

Experiences Of Foreign Tourists In The Old City Of Semarang: Evaluation Of Service Quality Foreign Languages In The Tourism Context

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Abstract . Research aims to evaluate the quality of foreign language services provided to foreign tourists visiting the Old City of Semarang, a tourism destination that is increasingly in demand. This research uses a qualitative approach with various methods, including case studies, indepth interviews with foreign tourists, content analysis, participant observation, document analysis and data triangulation. The research results revealed that the majority of foreign tourists were impressed with foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang. They shared positive stories about interactions with officers who tried to help in a foreign language, which made them feel welcome and comfortable. Another positive experience involves the ability to explore the culture and history of the city through smooth interactions with local residents who are fluent in foreign languages. However, a number of foreign tourists also face obstacles, especially in terms of communication, navigation and understanding cultural differences. Some of the recommendations given by foreign tourists include increasing language training for officers, providing more information materials in foreign languages, improving navigation, cultural exchange programs, use of technology, tourist feedback channels, and increasing cooperation between stakeholders. This research has important implications for improving the tourism sector and local economy. Improving foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang can increase tourist satisfaction, result in repeat visits, positive recommendations, and a positive contribution to the city's economic growth. Therefore, language training, provision of information materials, improved navigation, promotion of culture, technology, feedback channels, and cooperation between stakeholders are key steps in achieving this goal.

Keywords .Foreign Tourist Experience; Service Quality Evaluation; Foreign Languages in the Tourism Context.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the Old City of Semarang has become a tourist destination that is increasingly popular with foreign tourists. According to the latest statistical data, the number of foreign tourist visits to the Old City of Semarang has increased significantly. For example, in 2022, the number of foreign tourists visiting this city will increase by 75 percent compared to the previous year. "This reflects the strong attraction of the historical sites and unique architecture of the Old City of Semarang for tourists from various countries.

Apart from its cultural and historical attractions, tourism in the Old City of Semarang also makes a significant contribution to economic growth in this region.

Foreign tourists who come to this city not only contribute to the tourism sector, but also influence related service sectors, including hotels, restaurants, transportation, and various local businesses. The economic contribution brought by foreign tourists is one of the main drivers of the development of the Semarang Old City area.

Therefore, maintaining and enhancing the positive experience of foreign tourists is crucial, not only for the tourism industry, but also for overall economic growth.

The role of foreign languages in tourism services should not be ignored. Fluent language and effective communication enable foreign tourists to better interact with local people, understand local culture, and feel more welcome in the destinations they visit. Good language also makes it easier for tourists in various aspects of their trip, including navigation, ordering food, and understanding local directions or information. In the context of the Old City of Semarang, which has a strong history and cultural richness, smooth communication through foreign languages is a key element to ensure that foreign tourists can fully explore and enjoy the city's offerings.

Travelers who are satisfied with their experience have great potential to influence the growth of this sector. Satisfied travelers are more likely to return to the same destination on subsequent visits, which means continued business growth. Moreover, satisfied travelers also tend to provide positive recommendations to their friends and family, as well as through positive reviews on various online platforms. In this way, the contribution of satisfied tourists to the image of the Old City of Semarang and its attractiveness to potential tourists cannot be ignored.

Previous studies in this area have shown a positive correlation between tourists' experiences and their level of satisfaction. Research (Rahmawati et al., 2023) found that positive tourist experiences significantly increased their level of satisfaction during their visit. In addition, research (Sagita & Wulansari, 2023) highlights that tourist satisfaction has a positive impact on intention to return and provide positive recommendations.

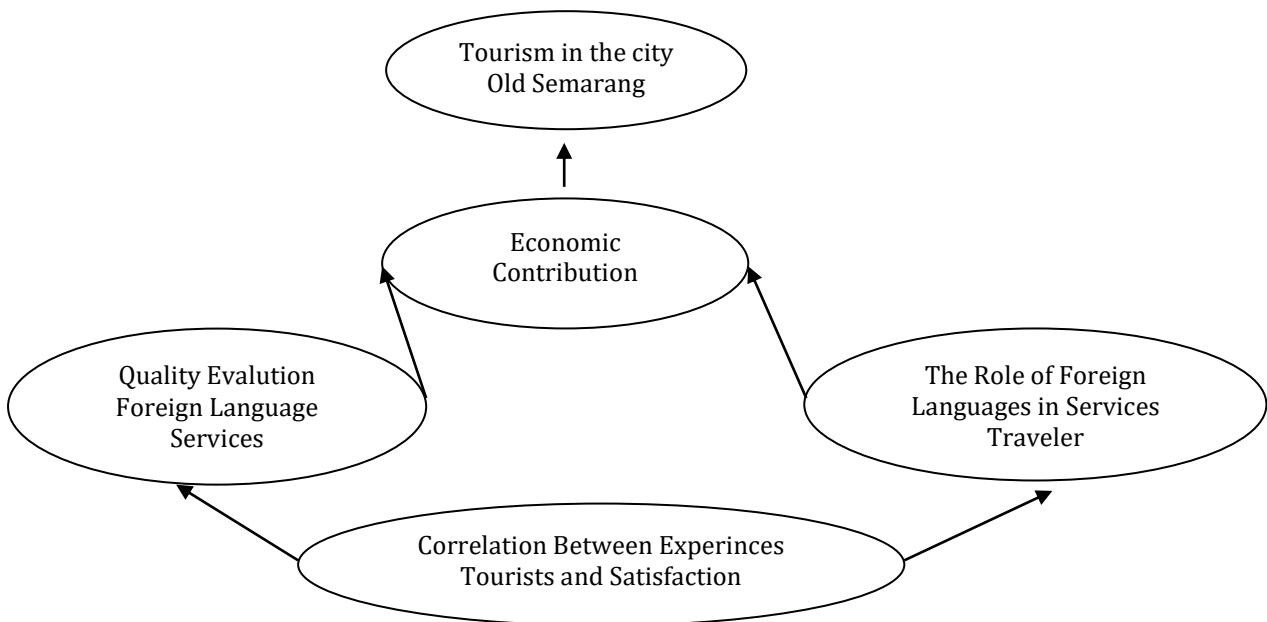
Foreign language services are an important factor in meeting the communication needs of foreign tourists. (Setyanto, 2014) emphasizes the importance of good foreign language in tourism services to improve communication and ensure a better experience. This is also an important factor in supporting the sustainability of the tourism sector. (Suwena & Widyatmaja, 2010) have developed a framework for evaluating service quality, which involves factors such as responsiveness, communicativeness, and ease of access. (Yakup, 2019) These factors are relevant in the context of foreign language services, and their evaluation will help in understanding the extent to which service quality contributes to the tourist experience. Several studies have examined foreign tourists' responses to the Old City of Semarang. (Yono, 2020) revealed that foreign tourists responded positively to the history and architecture of this city, but there were challenges in terms of communication and information.

Formulation of the problem; What is the current quality of foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang? What is the experience of foreign tourists in interacting with

foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang? The aim of this research is to investigate and evaluate the quality of foreign language services provided to foreign tourists visiting Kota Lama Semarang. This research aims to understand the extent to which the quality of foreign language services influences tourists' experiences and their satisfaction during their visit to the city. By analyzing and understanding the dynamics between foreign language services and tourist experiences, this research aims to provide recommendations that can improve the quality of foreign language services and their positive contribution to the tourism industry and economy of the Old City of Semarang.

METHOD

Qualitative research on evaluating the quality of foreign language services in the tourism context in the Old City of Semarang, using various methods and techniques. Figure 1. Framework for thinking about the quality of foreign language services in the context of tourism in the Old City of Semarang.



Approaches and steps that can be considered in qualitative methods:

Case Study: at certain tourist locations in the Old City of Semarang. Case studies can provide in-depth insight into how foreign language services in that location function in practice.

In-depth Interview: foreign tourists from 3 countries, who have visited the Old City of Semarang can provide a rich understanding of their experiences with foreign language services. Can ask about their interactions, obstacles, and expectations regarding foreign language services.

Content Analysis: analyze relevant content, such as traveler reviews on travel websites or social media. This can provide insight into how foreign tourists evaluate and communicate their experiences with foreign language services.

Participatory Observation: can engage in direct observation at tourism sites to understand how foreign language services are delivered to foreign tourists and how tourists respond to them.

Document Analysis: can analyze relevant documents, such as guidelines or promotional materials used by foreign language service providers. This can provide an understanding of the standards used in foreign language services.

Triangulation: Combining multiple qualitative methods is a powerful approach in qualitative research. Triangulation combines data from multiple sources to ensure the reliability of findings.

Selection of Relevant Samples: selecting interview or observation samples that represent 3 countries with various experiences of foreign tourists in the Old City of Semarang.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of this research are more in-depth about the experiences of foreign tourists in interacting with foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang. Specifically, this research revealed:

1. The majority of foreign tourists are impressed with the foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang. They conveyed positive stories about interactions with officers who spoke foreign languages well, as well as the ability to explore local culture and history through smooth communication with local residents.
2. Some tourists experience problems in communication because some local residents may not be fluent in foreign languages. Navigational obstacles and cultural differences also influence tourists' experiences.
3. Most foreign tourists are satisfied with foreign language services in Kota Lama Semarang, and they provide positive recommendations for improving services, such as providing more information materials in foreign languages.
4. Foreign tourists provided recommendations that included more foreign language training for officers, improved navigation, and better cultural understanding.
5. Strategies that can be adopted to improve foreign language services include foreign language training, improved information materials, better navigation, cultural exchange programs, and tourist feedback.

The results of this research provide valuable insights to authorities and stakeholders in the Old City of Semarang on how to improve the quality of foreign language services,

improve the experience of foreign tourists, and thereby strengthen the attractiveness of this tourism destination and contribute to economic growth.

Discussion

Results: In-depth understanding of the quality of foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang, the experiences of foreign tourists in interacting with foreign language services, the obstacles they face, the level of satisfaction, and the recommendations they provide.

This discussion also includes the implications of these findings for improving the tourism sector, including the role of language training, improved information materials, navigation, cultural exchange programs, use of technology, tourist feedback, collaboration between stakeholders, and sustainability of improvements.

The results of the discussion showed that the majority of foreign tourists were impressed with the foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang, especially because of the staff's efforts in helping them and the ease of communication. These positive experiences have a positive impact on tourists' perceptions of the destination, which can encourage repeat visits and positive recommendations.

However, some foreign tourists also experience obstacles in communication, navigation and cultural understanding. To improve this, there needs to be steps such as language training for officers, increasing information materials in foreign languages, improving navigation and information signs, cultural exchange programs, use of technology, tourist feedback, and strengthening cooperation between stakeholders.

The implication of these findings is that increasing foreign language services has the potential to improve the tourism sector and local economy. Language training is a key step in improving effective communication, and providing informational materials in foreign languages as well as improved navigation will help travelers overcome obstacles. Cultural exchange programs and the use of modern technology can also increase positive interactions and ease of navigation.

Furthermore, cooperation between stakeholders and a long-term commitment to maintain and improve the standard of foreign language services is essential to maintain this improvement as part of a sustainable strategy for the Kota Lama Semarang tourism sector.

CONCLUSION

That foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang have been able to provide a positive experience for the majority of foreign tourists. Foreign tourists were impressed by

the staff's efforts to help them in foreign languages and by their ability to communicate fluently. These positive experiences contribute to the level of tourist satisfaction during the visit.

However, a number of foreign tourists experience obstacles in communication, navigation and understanding cultural differences. These constraints create the potential to further improve foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang.

Recommendations provided by foreign tourists include increased language training for officers, provision of more information materials in foreign languages, improved navigation and clear information signs, cultural exchange programs, use of modern technology, tourist feedback channels, and increased cooperation between stakeholders.

In conclusion, improving foreign language services in the Old City of Semarang has great potential to improve the tourism sector and the local economy. This is a relevant step in ensuring that foreign tourists feel welcome and have a positive experience during their visit, which in turn will help promote sustainable growth in Kota Lama Semarang tourism.

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