



Customers' Complaint Behavior (CCB) and Tourists' Complaint Linguistic Strategy Against Tourist Attractions in the Case of West Java

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Abstract. Tourists' complaints on social media certainly hinder the rise of tourism sector after the pandemic condition of COVID-19. Therefore, it is necessary (1) to know what factors cause tourists to complain about the services of tourist attractions, (2) to understand the behavior of those complaints, and (3) to understand the linguistic strategy of tourists' complaints on social media. The findings indicate that several factors contribute to tourist complaints when visiting tourist attractions. The main factors that most tourists complain about are poor road access and high spending on tourist attractions. Regarding the behavior of tourists' complaints, most tourists express their complaints in negative words and complain to public in the comment column. There are also boycotts against tourist attractions, which are disappointing. Tourists use various impolite strategies to express their complaints, including balding on record, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm. The government and tourism service providers should continue to improve facilities and services. Regarding road access, which is often complained of, it is recommended that the government provides funds to repair and maintain road access to tourist attractions. Then, the tourist service providers do not longer charge additional fees to tourists and control the price of food sold at tourist sites so tourists are going to feel that the cost spent is more reasonable. It is also important that the management of tourist attractions clarifies and notifies efforts to improve services so the negative image of tourist attractions can be minimized.

Keywords: Behaviour · Complaint · Impoliteness · Linguistics

1 Introduction

After the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic subsided, tourism activity is reviving. Tourist attractions are open again as long as they obey health protocols. Many visitors visit tourist attractions for a break. Tourists often share their beautiful moments on social media. They share information and positive experiences of visiting tourist attractions. Social media is the trustworthiness of travel and tourism information sources [1]. People's

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decisions to buy a product or to travel are often based on online recommendations or online word of mouth (e-WOM), friends, or relatives, while commercial or advertising information is not a priority source of information [2, 3]. Then, the experiences of visiting tourist attractions after the COVID-19 peak are not always pleasant. They also share the experience on social media. This article aims to identify three important things that can hinder the revival of tourism in Indonesia, namely (1) the factors that make tourists complain about tourism services after the COVID-19 peak, (2) the behavior of tourist complaints expressed on social media, and (3) the linguistic strategies used in conveying complaints. This article is going to explain the impact of tourist complaints on tourism service providers on social media and the steps that service providers should take in responding to these complaints. Authentic data on tourist complaints from five Facebook groups that share information on tourist attractions in West Java were collected. The analysis of tourist complaints uses Day and Landon's Customer Complaint Behavior (CCB) model (1977) and Culpeper's Impoliteness Strategy [4]. The Day and Landon's CCB model is the most popular analytical model used to observe consumer complaint behavior [5]. Culpeper's Impoliteness Strategy (1996) is used to analyze the impoliteness strategy used by tourists in conveying their complaints.

1.1 Day and Landon's Customer Complaint Behavior (CCB)

Several researchers have proposed various models of customer complaint behavior (CCB) to explain consumer behavior. One of them is Tronovoll (2007). Tronovoll (2007) proposed three categories of complaint behavior caused by a bad service experience. The three categories are no complaining responses, communication complaining responses, and action complaining responses [6]. Although there are many customer complaint behavior models that are more contemporary, Day and Landon's CCB is still widely used. Day and Landon's Customer Complaint Behavior (CCB) is the most popular model because it provides a succinct, clear, and helpful definition of various categories of consumer complaint behavior. The dichotomy of customer complaint behavior suggested by Day and Landon Jr. (1977) is recognized as the cornerstone of all taxonomies [7]. The CCB general model proposed by Day and Landon (1977) is based on the action and no action dichotomy. The action category is divided into private action and public action. Day and Landon's framework has been reviewed and summarized by Panda (2014) as follows:

- a. Take no action—forget about the unpleasant experience
- b. Take some form of private action, such as (1) switching brands or suppliers, (2) ceasing use of the product class, and (3) notifying family or friends
- c. Take some form of public action, such as (1) directly seeking redress from the seller or manufacturer, (2) pursuing legal action against the seller or manufacturer, and filing a complaint with the seller or manufacturer, a public consumer protection agency, or a private consumer organization.

Singh (1990) also reviewed and summarized Day and Landon's CCB model to be simpler, namely no action, exit or boycott, negative word of mouth, voice or seek redress directly from business, and complain to third-parties.

1.2 Culpeper's Impoliteness Strategy

Culpeper's impoliteness strategy is developed based on the framework of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory which focuses on how communication strategies are built to improve and maintain harmonious relationships. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is also called the face-based politeness theory that interlocutors are expected to avoid face threatening act (FTA), such as orders, insults, or criticism [8]. On the opposite side, Culpeper's theoretical framework focuses on a different orientation, namely speech acts that attack the interlocutors and can cause disharmony [4, 9]. Culpeper's theory of impoliteness has become a framework of various pragmatic analysis for impoliteness [10–12]. Impoliteness happens when the speaker intentionally attacks honor, or the listener feels it is a deliberate facial attack, or a combination of both [9]. From that definition, it can be said that the main element in impoliteness is the speaker's intention. Culpeper's taxonomy of impoliteness consists of five categories, namely bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm/mock politeness (judging, figurative language, rhetorical questions, telling the truth, giving advice), and withholding politeness [4]. Bald on record impoliteness is a face threatening act (FTA) which is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way. Positive impoliteness happens when a speech is designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants. Negative impoliteness is the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants and sarcasm or mock politeness is a face threatening act that is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are insincere. The last, withhold politeness is the absence of politeness work where it would be expected [4].

2 Methodology

This research is a qualitative research. To obtain data on customers' complaint behavior (CCB) and tourist's complaint linguistic strategy (TCLS), an online survey was conducted regularly on 5 community groups of visitors to tourism sites on social media Facebook. According to Chung & Buhalis, on line survey for travel community research has three main benefits, namely: information acquisition, socio-psychological, and hedonic [3].

Comments that lead to CCB and impoliteness strategies that express disappointment or complaints of tourism consumers in West Java were noted and classified in the framework of Day and Landon's Customer Complaint Behavior (1977) and Culpeper's impoliteness theory (1996). The online survey was conducted over a period of five months from November 2021 to March 2022. It was assumed that November 2021 was the post-covid-19 peak and people were allowed to visit tourist attractions as long as they followed health protocols.

3 Why Do Tourist Complain?

There were several factors that caused visitors to complain about the services of tourist attractions in West Java. The main factors that caused tourists to complain were poor road access and high spending on tourist attractions.

Poor road access was the main complaint of visitors to tourist attractions. This was not only about the poor quality of the road, but also about the narrow width of the road that made it difficult for tourists to reach tourist attractions. In addition, there was a tourist spot that required tourists to stop at places far from tourist attractions and tourists had to pay additional fees to travel to tourist sites or walk very far. This made overweight tourists complain of fatigue when they arrived at their destination and this could endanger the health of visitors.

The number of complaints about spending at tourist attractions was because visitors had to pay entrance tickets which were considered very expensive and many things were commercialized. Some of the additional expenses included passing tickets, paying for toilet facilities, paying expensive parking fees, expensive food prices, and there were also tourist service providers who seemed reluctant to provide change and instead advise tourists to spend change in tourist areas so tourists felt like they were in a trap. There were also additional tickets that costed more expensive than the entrance ticket.

There were also tourists who felt that the promotion and reality were different (shown on 1, 2). For example, a hot water tourist attraction only provided cold water for tourists, and the water smelt like urine. This caused visitors to be reluctant to come back to the tourist attractions. There was also a gap between promotions on social media and the reality seen by visitors. Visitors felt that the tourist attractions they visited were not as beautiful as the promotions on social media (2).

- (1) “Terakhir 2x ke sini airnya dingin, yg pertama kirain kbetulan aja belum dikuras apa gmn, eh pas kedua trnyata emg dingin airnya skrg.”
 ‘Twice I came here the water was cold. At first coming, I thought it was a coincidence that it hadn’t been drained. At the second coming, it turned out that the water was really cold.’
- (2) “Ngak seindah di medsos”
 ‘It’s not as beautiful as on social media’.

The cleanliness of the tourist area was another factor that made tourists complaint. Some tourists complained about the management of cleanliness in tourist attractions. The unpleasant odor also made tourists feel uncomfortable at tourist sites. Some consumers showed their frustration when they did not get clear and open information about the costs that had to be incurred to enjoy a tourism service because the information provider asked consumers to ask for more detailed information on personal communication channel, not on Facebook social media. The lack of clarity about the costs that had to be incurred by visitors made visitors reluctant to visit these tourist attractions and they showed their reluctance in the Facebook comment columns.

4 Strategy of Tourists' Complaints

Some researches showed that a lot of dissatisfaction triggered consumers to be silent or do nothing. Most of the consumers chose not to take any action and forgot the bad experience they had [7]. Doing nothing was also believed to be done by visitors who have had unpleasant experiences. Three explanations were offered by Andersen (1988) for why

disgruntled customers did not file complaints, i.e., (1) a cost-benefit analysis revealed little benefits or high expenses, (2) others discouraged consumers from complaining, and (3) an intervening circumstance prevented or delayed the action or factor caused a delay or the prevention of action [13]. Do-nothing complaint certainly made it difficult for tourism service providers to improve services. However, feedback from consumers, both positive and negative, was needed so excellent service can be maintained or improved if there were deficiencies in service. The stereotype of consumer complaints behavior beyond do-nothing for tourism places in West Java based on monitoring on social media Facebook is that most of the tourist attractions visitors expressed their complaints with negative words. Those negative words were generally still accepted which figuring the direct experience of visitors at tourist attractions. Examples of negative words from customers in the tourist attraction in West Java could be seen as follows:

- (3) “Jauh dri tmpt parkir mobil.”
‘It’s far from parking area’
- (4) “Segala harus bayar.”
‘Everything must be paid’
- (5) “Kemahalan”
‘It’s too expensive’
- (6) “Seperti jebakan batman.”
‘It’s like a bat man trap’
- (7) “Airnya kotor.”
‘The water is dirty’
- (8) “Kotor dan berlumut”
‘It’s dirty and mossy’
- (9) “Sama aja boong.”
‘It’s a lie’
- (10) “Jalannya kurang lebar.”
‘The road is not wide’

The behavior of consumer complaints in the form of negative words was the main characteristic of complaints from tourists in West Java. This behavior could be said to be the most practical consumer complaint behavior carried out without a complicated procedure. In the Facebook group which shared information and experiences about tourist attractions, visitors’ unpleasant experiences were dominantly conveyed in the comment column, not in the public column. It seemed that the comments column was chosen by visitors to avoid negative risks from other parties. There were also negative words from visitors to tourism places that were not properly conveyed in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic which has not yet ended completely. There were also visitors who were reluctant to show information that they have been vaccinated. In fact, this is a health protocol that has to be carried out by visitors when visiting a tourist spot, and the tourism service provider has the right and obligation to check the status of visitors who have been vaccinated or not. The following was an example of a visitor’s objection who was reluctant to show the information that he has been vaccinated (11).

- (11) “Cuma sayangnya masuknya ribet hrs nunjukin surat vaksin satu persatu.”
‘It’s just that the entry is complicated, you have to show the vaccine certificate’

In addition to the form of negative words that expressed consumer complaints, another form of customer complaints was a boycott of these tourist attractions. This behavior was reflected in the statements in 12–15.

- (12) “Kapok sih ke situ lagi”
‘I would never come back’
- (13) “Bnyk yg kapokkk.”
‘Many hesitate to coming back’
- (14) “Mending cari wisata lain..hihihi.”
‘It’s better to visit other tourist attractions’
- (15) “Pernah ksini dan gamau lagi.”
‘Been here and I don’t want to come here again’

The boycott of tourism places did not directly use the word boycott or direct invitation to other consumers to boycott, but rather used other word choices that were directed to the customers themselves. Customer complaint behavior in the form of public action, namely seeing redress from tourism service providers, taking legal action, and registering a complaint to the public consumer protection agency by tourist spot visitors is almost impossible to occur. It has not found on the Facebook group in which a single public action done by visitors to against tourism service providers. It seemed that visitors to tourist attractions were reluctant to prolong the problem because of their dissatisfaction while at a tourist spot or they did not want to bother themselves in the problem. Instead, they chose to do nothing, made negative words about these tourist attractions, or did a boycott not to come to those tourist spots.

5 Linguistic Strategy of Tourists' Complaints

By using the theoretical framework of Culpeper’s impoliteness (1996), the analysis showed that visitors to tourist attractions tended to use the impoliteness linguistic strategy of bald on record in conveying their complaints to the tourist places visited. The complaints submitted by the visitors were carried out directly, clearly, and concisely. The complaints which described that a place has inconvenient or narrow road access and that the price was too high for visitors were often conveyed clearly and directly as follows:

- (16) “Mahal tidak sesuai dgn Fasilitas jalan rusak.”
‘It’s expensive, not worth the road condition.’
- (17) “Diwajibkan jajan/makan minum beli di dalam ya gaeesss.”
‘You have to buy food and drink inside, guys.’
- (18) “Jauh2 dr Karawang, nyesel.”
‘Coming far away from Kawarang and I regret it’
- (19) “Saya tidak tertarik oleh”
‘I am not interested in’
- (20) “Kapok besty.”
‘I don’t want to come back anymore’

Negative impoliteness strategies were also used by visitors to express complaints to tourist attractions by making comments that the place was less attractive or comparing these tourist attractions with other tourist attractions that were more recommended according to the commentator both in beauty and comfort for visitors. There were also complaints from visitors about a tourist place that prohibited visitors from bringing food from home with terrible word.

- (21) “Spot foto yg lain kurang menarik.”
‘Other photo spots are less interesting’
- (22) “ya, tp jauh lbh recommended DCas ...”
‘Yes, but Dcas is more recommended....’
- (23) “Msih banyak tmpat lbh nyaman buat piknik.”
‘There are still many other comfortable places for picnic’
- (24) “Muhun mengerikan lebih mengerikan mun kudu jajanwe menang”
The complaints were stated by using condescending, scolding, or ridiculing language. However, those expressions were closer to the impoliteness of a customer complaint.
Positive impoliteness using rude words were also shown on comment column on Facebook group. It used taboo words in rude language, namely abusive word.
- (25) “Indah prett ahh...”
‘Beautiful? It’s bullshit’

Tourist attractions that became target complaints were generally outdoor tourist attractions, such as parks, water parks, and natural attractions. The complaints of visitors to tourism destinations submitted in the travel community on Facebook group were actually in the context of the situation where those visitors did not face directly with the management of tourism service providers. So, the risk of backlash from complaints that violated politeness was very small, even though complaints with the linguistic impoliteness strategy had the potential to damage the face of tourism service providers.

6 Responding to Tourist Complaints

To restore the tourism sector in Indonesia after the peak of Covid-19, it is necessary to make serious efforts by various parties. Improvement of the condition of the tourism sector has to be carried out in an integrated manner. Several things have to be handled seriously. First, responding to the inconvenient condition of access roads, the government has to improve access roads that are suitable for tourism visitors to cross by. Secondly, regarding to prices that are considered too expensive by consumers, the government and tourism service providers should control appropriate rate for visitors so that tourism service providers do not go bankrupt due to many complaints about prices that are considered too high. Third, tourism service providers should not commercialize all services, for example, toilets are supposed to be facilities for visitors that have to be free of charge. Natural photo spots should also be free to visitors because tourism service providers do not create nature. Parking fees should not be collected too expensively to avoid the assumption of commercialization of parking lots. Then, the prohibition to

bring food and drinks from outside should be reconsidered because it makes consumers cancel their arrival. Consumers assume that paid tickets have become income for tourism service providers. Fourth, tourism service providers have to create effective social media content [14]. The providers should conduct a poll to consumers about visitor satisfaction and dissatisfaction so that service improvements can be made immediately. Tourism service providers also need to monitor tourism or travel community groups to see people's perceptions of the tourism places they manage. Managers of tourist attractions should also open channels for suggestions from visitors so that visitors can participate in improving tourism services, and visitors who are disappointed have the right channels and ways to file their complaints.

Finally, the bald on record linguistic strategy of impoliteness used by visitors to tourist attractions in submitting complaints is going to provide benefits for tourism service providers because the complaints are conveyed clearly and directly so that visitors' complaints can be caught clearly as well. However, service and tourism association should also receive education from various parties, such as the government, tourism associations, and so on, to make these complaints do not harm the tourism sector and lead to defamation. Tourism service customer satisfaction is the most importance in raising tourism industry. If there is dissatisfaction experienced by consumers, the first thing to do is to improve the service. That is the key to the success of tourism business. Service providers should not take the risk of negative word of mouth from disappointed consumers [7].

7 Conclusion

Online communities are growing more critical of the situation. Gradually, the communities grow in importance and become the primary source of information for visitors to tourist attractions, as well as chances for marketers [3]. Therefore, service providers have to be sensitive to the complaints of tourist site visitors, especially in West Java, Indonesia. The government and tourism associations have to work together to improve road infrastructure to tourist attractions and control ticket prices and high visitor spending while in tourist attractions. Negative words that are said in the comments column on travel communities groups are the main characteristic of tourists' complaints in West Java. They also use various politeness linguistic strategies in conveying complaints. However, Culpeper's most frequently used impoliteness strategy is bald on record.

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