

JAPANESE LANGUAGE TRAINING FOR HOSPITALITY EMPLOYEES OF SHERATON BANDUNG HOTEL & TOWERS

Hardianto Rahardjo *, Uning Kuraesin, Nurza Ariestafuri, Ningrum Tresnasari,
Raden Novitasari

Universitas Widyatama

Jl. Cikutra No.204A, Sukapada, Cibeunying Kidul District, Bandung City, West Java 40125, Indonesia

Email: hardianto.rahardjo@widyatama.ac.id

Abstract

Good communication skills are a key factor in ensuring excellent service in the hospitality industry. In the context of international tourism, foreign language proficiency is essential, given that guests are not limited to domestic visitors. Effective communication with foreign guests, particularly those from Japan, is a crucial concern. In reality, many hotel staff still struggle to interact with Japanese guests due to limited Japanese language proficiency, while English is often ineffective due to pronunciation differences. Given these conditions, the Japanese Language Study Program at Universitas Widyatama conducted a community service activity in the form of basic Japanese language training for hotel staff. This training focused on vocabulary and formal sentences relevant to the hospitality industry. In addition to improving employee communication skills, this activity also aimed to make an academic contribution to improving the quality of the tourism workforce and serving as a concrete manifestation of the *Tridharma Perguruan Tinggi* (Three Pillars of Higher Education).

Keywords: Communication, Japanese, Tourism, Hotel

INTRODUCTION

In the tourism industry, providing services that satisfy guests or visitors is one of the main objectives. One of the key aspects of delivering such services is having good communication skills with guests. In the hospitality sector, language plays a crucial role when interacting with guests. Foreign language proficiency is highly necessary, considering that hotel guests are not always domestic travelers. Therefore, mastering foreign languages is essential to ensure excellent service and enhance guest comfort during their stay at the hotel. This aligns with Pokhilko's (2018) statement that foreign languages are among the most important factors in the development of international tourism.

Bandung, or West Java in general, is one of the destinations frequently visited by foreigners, whether for tourism or business purposes. Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers is one of the five-star hotels located in the city of Bandung. To deliver optimal service, it is only appropriate for Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers to provide various types of training for its staff. Such training is essential to uphold the hotel's standard of hospitality. In terms of location, Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers occupies a strategic area, making it an attractive option for

tourists and business travelers alike, particularly those from Japan.

It is essential for hotel employees to possess foreign language skills—not only in English but also in other languages such as Japanese. Up to this point, hotel staff have often faced difficulties when communicating with Japanese guests. This situation does not stem from a lack of politeness among the employees but rather from their limited proficiency in using the Japanese language (Meidariani, Andriyandi, & Ardiantari, 2021). Another contributing factor is that many Japanese people tend to have difficulties with pronunciation when speaking English. Therefore, it is important to introduce both basic Japanese and Japanese language for hospitality, specifically, the vocabulary used in hotel-related activities. Moreover, Japanese has unique expressions used in formal contexts that differ from those used in daily conversation. Learning these expressions is considered necessary to enhance the quality of human resources (hotel employees) in delivering excellent service. Since hotel employees directly interact with guests, communication skills, especially in Japanese are needed for their personal development and for improving the hotel's service quality.

Based on the background above, we from the Japanese Language Study Program at Universitas Widyatama believe that Japanese language training for hotel employees, particularly those at Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers, Bandung, is necessary. This training is organized as part of our Community Service Program. It also serves as a form of social contribution and as an implementation of one of the university's *Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi* (Three Pillars of Higher Education), while also supporting efforts to improve service quality in the tourism sector, particularly in the hospitality industry.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The collaboration and active participation of the partner institution are highly expected to ensure the success of this community service program. Based on the agreement with the partner institution, to address the identified issues, the proposal team will implement a training-based approach as the main method of carrying out this community service activity.

This training program is supported by five lecturers from the Japanese Language Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Widyatama, who will deliver material on Basic Japanese Language, assisted by three students from the same program. The participants in this one-day Japanese for hospitality training will consist of at least 20 staff members from various hotel divisions, including:

- a. Front Office (Receptionist)
- b. Housekeeping
- c. Food & Beverage Service

The training consists of three stages: preparation, implementation, and reporting. The detailed description is as follows:

1. Preparation Stage

Tasks carried out by the partner institution:

- a. Coordinating with representatives and management of Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers.
- b. Preparing the necessary facilities for the training activity, such as laptops,

projectors, screens, sound systems, and training rooms.

Tasks carried out by the implementation team:

- a. Preparing the proposal for the Community Service Program.
- b. Coordinating with Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers.
- c. Conducting internal coordination among team members, including determining the training materials, assigning presenters, deciding on teaching methods, and designing questionnaires.
- d. Preparing a teaching module in the form of a soft copy or printed book.

2. Implementation Stage

The implementation team will conduct a basic Japanese language training session for the staff of Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers. The staff members will gather in one room with the implementation team for material discussions. The training method combines lectures and Q&A sessions, as the lecture method is highly effective when applied to a large number of participants (Shidiq & El-Yunusi. 2024). The training will be divided into five sessions with the following topics:

- a. *Aisatsu + Keigo* (Greetings and Honorific Language)
- b. *Check In + Annai* (Check-in Procedures and Guidance)
- c. *Heya de* (In the Room)
- d. *Shokudou de* (In the Dining Area)
- e. *Check Out* (Check-out Procedures)

3. Reporting Stage

In the reporting stage, the implementation team will conduct evaluations through the following steps:

- a. Reviewing the test results of the training participants. If 50% or more of the participants achieve above-average scores, the training is considered to have had a positive impact and can be seen as a viable solution to the previously mentioned issues.
- b. Reviewing the results of the participant questionnaires. The analysis of these questionnaires will be used to assess the sustainability of the program and determine whether it can be implemented regularly in the following periods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the implementation stage of the Community Service Program (PkM) up to this reporting period, the main activity carried out was a Japanese language training program specifically designed for hotel purposes, aimed at the employees of Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers. The training was conducted according to the predetermined schedule and included sessions on Japanese work culture in the hospitality context, learning guest service vocabulary and phrases, situational conversation practice (check-in, room service, handling complaints), and service simulation exercises within the hotel environment. The materials were delivered by the PkM teaching team using a combination of short lectures, pair exercises, and role-play activities, allowing participants to immediately practice the language skills they had learned.

The role-play method was chosen because it is considered effective in helping participants learn through direct experience by creatively and meaningfully enacting real-life situations (Gunadi, 2023).

Results Achieved

- a. The partner satisfaction evaluation instrument (satisfaction questionnaire) has been developed, distributed, and completed by representatives from Sheraton's management as well as training participants. This questionnaire serves as evidence of participation and as an initial data source reflecting the partner's feedback on material quality, delivery methods, relevance of content to hotel operations, and the direct impact on employees' communication abilities in work situations.
- b. The program has been successfully publicized through an online news article on ngaderes.com, summarizing the implementation of the PkM at Sheraton. This publication serves both as external documentation and as a medium for disseminating information about the activity to the public and relevant stakeholders. *Note:* Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the satisfaction questionnaires are still in progress to produce a comprehensive evaluation report. Preliminary findings and recommendations will be included in the final report.

Products or Innovations Implemented

- a. The main product developed and implemented is the Japanese Language for Hospitality Training Module. This module was specifically designed for five-star hotel operations and includes concise theoretical materials, thematic vocabulary lists, sample service dialogues, etiquette guidelines, as well as practice questions and activity sheets.
- b. The training module was distributed to all participants on the day of the training, enabling them to directly access the materials, carry out independent exercises, and use the module as a reference in their daily work. Providing this module represents a concrete effort to ensure continuous knowledge transfer and facilitate replication of the training across other departments within the hotel.

Activity Documentation (Photos/Images and Videos)

- a. Visual documentation in the form of photos and videos has been collected. The documentation includes photos of learning sessions, role-play and service simulation activities, moments of module distribution, group photos of participants and instructors, and short video clips of the training activities.
- b. Recommended arrangement of documentation for the final report and appendices:
 - 1) Photo 1: Opening session and welcoming remarks from Sheraton management
 - 2) Photo 2: Teaching session (close-up of instructor and presentation slides)
 - 3) Photo 3: Participants performing guest service role-play
 - 4) Photo 4: Distribution of training modules to participants
 - 5) Photo 5: Group photo of participants after the training
 - 6) Video 1: Short clips of conversation and simulation practice (1–3 minutes duration)
- c. The documentation is ready to be included as appendices in the report and/or for

publication on the partner institution's website. If necessary, the documentation can be watermarked with institutional identity, labeled with date and location, and indexed with file names for easier reference.

Overall, the interim results indicate that the activity has been implemented as planned, with tangible initial outputs: the completed and applied training module, the filled partner satisfaction questionnaires, and the published media coverage of the program. Recommended follow-up actions include:

- 1) Conducting a full analysis of the questionnaire results to identify areas for improvement;
- 2) Preparing an interim evaluation report containing both qualitative and quantitative findings;
- 3) Utilizing the documentation for wider dissemination; and
- 4) Planning follow-up reinforcement or mentoring sessions to ensure the continued application of the module in daily work practices.

CONCLUSION

The Community Service Program (PkM) organized by the team of lecturers from the Japanese Language Study Program at Universitas Widyatama received an excellent response, as reflected in the highly positive reception from the partner institution, Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers. The employees demonstrated great enthusiasm, resulting in an active and engaging training session. In addition, the PkM team distributed questionnaires as part of the evaluation process—both to assess the team's performance and to gauge the employees' interest in future training opportunities.

As for recommendations, it is suggested that this activity be continued through monitoring and evaluation efforts to assess the effectiveness of the Japanese language for hospitality training program that has been implemented. This program has the potential to be carried out sustainably, considering the growing interest in learning Japanese, which is highly beneficial in the professional field.

REFERENCES

- Booking.com. (n.d.). Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers. Booking.com. <https://www.booking.com/hotel/id/sheraton-bandung-and-towers.html>
- Dataset of Naïve Bayes Based Data Analysis on Online Travel Reviews [Data set]. (2025). Mendeley Data. <https://data.mendeley.com/datasets/cwwsjx3c9t>
- EHL Hospitality Insights. (2024). Hotel employee training impacts customer experience and happiness. <https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/hotel-employee-training-impacts-customer-experience-and-happiness>.
- Gunadi, Abraham. (2023). Implementasi Metode Pembelajaran Role Playing Untuk Meningkatkan Hasil Belajar Bahasa Inggris. *Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan (JKIP)*, 1(1), 39–45.
- <https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/bdosi-sheraton-bandung-hotel-and-towers/overview/>
- Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2023). Panduan Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat Tahun 2023. <https://dikti.kemdikbud.go.id/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Panduan-Penelitian-dan-Pengabdian-kepada-Masyarakat-Tahun-2023.pdf>
- NHK WORLD JAPAN. (n.d.). Easy Japanese for Work. NHK WORLD JAPAN. <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/tv/easyjapaneseforwork/>.
- Meidariani, Ni Wayan., Andriyani, A. A. Ayu Dian., Ardiantari, Ida Ayu Putri Gita. (2021). Pelatihan Daring Bahasa Jepang Perhotelan Karyawan Hotel di Bali. *Reswara : Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 3(1), 26.
- Organisation for Economic Co operation and Development (OECD). (2019). University Industry Collaboration. OECD Publishing. https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2019/04/university-industry-collaboration_e9c1e648-en.pdf.
- Pokhilko, Olga. (2018) *The Role of Foreign Languages in the Development of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry in the Context of Globalization*.
- Shidiq, Annur., El-Yunusi, Muhammad Yusron Maulana. (2024). Implementasi Metode Ceramah dan Tanya Jawab pada Mata Kuliah Microteaching Mahasiswa Universitas Sunan Giri Surabaya. *Impressive Journal of Education*, 2(3), 100.
- TripAdvisor LLC. (n.d.). Sheraton Bandung Hotel & Towers — Reviews. TripAdvisor. https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g297704-d301781-Reviews-Sheraton_Bandung_Hotel_Towers-Bandung_West_Java_Java.html