

# Cross-Cultural Communication Strategy of Kristal Hotel Management in Adapting to the Cultural Shock of Expatriates as Customers of Satu Lagi Bar

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to analyze the cross-cultural communication strategy employed by the Hotel Kristal Jakarta management in managing the cultural shock phenomenon among regular expatriate customers of Satu Lagi Bar. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected using in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation from expatriates, hotel staff, and hotel management representatives. The study employs Edward T. Hall's High-Context and Low-Context Cultures theoretical notion, Berry's Acculturation Strategy, as well as the W-Curve Model of cultural adaptation. The findings reveal that Hotel Kristal's management has formulated three key strategies: (1) staff cultural sensitivity training to develop intercultural awareness and communication competence; (2) staff communication strategies—verbal and non-verbal—employed to successfully communicate with expatriates; and (3) creation of a Third Culture Space at Satu Lagi Bar where foreign and local communities' values are reconciled. With these approaches, cultural shock in expatriates was significantly reduced, leading to easier social adjustment, emotional ease, and long-term customer loyalty. The study asserts that Hotel Kristal's cross-cultural communication approach is successful because it manages to make the bar a point of social integration where inclusiveness and intercultural sensitivity are possible within a multicultural hospitality environment.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is renowned for its hospitable people, natural beauty, and rich culture and is likewise one of the largest economies and most populous countries in Southeast Asia. Such has been a magnet for

multinational companies and expatriates to be attracted to set up business outlets or invest, posting company employees working in various fields such as finance, information technology, energy, and manufacturing.

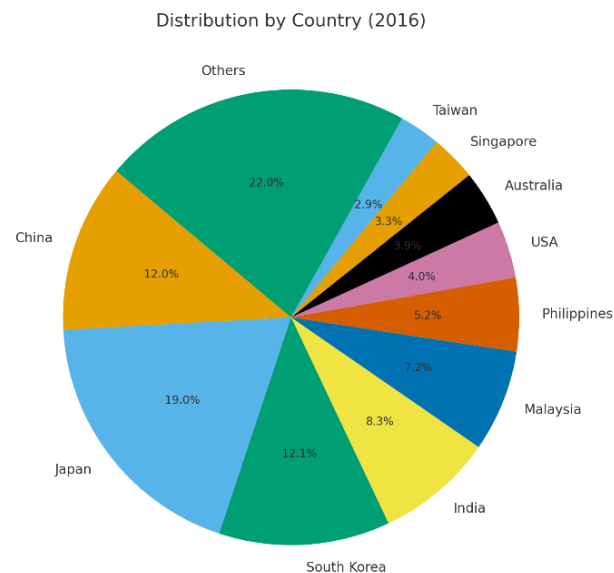


Figure 1. Data on Expatriates with Expatriate Work Permits Issued 2013-2016 in Indonesia  
Sources: Living in Indonesia A Site for Expatriates (2025)

Indonesia is famously hospitable, naturally rich, and culturally diverse, making it one of the most attractive locations for multinational companies and expats to invest and do business. As the biggest economy in Southeast Asia, the country attracts foreign professionals from various sectors such as finance, technology, energy, and manufacturing. Foreigners numbered 43,816 in 2016, as per Living in Indonesia: A Site for Expatriates [1], with a high concentration of 17,683 expats residing in South Jakarta due to international facilities and its closeness to diplomatic centers. However, government policies such as PP No. 34/2021 and Permenaker No. 8/2021 have imposed tighter regulations on foreign work to ensure the transfer of skills and the protection of local workers [2], [3]. Despite these reforms, expatriates remain a conspicuous group in Indonesian urban life, particularly in Jakarta, where the hospitality sector is an interface between the global and the local culture.

In the hospitality industry, hotels constitute a unique microcosm of intercultural communication. Among them, Hotel Kristal in South Jakarta, with Satu Lagi Bar as its flagship outlet, provides a social environment in which expatriates and Indonesian employees meet, converse, and share experiences. These interactions often

present challenges of communication arising from the disparity of cultural norms, values, and expectations. These differences can generate misunderstandings and anxiety, a phenomenon known as cultural shock—a social and psychological adjustment to new cultural environments characterized by anxiety, disorientation, and frustration [4]. While expatriates are generally perceived as highly adaptable people, many of them still perceive the affective and behavioral stress of adjusting to Indonesian social norms and communication styles [5], [6].

The hospitality setting magnifies all these because service interactions demand sensitivity, empathy, and precision. Since Satu Lagi Bar is a "third place" for expatriates to relax and form social networks, the ability of the staff to interpret verbal and non-verbal cues is very important in minimizing misunderstandings. Effective communication across cultures is one of the key strategies to transform potential tension into respect and inclusion for one another. In accordance with Paramita [7] overcoming cultural shock requires adaptive communication that is responsive to both high-context and low-context interaction patterns. Likewise, Sucipto et al. [8] note that intercultural communication competence among hospitality employees brings harmony and

prevents conflict, while Sinaga & Gulo [9] emphasize interactive approaches to increase cultural awareness and reduce misunderstandings.

This study aims to examine the ways in which Hotel Kristal management formulates and implements cross-cultural communication strategies in order to promote expatriate adjustment at Satu Lagi Bar. The study employs Edward T. Hall's High-Context and Low-Context Communication theory [10] and examines adjustment dimensions which consist of assimilation, acculturation, integration, separation, and marginalization. Using a qualitative descriptive design, the research is interested in how Hotel Kristal management and staff construct communicative practices that are open to both individualistic expatriate cultures and collectivist local norms. Such practices include cultural sensitivity training, interactive non-verbal communication, and the construction of a "third culture" space that combines local and international elements in order to enhance comfort and participation.

Lastly, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural communication in international hospitality contexts. Theoretically, it contributes to the body of literature on how communication practices influence adaptation and integration processes among multicultural actors. Practically, it offers strategic implications for hotel managers seeking to improve service quality and expatriate satisfaction. By illustrating how active intercultural communication can buffer cultural shock and build long-term relations, the study accentuates the key role of communication in bringing about inclusivity, customer loyalty, and sustainable business performance in Indonesia's emerging hospitality industry.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Paradigm

Thomas S. Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* [11] defined a paradigm as an universally accepted scientific framework that

guides the identification of problems and their solutions within a community of researchers. A paradigm is a collective set of assumptions, values, and practices that determine how a community sees and interprets reality. It is a philosophical foundation that encompasses ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (how reality is known), and methodology (how it is studied). In effect, a paradigm functions as a filter that organizes human knowledge, dictating how questions are framed, data are collected, and findings are interpreted.

In this study, "Strategi Komunikasi Lintas Budaya Manajemen Hotel Kristal Dalam Adaptasi Cultural Shock Expatriate Sebagai Pelanggan Satu Lagi Bar," the researcher employs an interpretive paradigm in explaining the causal and functional relationship between hotel management communication strategies and expatriate adaptation processes. This paradigm views reality as socially constructed and aims at coming up with meanings from the participant's perspective [12]. It assumes that knowledge is subjective, context-dependent, and created through interaction. The interpretive paradigm can allow the researcher to find out how hotel staff and expatriate customers create meaning through cross-cultural communication to reduce cultural shock and achieve adaptation. With in-depth interviews and multiple data sources, this paradigm can allow the understanding of how communication strategies at Satu Lagi Bar facilitate intercultural understanding and foster a more inclusive hospitality climate.

### 2.2 Previous Study

Literature review offers a theoretical background for examining current research in culture shock, adaptation, and intercultural communication to identify research gaps and conceptual models. Previous studies, e.g., *The Phenomenon of Culture Shock among Male Students at*

STP Khoiru Ummah Jember [13], applied the phenomenological approach in examining factors and phases of culture shock without paying attention to foreign subjects and adaptation theory. Interpersonal Communication as a Coping Mechanism for International Students in Yogyakarta [7] highlighted interpersonal communication as one of the international students' coping mechanisms, while *Adaptasi dan Culture Shock: Komunikasi Mahasiswa PMM di Universitas Djuanda* employed acculturation theory to show that adaptation and self-awareness impact intercultural adjustment. Culture Shock in Minangkabau Students' Cross-Cultural Communication at Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang [14] described four stages of culture shock without mentioning adaptation strategies. Studies of Japanese workers in Indonesia [2] and Peace Corps volunteers [15] showed strategies such as self-confidence, openness, and social support. Chinese student studies [16] emphasized language proficiency, mental health, and intercultural

experience as the adaptation determinants, while Culture Shocks at Japanese Workplace of Indonesian Students [17] and International Students' Communication Adaptation in the United Kingdom [18] experimented linguistic and social challenges through the U-curve model. Other scholars [19] integrated the ABC Model and cross-cultural adaptation theories such as Uncertainty Reduction, Anxiety/Uncertainty Management, Acculturation, and Co-Cultural Theory. Despite their contributions, most studies focused on the causes and stages of culture shock rather than adaptation strategies in the hospitality sector. Hence, this study carries the argument a step further by exploring Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies of Hotel Kristal Management in Adapting Expatriate Cultural Shock at Satu Lagi Bar through an interpretive qualitative approach in understanding communication-based adaptation in a multicultural service environment.

### 2.3 Theoretical Framework

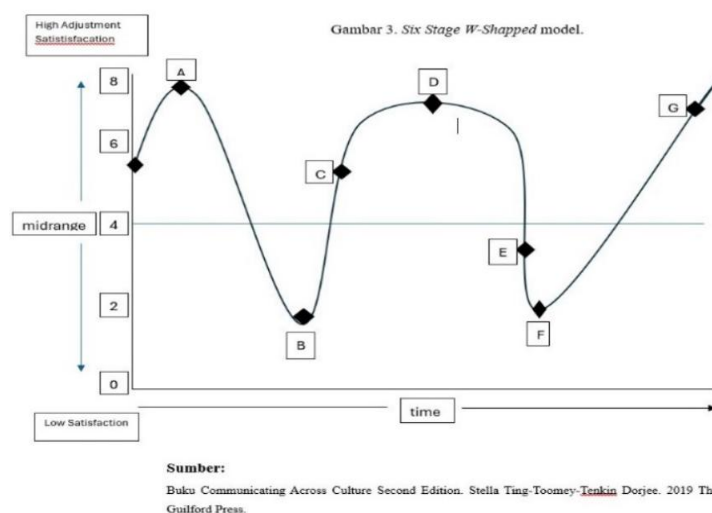


Figure 2. Theoretical Framework

Gullahorn and Gullahorn [20] propose that culture shock is a seven-stage process individuals usually experience when moving to a new cultural environment. The honeymoon

stage is Stage 1, wherein one is upbeat and smitten with the new culture, and each experience is pleasant and interesting despite some confusion or mild homesickness. It is followed by it-it

frustration or hostility phase, where individuals experience emotional distress and communication tension as the first excitement of the novel culture dies away. Anderson [21] divides this phase into three kinds of behavior: early defectors, who react in a hostile way or withdraw; time-keepers, who maintain a distance with a wait-for-return-home attitude; and adjusters, who attempt to blend and learn within the novel environment. To cope with it, individuals will resist by denying the local culture (conflict), evading involvement (escape), or attempting to filter, which includes rejecting differences, excessive praising of home culture, or adhering to host culture. As they become increasingly aware, they progress to a recovery and adjustment phase in which adaptation is a slow process through cognitive, acceptance, and behavioral flexibility towards local manners and mores. The following phases reflect higher levels of psychological and cultural integration.

At the humor or rebound phase, one begins to laugh at one's own mistakes, discovers areas of strength and weaknesses of each culture, and adapts with more self-assurance [4]. This is transferred to the harmonious adjustment phase, where one feels "at home" and experiences identity inclusion and social harmony due to empathy, communication skills, and mutual respect. With time, positive emotions and creativity are the order of the day as people easily blend into their host culture. This is soon followed by a phase of ambivalence, characterized by conflicting feelings of pride, sadness, and nostalgia as they bid farewell to new friends and cultural encounters. During their return, the re-entry culture shock stage normally upsets more than the initial adaptation, with subjects experiencing identity confusion as well as ignorance from home peers. Finally, in the resozialization stage, some subjects assimilate smoothly, while

others, designated as alienators, remain unable to adapt fully and adopt a global nomadic identity, more comfortable overseas than at home in their native culture. This multi-stage model provides theoretical guidance for studying how expatriate managers in Hotel Kristal's Satu Lagi Bar deal with emotional, behavioral, and social adjustments in adapting to Indonesian culture.

Planning, Organizing, Actuating & Controlling (POAC) Strategy (POAC)

Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) is a core management theory that supports organizational goal efficacy and effectiveness. Knowledge within an organization is developed by interaction between individuals at various levels, and achievement depends on how the knowledge is shared and coordinated. POAC is a two-way process of interaction between the stakeholders and the organization in communication and public relations management, encompassing planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. Planning is the initial managerial function that involves setting goals and determining the optimal way to achieve them. Good planning must be factual, rational, flexible, stable, and dialectic in nature, so that it is acted upon the basis of true facts and allows for variation [22]. It encompasses processes such as goal setting, diagnosing the given situation, diagnosing facilitating and retarding forces, and developing step-by-step plans. Planning essentially minimizes risk, synchronizes action with objectives, and constitutes the foundation of all managerial activity. The second function, Organization, is the arranging of human and physical assets in a way that work is reasonably brought together logically and responsibilities are clear.

Organization helps managers obtain coordination and synergy by making sure that each person understands his/her tasks, powers, and

responsibilities, thus creating coordination as well as synergy. Effective organization distributes work based on ability and skill, guaranteeing fair workload allocation and reducing inefficiency. This involves developing clear procedures, job splitting, and developing coordination systems to decrease conflict and improve cooperation. Actuation function, or guiding and stimulating people to achieve goals, emphasizes leadership and communication. Managers guide employees to act voluntarily and responsibly by developing motivation, coordination, and effective communication. Actuation involves things like coordinating operations, motivating workers, communication, and the provision of responsible orders to build effective teamworking, increased capabilities, and an active organizational atmosphere.

Finally, Control ensures that performance stays in line with established plans by measuring results and correcting deviations.

According to G.R. Terry [23], control involves setting standards, measuring performance, comparing results with expectations, and taking corrective action, if necessary. This allows for early identification of issues, assessment of the effectiveness of resources, and verification whether plans need to be altered. Control entails the creation of measurable benchmarks, monitoring performance, comparing real performance against objectives, and corrective action for enhancement. Efficient control provides significant insight into cause-and-effect reasons for variances and enables achievement of organizational goals through successful usage of resources. Lastly, the POAC model is a four-stage process of holistic cyclical sustaining organizational performance that underpins managerial effectiveness in private institutions as well as public ones.

## 2.4 *Definition & Theory of Cross-Cultural Communication*

Cross-cultural communication can be unintended; humanistic, two-way, transactional comprehension more accurately describes intercultural interactions than mechanistic transmission, one-way models, as the same verbal and nonverbal cues can have alternative meanings in different cultures. Edward T. Hall [10] has interpreted intercultural communication as a two-way exchange of thought and meaning among people of different cultures and identifies high-context (HCC) and low-context (LCC) styles: HCC relies on shared knowledge, nonverbal cues, and tacit meaning, whereas LCC is centered on explicit, direct, and elaborate verbal content [24]–[27]. In workplaces, HCC promotes togetherness but may be misinterpreted without shared context, whereas LCC speeds up productivity but inhibits depth of relationship [27], [28]. Individualism tends to be congruent with LCC—focusing on autonomy, independence, personal achievement, straightforward messages, and privacy [29]–[31] with a fondness for directness, clear norms, and personal accountability; whereas collectivism is congruent with HCC—valuing harmony, group loyalty, hierarchy, and implicit communication that saves face and preserves social balance [29], [30].

Conceptually, intercultural (interaction among members of different cultures) and cross-cultural (cultures in comparison) are analogous but not identical [32]. HCC (e.g., China, Indonesia, Japan) and LCC (e.g., Germany, U.S., Finland) style misalignment can trigger misunderstanding unless there is sensitivity to context, nonverbal communication, and shared frames in HCC or clear instructions and direct feedback in LCC contexts [26]–[28]. Sensitivity to these cultural logics during public relations planning allows

empathetic communication, reduces bias, and maximizes multicultural public collaborative work. Ultimately, communication is an interactively produced creation of meaning through verbal and nonverbal conduct [33]; successful cross-cultural practice organizes messages in harmony with local value systems, interaction norms, and identity concerns in order to promote quality of relationship and organizational outcomes internationally.

## 2.5 *Adaptation and Adaptation Strategies*

Clyde Kluckhohn, together with Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodbeck [34], explains adaptation under the Values Orientation Theory, where culture is defined as human beings' primary adaptive device. All human societies are inevitably faced with shared existential mysteries if they are to be, like, how human beings interact with nature—whether to peacefully coexist, conquer, or be dominated by it. Culture thus is a cognitive and social adaptation tool, providing learned and transmitted problem solutions of the environment and society. Norms and habitual patterns emerge as social solutions that drive groups toward sustaining existence and social order in a specific ecological context. Here, adaptation means both personal and cultural adaptation mechanisms that align internal values with external realities.

Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, and Roy [35] propose five grand cross-cultural adaptation strategies: assimilation, in which individuals adopt the new culture fully and abandon their original one; acculturation, a balance of acquiring the host culture while retaining original identity; integration, the most conflict-free approach that blends both cultures; separation, in which groups avoid the dominant culture to preserve heritage; and marginalization, in which individuals forfeit both cultural ties and belonging. These strategies are situation and

situational, guided by host-country policy, social belief, and personal experience. In multicultural settings like expatriate communities in Satu Lagi Bar, Hotel Kristal Jakarta, acculturation and integration are most effective since they promote intercultural competence and communication flexibility. Through the use of these strategies, expatriates can cope with culture shock by maintaining their identity while adapting to local norms, attaining personal comfort and social harmony.

## 2.6 *Culture Shock*

As the individual finds his or her footing in a new cultural environment, it is inevitable that the individual becomes anxious, confused, and irritated—a process that has been identified by Hall [36] as culture shock and later elaborated by Oberg [37] as a state of confusion and dejection caused by contact with novel cultural environments. Ward [38] also articulated culture shock as a dynamic process of affective, behavioral, and cognitive (A-B-C) responses in encountering a second culture [39]. The major determinants of culture shock are variations in values and norms of cultures, communication barrier because of language differences, social support deficit, emotional preparedness, environmental factors, psychological stress, and ethnocentrism blocking adaptation [40]. It ranges from physical discomfort, insomnia, and withdrawal to anxiety and loneliness, tending to disrupt successful intercultural communication. The phenomenon, however, has both positive and negative effects. It increases adaptability, social competence, cultural awareness, and personal growth on the positive side [41], [42]. Conversely, it may also trigger stress, communication breakdown, and reduced work performance due to the issue of adjusting to new social norms [43]. Ultimately, culture shock is both an inner psychological challenge and an ability for change, whereby individuals

can negotiate identity, establish intercultural understanding, and become resilient through accommodation in multicultural societies.

## 2.7 *Expatriate*

An expatriate is an individual who relocates from his or her native country to work and stay abroad either through corporate choice (assigned expatriates) or personal initiative (self-initiated expatriates) [44]. Motivations for expatriation may be career growth and skill acquisition to cultural immersion and personal development [6], [45]. Despite such dreams, expatriates often face severe difficulties, particularly culture shock, that can devastate psychological health and work performance [5], [6]. Expatriate communities are typically made up of professionals, scholars, diplomats, entrepreneurs, and retirees of varying cultural backgrounds who reside in foreign countries temporarily. They like forming formal and informal social networks—e.g., global clubs and business associations—to exchange information, provide emotional support, and ease adaptation to new environments. While remaining among such communities has benefits like easier adaptation, contacts with global networks, and cross-cultural experience, it has disadvantages in terms of language differences, remoteness of culture, good standard of living, and low integration into local society. Hence, the expatriate experience is one of opportunity and complexity requiring adaptability, cultural intelligence, and effective interpersonal communication to thrive in multicultural settings.

## 2.8 *Conceptual Framework*

Conceptually, the research work on "Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies of Hotel Kristal Management in the Adaptation of Cultural Shock among Expatriate Customers at Satu Lagi Bar" is grounded in the culture shock phenomenon leading to

miscommunication among tourists to the bar. In intercultural communication, culture shock tends to happen in interaction contexts involving indigenous and host communities, for instance, in the life at Hotel Kristal for expatriates. Communication style disruptions, values, and social expectations between High-Context Cultures (HCC) and Low-Context Cultures (LCC) and between collectivist and individualist inclinations tend to result in misunderstanding. While LCCs (e.g., Western societies) favor direct and explicit verbal communication, HCCs (e.g., Asian societies) employ contextual and nonverbal cues. Similarly, individualist cultures seek autonomy and personal goals, whereas collectivist cultures emphasize harmony and group belonging. In order to mitigate these cultural differences, Berry's [46] adaptation strategies—assimilation, acculturation, integration, separation, and marginalization—are rubrics for defining how individuals adjust to new culture settings. In the case of Hotel Kristal, the uses of Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) by managers influence the interactions of expatriates efficiently and integration socially with the host culture. Moreover, adaptation continues with the sequence of the W-curve model describing emotional phases of honeymoon and shock followed by recovery and adjustment sometimes followed by reverse culture shock on the return trip. The conceptual framework thus connects cultural dimensions (HCC–LCC, collectivism–individualism), adaptation tactics, and the affective dynamics of culture shock in an effort to explain patterns of cross-cultural adaptation and miscommunication between expatriates—positioning Hotel Kristal as an active case of intercultural communication within a multicultural hospitality context.



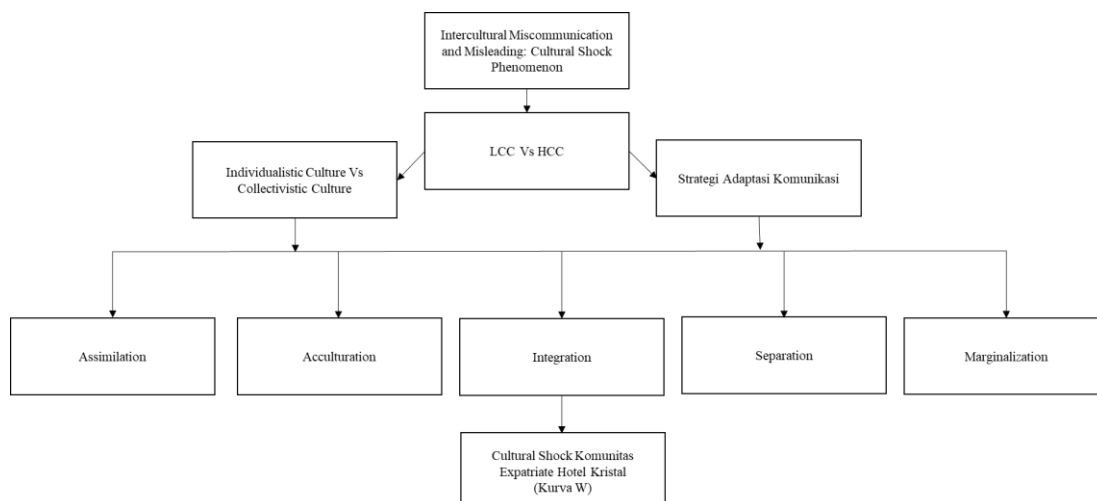


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to provide a clear, orderly, and precise description of the phenomenon being investigated about expatriates' culture shock experiences in Indonesia. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of expatriates' subjective experiences about the cultural problems they face during their interaction with local individuals [47]. According to Bogdan and Taylor in Communication Research Methods [12] and Moleong [48], qualitative research provides descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and visible behavior. It is based on various sources of data and uses triangulation techniques, carried out continuously until saturation is achieved [12]. Researchers play a key role, observing and examining naturally occurring wonders to discover how cross-cultural communication adaptation strategies emerge and influence interactions among Satu Lagi Bar patrons.

Social research, as noted by Lawrence [49], relies on systematic processes and scientific evidence that are unique to ordinary reasoning or rational judgment by itself. This study, which is titled "The Intercultural Communication Strategies of Kristal Hotel Management in Adapting to

Culture Shock among Expatriate Customers at Satu Lagi Bar," uses empirical data collected using qualitative data collection methods based on interviews, observation, and document analysis. These are the basis for analyzing the ways in which the local and expat workers are engaged in adaptive communication processes in culture shock situations. This entails planning, collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data using systematic and recurring steps to ensure analytical rigor and conceptual validity.

The research subjects were expatriates staying at the Kristal Hotel—both short- and long-term—and employees and workers at Satu Lagi Bar. The research was geared towards determining how expatriates transcended cultural shock and adjusted to local norms. Data was collected between September 2024 and November 2025 via in-person interviews with the selected informants. The nine key informants included expatriates from the United States, Russia, Australia, and the United Kingdom, as well as local hotel employees such as managers, bartenders, and waiters. The research period fitted in the proposal development, data collection, analysis, and completion of the thesis stages, with sufficient time for multiple fieldwork and checking of data.

The unit of analysis follows an interpretive paradigm with a focus on

individual expatriates with various cultural backgrounds living and working in Indonesia. Their individual experiences of cultural adjustment to Indonesian culture provide profound insight into the process of cultural shock and their coping with it. Through the application of purposive sampling, this study records numerous voices in an attempt to understand the intercultural communication process between expatriates and locals. The data were analyzed using qualitative procedures proposed by Sugiyono [50], including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The validity of the findings was ensured through credibility, transferability, reliability, and confirmation tests [51], [52]. These steps ensure scientific accuracy, so that the research findings are reliable and can represent the process of intercultural adaptation that occurs in Hotel Kristal's multicultural work environment.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 *Description of the Research Object*

Hotel Kristal is a residential and business hotel for long-term stay that is strategically located on Jl. Terogong Raya, Cilandak, South Jakarta. This building was initially developed as a rental apartment by the Metropolitan Linggajaya group, which is part of the Peddy Wongsowidjojo group, in conjunction with the development of the Permata Hijau Apartment back then. The groundbreaking phase of construction started in April 1991 and was followed by the second phase in August 1991, with an investment worth approximately 45 billion rupiah. Construction was targeted for completion in November 1992. Hotel Kristal consists of two towers (Tower I and Tower II), ten stories each with one sub-basement level, and a total of 328 units with five room types: Studio, One Bedroom, Two Bedrooms, Three Bedrooms, and Penthouse—each room with its own private swimming

pool.

Initially, when it opened, Hotel Kristal targeted Japanese expatriates in Indonesia. But from late 1995, it has been functioning as a four-star business hotel with a serviced apartment theme providing home-like comfort for expatriates, businessmen, and short-term guests. Its architectural style is modern tropical, and the exterior of the building does not feature a sloping roof but is one with multifunctional window "frames" which also serve as balconies and air-conditioning installations. The interior of the hotel is shaped like an L, creating a warm swimming pool and children's playground. Hotel Kristal has been committed to providing complete facilities such as the Orchid Resto restaurant, The Delli café, Satu Lagi Bar as the main lounge, a gymnasium, meeting rooms, a beauty clinic, the Jean Christin accessory shop, and a day care center that helps guests to leave their children while they are occupied with business activities.

The location of Hotel Kristal, being close to the business district, shopping, and public facilities in South Jakarta, makes it the top choice for expatriates and business travelers. The hotel also combines Indonesian local wisdom with the most advanced technology, such as the utilization of an efficient self check-in and check-out system. The combination of creative architectural design, friendly service, and well-equipped facilities provides it with a unique and exclusive reputation among its guests. In addition to the recreational facilities, "Satu Lagi Bar" commenced operations in 1995 and has been an expatriate social gathering landmark ever since. This bar is themed American Bar, as seen in its conquest of world food menus, the variety of alcoholic beverages

such as whiskey, wine, and beer, and the sale of cigars as a Western-style bar signature. The warm interior with wood decor, billiard tables, and retro-style wall ornaments make this bar a meeting point of cross-cultural interaction for locals and international customers. Hence, "Satu Lagi Bar" has been referred to as the Expatriate Community Bar or a gathering place for the expatriate community in South Jakarta.

Vision and Mission of Hotel Kristal Jakarta

Vision:

To be the first choice for business travelers, both local and international, as well as leisure travelers seeking comfortable, high-quality accommodation with a serviced apartment concept in the South Jakarta area.

Mission:

- a) To provide quality accommodation with excellent service and make a positive contribution to employees and the surrounding community.
- b) To provide professional and responsive service to guests' needs in all aspects of service.
- c) To maintain the cleanliness, comfort, and quality of hotel

facilities on an ongoing basis.

- d) To focus on guest satisfaction by listening to and following up on feedback to improve service quality.
- e) Implementing continuous innovation through the application of modern technology to improve operational efficiency and service quality.
- f) Developing professional human resources through continuous training and coaching, as well as creating a positive work environment for employee welfare.
- g) Playing an active role in the local community through social participation, economic partnerships, and business collaborations that support regional development.

With this vision and mission, Hotel Kristal strives to maintain its reputation as a leading accommodation in South Jakarta that excels not only in service and facilities, but also in sustainability, innovation, and contribution to the local community.



Figure 4. Logo Kristal Hotel

#### **4.2 Cross-Cultural Communication Strategy at Kristal Hotel Management**

Based on interviews with Kristal Hotel management, including HRD and the General Manager, as well as through a review of internal documents, it was found that the cross-cultural communication strategy at Satu Lagi Bar was systematically designed to anticipate potential cross-cultural misunderstandings between staff and expatriate customers.

The first strategy identified is cultural sensitivity training for all bar staff, which is conducted regularly in the form of monthly training sessions. The training focuses not only on English language proficiency, but also on increasing cultural awareness and non-verbal communication skills. The main objective of this program is to train staff to recognize the early signs of culture shock in customers and to respond appropriately and empathetically. One staff member revealed, "We have monthly training, the focus is not only on service, but also on cultural awareness, which aims to serve guests from various countries." The results of the observation show that the staff also apply mindfulness when interacting with expatriates, such as maintaining their expressions, paying attention to body language, and adjusting their tone of voice to create comfortable communication. One staff member said, "If we see a guest looking confused or stressed, we approach them and ask them carefully."

The second strategy relates to the application of adaptive communication, both verbal and non-verbal. In verbal communication, staff are trained to use simple English (Basic English) and avoid local idioms that are

difficult for foreign customers to understand. Staff are also accustomed to repeating and reconfirming customer orders to ensure that the message is conveyed correctly, as one staff member said, "We always repeat the order to make sure (especially for different accents)." Meanwhile, in terms of non-verbal communication, staff are trained to use universal hand gestures that minimize the risk of misinterpretation and to maintain an appropriate distance (proxemics) in accordance with the cultural norms of the customer. For example, when serving guests from the Middle East, staff avoid direct physical contact, as stated, "We are taught not to directly touch guests from the Middle East when serving them something; it's a matter of etiquette." This strategy demonstrates an adaptive ability to understand differences in expression, body language, and personal boundaries of customers from different cultures.

The third strategy is the creation of a Third Culture at Satu Lagi Bar as a transitional space for expatriate customers. Management strives to create an atmosphere that combines local and international elements so that customers feel more comfortable adapting. This is reflected in the interior design, which features an American bar concept with a local tropical touch, as well as a selection of music, decorations, and food menus that combine Western and Asian flavors, such as Beef Goulash Soup, Tom Yam Gong, Thai Beef Salad, and Classic Beef Burger. The bar's social environment also serves as a forum for social integration, where expatriates interact with each other and build social support networks. One expatriate stated, "This bar is my place of rest. Here, I don't have to worry about miscommunication. The

staff are very patient; they wait for me to think of what to say. This helps me adapt." Through the creation of this inclusive atmosphere, Satu Lagi Bar becomes an adaptive space that facilitates harmonious

cross-cultural interaction and supports the process of cultural shock adaptation for expatriate customers in the Hotel Kristal environment.

Table 1. Data Analysis Table (Child Code and Parent Code)

Raw Data (Interview/Observation Quotes)	Child Code	Parent Code	Description / Interpretation
"The manager requires all bar staff to attend workshops on accents so they can understand guests from various countries." (Bar Supervisor Interview)	A1.2. Language Training	A. Cross-Cultural Communication Strategy (CCC)	Management strategy aimed at improving adaptive linguistic skills.
"We were taught not to directly touch guests from the Middle East when serving something – it's a matter of etiquette." (Bar Staff Interview)	B2.2. Interaction Distance (Proxemics)	B. Implementation of CCC by Bar Staff	Staff apply non-verbal communication based on cultural awareness.
"When I first moved, I was confused about whether to smile at new people or not. But at the bar, they always greeted me with a smile, so I felt comfortable." (Expatriate Interview)	C2.1. Interaction Comfort	C. Adaptation to Expatriate Cultural Shock	Staff successfully reduce expatriates' initial anxiety through universal non-verbal cues (smiles).

#### 4.3 Analysis of Results Based on the Research Questions

Based on the coding of data results in the analysis table, the findings of the research that respond to the first formulation of the problem, namely *"How does Hotel Kristal form a cross-cultural communication strategy to serve expatriate customers at Satu Lagi Bar,"* illustrate three main aspects of the strategy. First, under the Main Code (A1) Training Policy, it was fixed that training of staff is not only focused on service but also cultural awareness. The interview results show that management holds regular monthly training with an emphasis on cultural awareness and English language skills as minimum standards. Based on one informant, *"We have monthly training, the focus is*

*not only on service, but also cultural awareness, which benefits the guests of other cultures. There is no special training, but the requirement is that employees must speak English."* Second, Key Code (A2) Environmental Design, confirms that the design of the bar is set as an American-style bar with 80% Western-style decor, furniture, and food and beverage menus. The interview results substantiate the finding by quoting, *"For the bar concept itself, we did design it specifically to look like an American bar. there is a pool table, wall decorations, and a bar menu that is 80% Western F&B."* In addition, there is live music three times a week to provide a warm atmosphere and promote socialization among visitors. Third, Key Code (A3) Feedback Mechanism implies

implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) augmented with Service Excellence and How to Deal with Complaints training, as explained, "The system created is an SOP. HR also provides training and development to enhance performance and service standard compliance."

Furthermore, examination of the second problem statement, i.e., "How is the cross-cultural communication strategy implemented by Satu Lagi Bar staff in their day-to-day interaction with expatriates," yielded three main modes of implementation. Under Primary Code (B1) Adaptive Verbal Communication, employees use simple-to-understand English and double-check messages at all times to make sure they do not misinterpret, as explained in an interview, "We don't use language that is too complicated, the key thing is that the message is understandable." always repeat the order to ensure (especially for other accents)." In Key Code (B2) Non-Verbal Communication, staff maintain open body posture, avoid making closed gestures, and adjust the distance of contact based on the customer's cultural background, as said, "Always smile, don't fold your arms, so they don't feel uncomfortable. First, look at where the guests are from. If they are from the West, keep a bit more distance." The Main Code (B3) Role as Facilitator demonstrates that staff are active in helping customers through advice and emotional support. One staff member explained, "Sometimes we give recommendations to guests about where to dine outside the hotel or how to flag a taxi. If we see a lost or upset guest, we approach him or her and ask politely." This research proves that not only do the staff function as servants but as cultural mediators and agents of social

adaptation for expatriates.

The third problem statement, i.e., "How effective is the cross-cultural communication strategy of Kristal Hotel Management in facilitating adaptation and minimizing the impact of cultural shock to expatriate customers at Satu Lagi Bar," resulted in three main categories. As a result of the Primary Code (C1) Initial Cultural Shock Experience, customers reported becoming frustrated and confused in the early adaptation phase but were reassured by the bar environment. This is revealed in the quotation, "At first, I was frustrated because people outside the bar didn't understand what I wanted. This bar is my place of rest. Here, I don't have to worry about miscommunication." Furthermore, Main Code (C2) Facilitated Adaptation Level ensures that patient and empathetic communication from staff helped customers adapt socially, as one customer revealed, "The staff are very patient; they wait for me to think of what to say. This helps me adapt. I met new friends from other countries because of the bar events. I'm not lonely anymore." Finally, the Main Code (C3) Customer Loyalty reflects the success of cross-cultural communication tactics, as seen in the greater loyalty of expatriates towards the hotel. One of the customers explained, "I became a regular customer because I feel valued and understood, not just served." The above findings support that adaptive communication practices and empathetic approaches are important in developing a culture that supports expatriate customers' cultural adaptation process in Hotel Kristal.

#### 4.4 Discussion

Outcomes of such research show that cross-cultural communication habits have been strategically implemented by Hotel

Kristal management to reduce cultural barriers and foster the accommodation of expatriate travelers to Satu Lagi Bar. The hotel strategy combines systematic cultural sensitivity training, adaptive communication behavior, and the creation of a culturally neutral social environment, a Third Culture Space. This aligns with Hall's [36] High-Context and Low-Context communication theory, which posits that misunderstandings are likely to occur when direct, explicit communication culture people (low context) encounter those from implicit, relational communication culture people (high context). Evidence from interviews shows that the management intentionally designed Satu Lagi Bar to harmonize both the communication norms—without abandoning Western-type design and service quality but embracing Indonesian values of hospitality such as warmth, attentiveness, and concern. Through this mixed approach, expatriates acclimatized easily while adjusting to local cultural variations incrementally and stress and confusion that would otherwise be associated with culture shock decreased [37].

Moreover, the adaptive communication behaviors that employees emulated played a significant role in reducing intercultural miscommunication as well as expatriates' psychological adjustment. Verbal accommodations, such as simplification of English, repetition, and clarification, are a manifestation of what Gudykunst [53] refers to as anxiety and uncertainty management—a communication skill essential to effective cross-cultural contact. Non-verbal empathy, such as open body posturing, appropriate interpersonal space, and relaxed vocal quality,

enhanced relational comfort between expatriates and staff. These findings validate Ting-Toomey's [39]. Mindful Communication theory, which distinguishes between awareness and flexibility as the primary determinants of intercultural effectiveness. Hotel Kristal staff demonstrated such sensitivity by adjusting their responses to the cultural expectations of each expatriate group. This refashioned the service setting into a psychologically safe environment in which expatriates were free to freely express themselves with no fear of judgment or misperception. This two-way interaction between employee empathy and expatriate openness strengthened social trust and promoted mutual respect, which are the building blocks of intercultural harmony.

Finally, the study highlights that the effectiveness of Hotel Kristal's communication strategy cannot be detached from the process of cultural adaptation outlined in Berry's [46] Acculturation Framework. The presence of integration and acculturation strategies among expatriates over separation or marginalization suggests that Satu Lagi Bar is a liminal social space for cross-cultural learning. Expatriates' mention of being "respected and understood, not just served" demonstrates successful adaptation leads to as per the W-Curve Model of cultural adaptation [20]. Further, incorporating cross-cultural competence into employee training and customer service model, Hotel Kristal not only enhanced expatriate satisfaction but also developed a sustainable hospitality management model with inclusiveness and empathy. These results contribute to the overall understanding of how cross-cultural communication is both

a managerial tool and a social mechanism for cultural distance reduction in globalized service businesses.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The conclusion that Hotel Kristal Jakarta has managed to utilize a large-scale cross-cultural communication system that supports the expatriates' adjustment process within the multicultural environment of Satu Lagi Bar. The first strategy, cultural sensitivity training, has worked well to develop staff competency in detecting intercultural cues and making sensitive responses to varying customer behaviors. Adaptive communication, both verbal and non-verbal, is the second strategy that assists staff in overcoming language barriers and minimizing miscommunication during real-time interactions. Concurrently, the third method—the creation of a Third Culture setting—offers an intercultural in-between social space integrating Western and

Indonesian dimensions of culture, providing expatriates with psychological comfort and a feeling of belonging.

All the strategies together eradicate the negative impact of cultural shock, creating positive emotional experience and facilitating expatriates' integration into their host setting. Expatriates report that they are accepted, comfortable, and valued, and it further adds to their loyalty and dedication towards Hotel Kristal. This research determines that cross-cultural communication in hospitality management is not only linguistic proficiency but also cultural understanding, situational adaptability, and institutional support through frequent training and environmental planning. Therefore, Hotel Kristal's model can be used as an example to other hospitality contexts, which want to improve intercultural communication and solidify customer relations in more globalized service contexts.

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