friend first. Thanks”)
Farewell
• S: (“Okay”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Good fluidity, correct grammar

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Leo Optic (Central)

Interaction #S13
Shopping – Optical Stores – Leo Optic

Date/Time: January 15th, 2009
Start: 12:30 PM
End: 12:45 PM

Setting and Scene: Leo Optic
IFC mall
Central

Participants: Kevin, James
Sales (Male)

Ends: Was buying glasses
Clear options of glasses were given

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Staff: (“How can I help you?”)

Main Body
- Customer: Inquiry about different kinds of sunglasses
- S: Complete answer (Offered many models of glasses)
- C: Inquiry about different kinds of glasses
- S: Complete answer (Offered many models of glasses)
- C: Inquiry about kind of clients
- S: Unrelated answer (Explained that Central was a financial district)
- C: Inquiry about languages spoken
- S: Complete answer (The staff spoke English and Cantonese and then explained that even locals around this area speak English)

Farewell
- S: (“Thank you have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only

Norms: Polite and courteous trying to please a consumer
Deals with many locals and European consumers
In financial district and so common language in central is English

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Victoria Optical (Tsim Sha Tsui)

Interaction #S14
Shopping – Optical Stores – Victoria Optical

Date/Time: January 8th, 2009
Start: 5:35 PM
End: 5:45 PM

Setting and Scene: Victoria Optical
The Peninsula Arcade
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: 3 Koreans (C1: Husband, C2: Wife, C3: Mother of husband)
Sales (Male)

Ends: Looking for a new pair of glasses, frames
To be picked up at a later time

Act Sequence: Greeting
• Staff: (“Hi, can I help you with anything?”)
Main Body
• Customer1: Inquiry about glasses (“We’re looking for some glasses”)
• S: Inquiry about glasses (Asking customers which glasses they’d like to see)
• Customer2 tries some glasses on and makes comments in Korean to Customer1
• S: Explanation (explains the different materials of the frames and the different advantages and disadvantages)
• C1: Explanation to C2 (translates what the Staff just said)
• S: Explanation (explains further the prices and the details needed for a purchase)
• S: Explanation (explains the advantage of the two final picks)
• C1: Explanation to C2 (the Staff convinces C1 that one of the glasses is better than the other, C1 translates to C2 who accepts the explanation and chooses those glasses)
• S: Inquiry about payment (how will the customers pay)
• C1: Basic answer (“By cash”)
• S: Explanation (how long it’ll take for the glasses to be ready)
Farewell
• C: (“Alright. Thank you”)
• S: (“Thank you. Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
No accent
Norms: Husband spoke English to sales assistant and translated to wife in Korean. Difficulty making business with them due to language barrier. In order for wife to be convinced to buy (target customer), husband must be convinced by sales person (translator). Slow and steady progress.

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Interaction #515

Shopping – Optical Stores – Victoria Optical

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 3:35 PM
End: 3:40 PM

Setting and Scene: Victoria Optical
The Peninsula Arcade
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Western couple (Customer = wife)
Sales (Male)

Ends: Picking up glasses
Successful order and purchase

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: (“Hello, good to see you again”)
- Customer: (“Hello there”)

Main Body
- Staff immediately proceeds to take out box with glasses
- C: Explanation (“Wow, these look great”)
- S: Inquiry about glasses (“Would you like to try them on ma’am?”)
- C: Basic answer (“Yes, please”)
- Customer is very happy with the result
- C: Inquiry about glasses (“Could you show me how to close them?”)
- S: Basic answer (“Certainly”)
- Staff demonstrates how to close the glasses, due to the complex system, they fold in half.
- C: Explanation (“This is great, thank you so much”)
- Customer gets up and tries to push chair in
- S: Explanation (“No, no, please allow me”)
- Staff push chairs in

Farewell
- S: (“Hope you enjoy your glasses. Bye Bye”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only

Norms: Customer is recognized right away
No need for receipt or name
Extremely friendly and comfortable
Making lots of jokes
Incredible service with a warm aspect
Customers are not allowed to clean after themselves, even pushing in chair
Always thanking customer for coming to this shop

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Interaction #516
Shopping – Optical Stores – Victoria Optical

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 4:10 PM
End: 4:14 PM

Setting and Scene: Victoria Optical
The Peninsula Arcade
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Two Chinese Women (High-class)
Sales (Female)

Ends: Looking for new frames
Quick purchase

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: “Hello”
- Customers reply in Chinese
Main Body
- Staff and Customers speak in Chinese.
- After only 5 minutes, one of the customers is satisfied and hands $1000 bill to male Staff. Change is given and glasses are packaged.
- Women continue to look around.
Farewell
- In Chinese

Instrumentalities: No English used
Mandarin only

Norms: When Chinese people come in, they want someone right there, right away helping
They want to make sure they are being serviced
They want everybody helping them, paying attention to them, which is opposite of western.
Incredible service

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Interaction #517
Shopping – Optical Stores – Victoria Optical

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 4:50 PM
End: 4:55 PM

Setting and Scene: Victoria Optical
The Peninsula Arcade
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Two Western Men
Sales (Male)

Ends: Picking up frames
Successful order

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Staff: “Good afternoon”
- Customer: “Hello”

Main Body
- Staff receives receipt from customer and takes out box
- S: Explanation (“Here you go, sir”)
- Customer hands over credit card
- Staff charges credit card
- S: Inquiry about service (“Anything else I can help you with, sir?”)

Farewell
- C: (“No, thank you”)
- S: (“Have a nice day sir”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only

Norms: Good short explanations
About frame material and composition

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Interaction #518  
Shopping – Optical Stores – Victoria Optical

Date/Time: January 16\textsuperscript{th}, 2009  
Start: 3:35 PM  
End: 3:41 PM

Setting and Scene: Victoria Optical  
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Western man  
Sales Assistant (Female)

Ends: Needs frame to be fixed  
Fixed successfully and free of charge

Act Sequence: Greeting  
- Staff: (“Hi, how can I help you today sir?”)
Main Body  
- Customer: Inquiry about service (Asking if Staff could fix his glasses. The glasses are not straight and the nose pieces are too loose)  
- Staff looks at glasses and hands over to a co-worker that will fix them inside a room.  
- Staff makes small talk with Customer  
- Co-worker comes out and gives them to Staff  
- S: Inquiry about glasses (“Could you try them out, sir?”)  
- Customer receives glasses and tries them on
Farewell  
- C: (“A lot better, thanks”)  
- S: (“Thank you. Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Semi-formal  
Excellent English  
No accent  
English only

Norms: Staff spoke in Cantonese to co-worker for assistance with fixing the glasses  
Small talk while glasses are being fixed by other staff  
Only one staff is allowed to assist customer at a time  
Avoids cluster and pressure  
Western customers are more likely to feel comfortable this way  
Always thanking customer for coming to this shop, even with free service

Genre: Sales Inquiry
Museums

Dr. Sun Yet-Sen Museum (Mid-levels)

Interaction #M1
Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Museum, Jan/16/2009

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 11:00 AM
End: 11:03

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Museum
Hong Kong Island

Participants: Lindy
Front desk

Ends: Checked ticket to enter museum
Ticket is okay, gave brochures

Act Sequence: Greeted
• Both greeted
Main Body
• Staff: Inquiry about ticket (Asked for customer to present ticket)
• Customer: Basic response (customer had six month pass)
• Staff scanned pass and gave brochure
Farewell
• Customer thanked staff

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English
No accent
English only

Norms: Greeted in English and gave English brochures
No difficulty communicating

Genre: Museum services
Interaction #M2
Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Museum, Jan/16/2009

Date/Time: January 16th, 2009
Start: 1:00 PM
End: 1:03 PM

Setting and Scene: Gift Store
Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Museum
Hong Kong Island

Participants: Lindy
Gift store cashier

Ends: Inquired about the museum’s hours
Hours given, after misunderstanding of question

Act Sequence: Greeting
● No verbal greeting
Main Body
● Customer: Inquiry about museum hours (“What time does the museum open?”)
● Staff: Unrelated answer (“December 15, 2006”)
● C: Clarifying question (asked for museum hours)
● S: Basic answer(gave hours)
Farewell
● No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: Formal
Weak English
Slight Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Greeted in English
A little trouble with pronunciation (December = Da-sam-ber, excuse me = escuze me)

Genre: Museum services
Hong Kong Museum of History (Hung Hom)

Interaction #M3
Hong Kong Museum of History, Jan/17/2009

Date/Time: January 17th, 2009
Start: 1:45 PM
End: 1:51

Setting and Scene: Front entrance
Hong Kong Museum of History
Hung Hom

Participants: Lindy
Ticket counter worker

Ends: Checking ticket to enter museum
Ticket is okay, gives brochures

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- No verbal greeting
Main Body
- Staff: Inquiry about ticket (asked if customer had a ticket),
  Customer: Basic response (“Yes” gave pass)
- S: Inquiry about where customer lived, and length of trip
  C: Complete response (Told staff about length of trip, purpose of trip,
   and identified home country)
- Staff gave the customer brochures
- C: Inquiry about guided tour (“Where does the English guided tour
  start?”)
  S: Non verbal response, incomplete answer, follow-up question (Shook
  her head. The tour did not start for 40 minutes. Which gallery did the
  customer want to see in the mean time?)
  C: Basic answer (identified gallery)
Farewell
- No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English
Cantonese accent
English only

Norms:
Greeted in English
Was comfortable speaking in English
She seemed to understand that she was not answering the customer’s question, at the end of the interaction, but before the customer could ask again a large group approached, she was distracted by them, and the customer entered the museum.

**Genre:** Museum services
Interaction #M4  
Hong Kong Museum of History, Jan/17/2009

**Date/Time:** January 17th, 2009  
Start: 2:00 PM  
End: 2:12

**Setting and Scene:** Museum movie viewing area  
Hong Kong Museum of History  
Hung Hom

**Participants:** Lindy, small group (5-7) some Asian, some non-Asian  
Exhibit worker

**Ends:** Told group of people waiting what language the video was going to play in (looped between Cantonese, English and Mandarin) and let them enter the theatre

**Act Sequence:**  
Greeting  
- No verbal greeting  
Main Body  
- Staff: Explanation (told the visitors that the video played in English, Cantonese and Putonghua, and that it would be in English this time)  
Farewell  
- S: (“Thank you” very loud)

**Instrumentalities:**  
Formal  
Weak English used  
Cantonese accent  
English only

**Norms:**  
Greeted in English  
As soon as video was over she said ‘thank you’ loudly and directed everyone to the door, which was not very polite

**Genre:** Museum services
Interaction #M5
Hong Kong Museum of History, Jan/17/2009

Date/Time: January 17th, 2009
Start: 2:15 PM
End: 2:17 PM

Setting and Scene: Tour starting point
Hong Kong Museum of History
Hung Hom

Participants: Lindy
Tour guide

Ends: Determined if customer wanted to go on the English guided tour, gave information about the tour

Act Sequence: Greeting
• Staff: (“Excuse me?”)
Main Body
• S: Inquiry about tour participation (“Are you waiting for the English tour?”)
• Customer: Basic response (“Yes”)
• S: Explanation (“I am not the docent for the English tour, but he will be here in a...few minutes”)
• C: Follow up question (“The tour will be leaving from here though?”)
• S: Basic answer (“Ah...Yes”)
Farewell
• No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English
Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Had essentially the same interaction with 2 other (Non-native) English-speakers who were waiting
Took some effort to understand due to accent and intonation

Genre: Museum services
Interaction #M6
Hong Kong Museum of History, Jan/17/2009

Date/Time: January 17th, 2009
Start: 2:30 PM
End: approx. 4PM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of History
Hung Hom

Participants: Tour guide
5 English Speakers
  3 native English speakers from the United States (Lindy and an older couple from Chicago)
  1 Swedish non-native English speaker
  1 Indian non-native English speaker

Ends: Taught about the History of Hong Kong in the Exhibit ‘The Hong Kong Story’

Act Sequence: Greeting
  • Staff: (“Hello, my name is [staff’s name]. And I will be your tour guide.”)
Main Body
  Generally three patterns of interactions
  • Long explanations from tour guide
  • Requests for participation
    ▪ Customer: Respond to inquiry, sometimes discuss among themselves or ask follow-up questions
    ▪ S: Explanation
  • Tour members’ questions
    ▪ C: Inquiry for information
    ▪ P (sometimes): Request for clarification
    ▪ C (sometimes): Clarifying question(s)
    ▪ S: Complete response
    ▪ C (sometimes): Follow-up questions
    ▪ P (sometimes): Complete response

Farewell
  • S: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: Semi Formal
Proficient English
Strong Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Greeted in English
Mixed up ‘good’ and ‘well’ several times
Numbers took him a few seconds to say, seemed like he had to translate before saying them
He could answer all questions, (he both knew enough English and had enough information) but sometimes did not understand questions the first time, tour groups members sometimes had to repeat or rephrase. For example: he did not understand “Were Chinese pharmacists educated?” but did understand “Were Chinese pharmacists trained?”

Talked amiably with tour members

Genre: Museum services
Hong Kong Museum of Science (Hung Hom)

Interaction #M7
Hong Kong Museum of Science, Jan/19/2009

Date/Time: January 19\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
Start: 11:00 AM
End: 11:02 AM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of Science
Hung Hom

Participants:
Lindy
Woman at ticket counter

Ends:
Checked pass

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Staff greets customer
- Customer greet staff

Main Body
- C: non verbal response (offers pass)
- S: Explanation (took museum pass “I need to scan it”)

Farewell
- S: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities:
Semi-formal
Weak English
Cantonese accent
English only

Norms:
Greeted in English
Pointed to scanning device to help explain ‘I need to scan it’
Seemed unsure of English ability

Genre:
Museum services
Interaction #M8
Hong Kong Museum of Science, Jan/19/2009

Date/Time: January 19th, 2009
Start: 11:00 AM
End: 11:01 AM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of Science
Hung Hom

Participants: Lindy
Woman guard

Ends: Inquired about bathroom location

Act Sequence: Greeting
• No verbal greeting
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry about location (Asked about location of bathroom)
• Staff: Non verbal response (Pointed at a sign)
Farewell
• No verbal farewell

Instrumentalities: Pointed at signs, didn’t try to communicate verbally

Norms: No speech used, did identify correct direction

Genre: Museum services
Hong Kong Museum of Space (Tsim Sha Tsui)

Interaction #M9
Hong Kong Museum of Space, Jan/10/2009

Date/Time:       January 10th, 2009
                 Start: 2:00 PM
                 End: 2:04 PM

Setting and Scene:   Hong Kong Museum of Space
                     Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants:       4 Native English Speakers, Lindy and 3 Female college students
                     2 Cashiers

Ends:              Taking money and gave tickets

Act Sequence:       Greeting
                     ● No verbal greeting
Main Body
                     ● Customers gave the staff cash to pay for tickets
                     ● Staff gave change and tickets
Farewell
                     ● Staff: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: Very weak English used
                    Neither of the women seemed to speak enough English to say more than ‘thank
                    you’ luckily the signs giving admission costs were easy to understand and easy
                    to see

Norms:             Staff barely speak any English

Genre:             Museum services
Interaction #M10
Hong Kong Museum of Space, Jan/10/2009

Date/Time: January 10\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
Start: 2:00 PM
End: 2:10 PM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of Space
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: 4 Native English Speakers, Lindy and 3 Female college students
Guard (Female, Asian descent)

Ends: Directed customers to go outside to buy tickets, took tickets when customers returned

Act Sequence:

Greeting
• No verbal greeting

Main Body
• Staff: Non verbal communication used to point out signs that explained that the ticket booth was outside
• Customers went outside purchased tickets, returned, showed tickets, and entered the museum

Farewell Greeting
• S: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: Very weak English used

Norms: She took out tickets and smiled at us as we entered

Genre: Museum services
Interaction #M11
Hong Kong Museum of Space, Jan/10/2009

Date/Time: January 10\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
Start: 3:30 PM
End: 3:34 PM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of Space
Tsim Sha Tsui

Participants: Lindy
Gift shop cashier (Female, Asian descent)

Ends: Purchased item

Act Sequence:
Greeting
  ● Staff: (“Hello”)
Main Body
  ● Customer: Nonverbal response (smiled, gave item)
  ● S: Basic response (told cost)
  ● Customer gave cash to staff, staff gave change and a receipt and put the
    item in a bag
Farewell
  ● S: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: Very weak English

English Only

Norms: Smiled, acted friendly

Genre: Museum services
Hong Kong Museum of Art (Tsim Sha Tsui)

Interaction #M12
Hong Kong Museum of Art, Jan/7/2009

Date/Time: January 7th, 2009
Start: 2:45 PM
End: 2:50 PM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of Art
Hung Hom

Participants: Lindy, James
Entrance ticket desk (Male, Asian descent)

Ends: Inquired about location of guided tour

Act Sequence:
Greeting
- Customer (“Hello”)
Main Body
- C: Inquiry about English guided tour (When and where are English guided tours)
- Staff: complete response (check times, told customers when tours started, gave a map, showed location of tour on the map)
Farewell
- C: Thanked staff

Instrumentalities:
Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only

Norms:
Greeted in English
Very comfortable speaking in English

Genre: Museum services
Interaction #M13
Hong Kong Museum of Art, Jan/7/2009

Date/Time: January 7th, 2009
Start: 3:00 PM
End: 4:00PM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of Art
Hung Hom

Participants: Lindy, James approx 10 other tour members including both Native and non-native English Speakers, Tour guide (Female, English)

Ends: Gave a tour of the Chinese Ceramics Gallery

Act Sequence: Greeting
- Tour guide introduced herself, and explained that she would be giving the tour about the exhibit

Main Body
Generally three patterns of interactions
- Long explanations from tour guide
- Requests for participation
  • Customers: Respond to inquiry, sometimes discuss among themselves or ask follow-up questions
  • S: Explanation
- Tour members’ questions
  • C: Inquiry for information
  • S: Complete response
  • C: (sometimes): Follow-up questions
  • S: (sometimes): Complete response

Farewell
- Tour guide and participants thanked each other

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only

Norms: Greeted in English
Very knowledgeable about the pottery in the gallery, she included more information than what was included in text near each exhibit
The tour guide was interacted with the tourists, she asked people to make guesses about the symbolism behind of the pieces
At the end of the tours she gave visitors suggestions of other areas to visit
She joked with the group.

Genre: Museum services

142
Interaction #M14
Hong Kong Museum of Art, Jan/7/2009

Date/Time: January 14th, 2009
Start: 11:00 AM
End: 1200 AM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of Art
Hung Hom

Participants: Lindy, James, one other Native English Speaker
Tour guide (Female, Asian descent)

Ends: Gave a tour of the museum
Taught tour participant about the museum’s galleries and features

Act Sequence:
Greeting
• Tour guide told customers she would be leading the tour, and explained
  the tour’s purpose

Main Body
Generally three patterns of interactions
• Long explanations from tour guide
• Tour members’ questions
  ▪ C: Inquiry for information
  ▪ P (sometimes): Request for clarification
  ▪ C(sometimes): Clarifying question(s)
  ▪ S: Complete response
  ▪ C (sometimes): Follow-up questions
  ▪ P (sometimes): Complete response

Farewell
• TG: (“Thank you”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Proficient English
Cantonese accent
English only

Norms: Understood all question and answered appropriately.
Was sometimes difficult to understand her, but she repeated herself,
sometimes twice, and we would understand the second or third time
She gave us museum brochures in English, and pointed out museum services
detail in the brochure that we would not have otherwise noticed
Encouraged us to ask questions

Genre: Museum services
Interaction #M15
Hong Kong Museum of Art, Jan/14/2009

Date/Time: January 14th, 2009
Start: 3:00 PM
End: 4:00 PM

Setting and Scene: Hong Kong Museum of Art
Hung Hom

Participants: Lindy, James, approx. 10 other tour members including both native and non-native English Speakers
Tour guide (Female, English)

Ends: Gave a tour of the ‘Looking for Antonio Mak’ Gallery
Taught tour members about Antonio Mak

Act Sequence: Greeting
• Tour guide introduced herself
Main Body
Generally three patterns of interactions
• Long explanations from tour guide
• Requests for participation
  ▪ Customer: Respond to inquiry, sometimes discuss among themselves or ask follow-up questions
  ▪ Staff: Explanation
• Tour members’ questions
  ▪ C: Inquiry for information
  ▪ S: Complete response
  ▪ C (sometimes): Follow-up questions
  ▪ P (sometimes): Complete response
Farewell
• S: “Thank you”

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only

Norms: Native English speaker
Very knowledgeable about the art in the gallery, she included more information than what was included in text near each exhibit
The tour guide was very interactive with the tourists, she asked people to make guesses about the meaning of the pieces
She joked with the group

Genre: Museum services
Museum of Tea Ware (Admiralty)

Interaction #M16
Museum of Tea Ware, Feb/09/2009

Date/Time: February 9th, 2009
Start: 1:28 PM
End: 1:31 PM

Setting and Scene: Museum of Tea Ware
Admiralty

Participants: Lindy, Francisco
Gift shop cashier

E: Getting directions

Act Sequence:
- Greeting
  - Customer1: (“Hi”)
  - Staff: (“Hello, can I help you?”)
- Main Body
  - C1: Inquiry for directions (“How do I get here”, indicates place in brochure)
  - S: Complete answer: (“You just go outside, and there’s a path, and it’s on this side (indicates left)”
  - C1: (“Thank you”)
  - Customer 2: Inquiry about business cards (“Is this your business card?”)
  - S: Basic answer (pauses to see what customer is indicating “Yes”)  
  - C2: Follow-up question (Asked if he could take a card) 
  - S: Basic answer (“Yes”)  
- Farewell
  - C2: (“Thank you”)  
  - S: (“Have a nice day”)

Instrumentalities: Formal
Excellent English
No accent
English only

Norms: Paused some while speaking, but not so much as to obscure meaning
The staff did not speak to the customers until they spoke to her

Genre: Museum services
Interaction #M17
Museum of Tea Ware, Feb/09/2009

Date/Time: February 9\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
Start: 1:10 PM
End: 1:12 PM

Setting and Scene: Front Desk
Museum of Tea Ware
Admiralty

Participants: Lindy
Front desk staff

Ends: Asked for a map, was given a map

Act Sequence: Greeting
• No verbal greeting
Main Body
• Customer: Inquiry for information ("Do you have a map of the museum?")
• Staff: Basic answer ("yes", stood up, got the correct map, and gave it to me)
Farewell
• C : ("Thank you")
• S: Non verbal response (nods)

Instrumentalities: Very weak English used

Norms: Smiled at me as I entered the museum
Responded quickly to question

Genre: Museum services
References

Population By-census Web site:

The Four Key Industries in the Hong Kong Economy Web site:
http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hong_kong_statistics/four_key_industries/index.jsp


Legal Cultural Service Department (2006), Report No. 46 of the Director of Audit – Chapter 5: Provision of public museum services; Hong Kong.


