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Tourists' experiences with service providers while on holidays in Croatia

Abstract

Travellers' emotions and feelings as a result of inhospitable experiences with service providers have received limited research interest. The current study sought to address this gap by exploring and classifying travellers' perceptions about inhospitable experiences while holidaying and considering the role of perceived injustice in the elicitation of divergence of emotions following the inhospitable encounter. The research undertaken spanned a period of two years - two peak summer periods in Croatia and was based on qualitative data gathered by way of interviewing both domestic and international travellers about their experiences with service staff while on holidays in Croatia. Of the 200 people interviewed, all but 34 (17%) had something negative to report, and 90 (45%) of the respondents were clearly very annoyed and upset about some of the encounters they had with Croatia's service providers. The interview question was, "Can you describe your experiences with service providers while on holidays [in Croatia - for overseas visitors]?" The analysis of the findings revealed that both domestic and international tourists' perceived emotions and injustices were predictive of the type of inhospitality received. With a better understanding of the nature and causes of the negative emotions experienced by the travellers as a result of inhospitable encounter, it should be possible to implement appropriate recovery systems that are designed to reverse the effects of inhospitable encounters.

Keywords:

travellers; inhospitable experiences; narrative; justice theory; Croatia

Introduction

Despite its almost magical spell on visitors; sublime scenery, rich history, pristine environment, ease of access, both inland and on the Adriatic coast, these all quickly fade away if those who provide services to the visitors are unfriendly, downright rude, and inhospitable. While many tourism studies identify and address factors that affect destination choice and image, few studies have addressed the role which hospitality, or service provider-customer encounter, plays in the way tourists experience and feel about the destination. Of note have been such studies by Bolton & Drew (1992); Chung & Hoffman (1998); Tax, Brown, & Chandrashekar (1998); Collie, Sparks, & Bradley (2000); Johns & Clarke (2001); and Kivela & Chu (2001).

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Context – Croatia's tourism post 1995

While studies have identified factors that affect destination choice and image, few studies have addressed the role that hospitality (and lack of it) plays in the way tourists experience and feel about the destination. Of course, the issue is sensitive and potentially damaging, for one reason no-one nation or destination likes to be identified as being inhospitable, hence the dearth of investigation. Consequently, while the relationship between hospitality and tourism is affirmed in the literature, few studies are reported that specifically addresses the relationship between hospitality given and the tourist. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to review prior studies involving service staff encounters and their hospitality, its linkage as to how tourists felt and made judgments about such encounters, and to determine how such encounters affected tourists' experiences of a destination. The significance of this research was twofold. If hospitality could be shown to significantly influence how visitors experienced a destination, then it could be argued that a hospitable behaviour was a viable marketing tool for destinations. In addition 'being hospitable' could become a mantra behind the revival of tourism for destinations that have had the challenges of inhospitality.

At the 1st session of the Croatian Government's Assembly for the Preparation for the Tourist Season 2006, held at the Istrian city of Rovinj, the Minister for the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development Dr. Božidar Kalmeta said that the 2006 tourist season will yield the best tourism growth results so far, making it possible for Croatia to be designated by the World Tourism Organisation as a four-star tourist destination. The Minister's projections for 2006 tourist arrivals were realised, where according to statistics provided by the State Bureau for Statistics (Republika Hrvatska – Državni Zavod za Statistiku, 2007), in 2006 travel and tourism accounted for 11.4% of Croatia's GDP generating 148,000 jobs, and representing 14.8 per cent of the total workforce. Table 1. below highlights tourist arrivals to Croatia in 2006 compared with the 2005 season.

Table 1
TOURIST ARRIVALS AND ROOM-NIGHTS JAN - OCT 2006

	Arrivals			Room-Nights				
	Jan – Oct 2005	Jan – Oct 2006	Indices	Jan – Oct 2005	Jan – Oct 2006	Indices	Jan – Oct 2006	
			Jan – Oct 2006.			Jan – Oct 2005	Structure, of nights (%)	Average number of nights per arrival
Domestic tourists	1,372,307	1,536,485	112	5,096,679	5,578,819	109	10.7	3.6
Foreign tourists	8,331,136	8,496,853	102	45,638,345	46,622,408	102	89.3	5.5
Total	9,703,443	10,033,338	103	50,735,024	52,201,227	103	100	5.2

Source: Republika Hrvatska – Ministarstvo mora, turizma, prometa i razvitka, (2007).

<http://www.mmtpr.hr/UserDocsImages/1-10-listop.pdf>

Croatia has faced both challenges and opportunities in the rejuvenation of its tourism economy (Hall, 2003). Nevertheless, the re-imagining of Croatia as a safe and a new European destination has been by and large successful, first in Europe and now in Australia, Japan and the Far East, and Canada (Ministarstvo mora, turizma, prometa i razvitka, 2007), with such re-imagining marketing slogans as "[Croatia] offers new

Inhospitable behaviour and perceived (in)justice

opportunities for tourists who are weary of travelling [to] the same spots offered by other countries”; and “Croatia boasts scenic wonders and a cultural ambience that are regarded as one of the best in Europe” (Croatian Tourism Board, 2006), were successful, prompting the Croatia’s Tourism Board to adopt a new re-imaging logo for its coastal and island tourism as “The Mediterranean as it once was”.

In the tourism context, inhospitable behaviour and/or incivility¹ is a discourteous behaviour towards visitors that lacks courtesy. Such behaviour may be rude, offensive, condescending, racist, demeaning, cavalier and such, but is not necessarily aggressive, although these kinds of incidents can lead to aggression (Lee, 1999). Literature suggests that there is a link between the work environment and employee behaviour. Importantly, Flynn (1998) and Pearson (1999) have revealed that rude employees and managers can cost a company millions in lost revenue, bad publicity, and unhappy customers. For example, in a survey of 5,000 employees across all sectors of British industry (Keelan, 2000), including hospitality and tourism, it was found that inhospitable behaviour toward customers and other employees caused an estimated loss of 18 million workdays because of the resultant stress and customer complaints.

According to Girardet (1999) and Lee (1999), employees in troubled organisations put forth ‘being too busy’, ‘understaffed’, ‘culture’, ‘angry about something’, ‘stupid customers’ and ‘stupid bosses’, as the root causes of inhospitable behaviour. Incredibly, survey respondents suggested that civility is for stupid and weak people. Nevertheless, the literature thus far indicates that inhospitable behaviour of employees is fuelled by anger, overwork, stress, and the prevailing organisational culture. For example, as many as one-quarter of employees feel chronically angry at work and most of the effects of anger are subtle (Lee, 1999). They include hostility toward other employees and customers and the tendency to do the minimum amount of work while ‘being extremely busy’ (Halcrow, 1998). Moodie and Borthwick (1999) suggested that the top five causes of stress in the workplace which are manifest in inhospitable behaviour were: organisational change; lack of communication; increased workload; job insecurity; and poor work organization. Not surprisingly therefore, the stressed out employees take their angst to their fellow employees and, importantly, customers end up on the receiving end of incivility. Economic, technological, and business factors such as downsizing, restructuring, dead-end-jobs, and high unemployment due to job losses have, often forced those workers who are left to shoulder the greater work burden.

These inhospitable encounters are in fact incidents, that is, incidents that have some criticality (Kivela & Chu, 2001) about them. The observed incidents must have special (a) significance to the tourist; and (b) to the service provider. For the purposes of this study, an inhospitable incident must occur where the meaning or purpose of the service providers’ behaviour appears quite clear to the recipient, and where the negative consequences of its effects are unambiguous. In the tourism context, such critical incidents can be defined as those service staff behaviours that represent a failure in performing an important aspect of service to the customer at a specific occasion. Based on Kivela and Chu’s (2001) work, for the purpose of this study, a service encounter with service providers in Croatia was required to meet the following four criteria:

- the respondent’s experience of the encounter had to be favourable or unfavourable;
- the encounter or experience had to be of sufficient detail and quality to be credible;
- the encounter or experience had to be based on respondent-service employee interaction; and
- the encounter or experience had to be a single episode.

Inhospitable behaviour also refers to the tourists' perceived intensity of a service problem that they encountered. The more severe this encounter is, the greater the tourists' perceived inhospitality. Research reported in the relevant literature suggests that the severity of inhospitality is influential in the evaluation of the destination and of the destination's service providers. For example, prospect theory and mental accounting principles suggest that negative feeling that arise from inhospitable encounters with service staff will be weighed more heavily than gains received during recovery e.g. apology for the inhospitable encounter made good (Thaler, 1985; Smith, Bolton, & Wagner, 1999). Therefore, despite a sufficient encounter recovery and a favourable outcome, an inhospitable encounter will result in a negative feeling even when a sufficient remedy has taken place. Of course, as the encounter problem becomes more acute, the tourists' negative feelings reduce their tolerance zone, thus dramatically increasing the potential for dissatisfaction (Hoffman, Kelley, & Rotalsky, 1995). Therefore, it can be argued that the severity of the inhospitality will have a negative influence on satisfaction with the remedy offered. This observation is consistent with Bolton and Drew's (1992) suggestion that an agreeably handled issue does not completely offset the tourists' negative feelings that occurred during the encounter. Negative hospitality offered is also likely to decrease the likelihood that tourists identify with the destination's and its service provider's values and wishes to continue the relationship (Keaveney, 1995). While Richins (1987) suggested that a more severe encounter increases the likelihood of negative word-of-mouth due to the strong negative emotions associated with the inhospitable behaviour. And evidence from depth interviews conducted in this study demonstrated the influence of inhospitality on the relationship between the tourists and service providers in Croatia; it marred the trust between the service provider and service user. This suggests that even though a tourist is satisfied with the recovery of a bad experience does not mean that the tourist becomes more trusting of the service provider.

Studies that have explored customer responses to complaints have focused on the construct of perceived justice. This theoretical perspective suggests that the fairness of the complaint resolution procedures, the interpersonal communications and behaviours, and the outcome are the principal antecedents of customer evaluations. Collectively, these antecedents are referred to as perceived justice and individually they are described as: (1) procedural justice, (2) interactional justice, and (3) distributive justice. There is a growing volume of empirical evidence to support the proposition that consumers will evaluate satisfaction with complaint handling in terms of perceived justice (Blodgett, Hill, & Tax, 1997; Tax, Brown, and Chandrashekar, 1998). According to Smith, Bolton, and Wagner (1999), a recovery from an inhospitable encounter with high levels of interactional and distributive justice, may not be adequate to overcome the inhospitality inflicted because tourists use a non-linear value function to evaluate recovery outcomes. Therefore, as the severity of the inhospitable encounter increases, the positive value of any recovery, real or perceived, decreases. That is, as the inhospitality becomes more severe, the positive influence of both interactional and distributive justice on satisfaction judgments decrease, as do the outcome variables e.g. trust and respect in the service provider and negative word-of-mouth. Typically, procedural, interactional, and distributive justice can be shown in the following example:

Interactional justice:

- *Low.* The Tourist Agency employee does not apologise for the tour cancellation and tells the customer it's not his (providers) fault – things happen.
- *High.* The Tourist Agency employee apologises for the cancellation of the tour and explains to the customer that the tour bus' engine broke down.

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Procedural justice:

- *Low.* The Tourist Agency employee suggests that the customer goes away and calls back later to find out if the bus' engine has been repaired, or finds other means of getting to the tourist site.
- *High.* The Tourist Agency employee suggests that the customer takes the next tour bus which is leaving in 1 hour.

Distributive justice:

- *Low.* The Tourist Agency employee tells the customer that the company does not compensate passengers for cancellations.
- *High.* The Tourist Agency employee is authorised to offer a full refund or appropriate cash-back as compensation.

In the hospitality and tourism context, Sparks & McColl-Kennedy (2001) have analysed interactions between different aspects of perceived justice: the tone of voice, level of courtesy and politeness displayed and extent of special treatment. Their results highlighted the importance of the way in which a service provider responds to customer needs and complaints. The body of research thus far provides evidence to suggest that the customers' judgments of injustice during a service encounter, and recovery, will have a negative impact on their evaluations of the entire process. On the other hand, there is also evidence to suggest that effective emotional reactions associated with the encounter experience can have a significant impact on the customers' evaluation - such as satisfaction (Matilla & Wirtz, 2000).

"Tourists are explorers" (Johns & Clarke, 2001). The appearance of this statement in a tourism-related context is no accident, nor is the connection between tourists and "explorers" to travellers or to readers of travel and lifestyle magazines. But does it really mean 'to travel for the joy of discovery and new experiences? As noted, an element of travel is exploration and adventure, as tourists search for new destinations, new vistas and new leisure and relaxation experiences. Travel industry professionals readily identify both niche and mass markets, and yet, until recently research about tourist experiences or encounters with service staff is relatively overlooked, and there remains modest research that would explain this encounter. Thus the aim of this study was to search for an understanding of this phenomenon by regarding the traveller as a narrator, and their experiences with the destination's hospitality² e.g. its service staff, as a narrative. It describes acts as well as tales of their encounters with service staff and about their feelings of such encounters as meaningful symbols with which travellers make statements about their holiday explorations. Explorations and experiences with service staff are not regarded as fixed states that may or may not be manifest within a person, e.g. waiting to be (re-)told, but rather as continuous constructs describing ongoing experiences. This is closely related to the concepts of 'life stories' proposed by Johns & Clarke (2001), encompassing not only an individual's biographical recalling of events, but also all the related experiences that are a part of those events, and that are connected through self-narratives.

The phenomenological nature of destination quality has been much discussed but it is unclear from the literature whether the essence of destination quality is the interpersonal exchange, situational factors, hospitality, culture, or a holistic combination of all of these. The purpose of this study required finding out situations in which there seemed to be a good chance of encountering hospitality experiences head-on and at a

deeper and more personal level. It was also felt that these hospitality experiences transcend hotel and restaurant staff, tour operators and tour agents, and transport services staff, and that these were more likely to be the case of the experience of the holiday as a whole: which also offered richer opportunities for the development of travellers' experiential narratives. The notion here is that narratives about hospitality experiences white holidaying used as claims for leisure travel can be understood as manifestations of a dominant narrative of travel in which journeying to places described as experiencing local hospitality, participating [in local experiences], exploring for authentic/local culture, and savouring unique and memorable holiday experiences, is seen as both pleasurable and enlightening.

This study has focused on experiences of the hospitality received which are underpinned by customers' emotional states as a result of the encounter in order to construct the travellers' story. Hence, as alluded to earlier, the notion that cognitive and affective elements may be complementary in determining satisfaction may be affirmed or rejected (Oliver, 1997), and that within the general category of affective processes, emotions may be recognised as being increasingly important in understanding tourists from a range of different perspectives. In this context, emotions have contributed to the understanding of customer behaviour from cognitive, hedonic and compulsive perspectives and in areas such as touristic consumption experiences (Hirschman & Stern, 1999). This investigation was timely because it increased our knowledge about the many interesting yet simple acts through which individuals express themselves about their experiences while travelling, specifically it highlighted how narratives served as a basis for understanding travellers' experiences.

Methodology

To build upon the ethnographic fieldwork in tourist areas of Croatia, this study included both observations of and interviews with visitors. This is a most appropriate "approach to data collection... in situations where in-depth information is needed or little is known about the phenomenon, or when very specific information is indispensable to understand the service provider-receiver occurrences (Kumar, 1996, p. 109), thus allowing the interviewer to elicit extremely rich information about the travellers' emotions and feelings as a result of inhospitable experiences with the service providers.

To protect the respondents' individual rights and anonymity, the approach question to potential respondents was; if they would like to participate in a short interview about their experiences with the service staff while on holidays? Respondents who answered negatively were thanked and were not disturbed again. For the respondents who answered positively they were first told that they did not have to identify themselves during the interview and that they could terminate the interview at any time they wished for whatever reason. They were then asked if they would consent to their comments being audio taped. For the respondents who answered negatively, they were thanked and were not disturbed again. For the respondents who answered positively, the interviewer then explained the interview procedure to them, including what the main question was (e.g. Can you describe your experiences with service providers while on holidays [in Croatia – for overseas visitors]?"), and how and where the interview was to be conducted, again stressing that at no time did not have to identify themselves and that for whatever reason they could terminate the interview at any time.

The data for the work described here was collected at five counties in Croatia over a period between 2005 and 2006 - (1) Counties Zagreb and Krapina and Zagorje: regions which according to the Croatian National Tourism Board, are emerging beyond the initial stage of tourism development in offering niche tourism activities; (2) County

Dubrovnik Neretva: an well-established tourism region; (3) County Istria: the country's premier tourism region; and (4) County Split-Dalmatia: a well-known region for its Mid-Dalmatia island and mass tourism market (see Figure 1). These counties were selected:

- because of their propensity for attracting larger visitor numbers;
- of their proximity to major air and sea travel routes; and
- because it was convenient for the researchers, with the target being 200 respondents.

Figure 1
MAP OF CROATIA SHOWING DATA GATHERING AREAS



Source: The Cartographic Section of the United Nations, No: 3740 Rev. 5th June 2004

Table 2 highlights tourist arrival in each respective county for the 2006 tourism season.

Table 2
TOURIST ARRIVALS FOR THE 2006 SEASON

County	Tourists/ nights	Domestic	Foreign	Total
Zagreb and Krapina – Zagorje (combined) Tourist arrivals Jan – Oct 2006	tourists	47,124	24,348	71,472
	nights	128,022	49,654	177,676
Dubrovnik-Neretva Tourist arrivals Jan – Oct 2006	tourists	98,664	803,458	902,122
	nights	375,505	3,936,192	4,311,697
Istria Tourist arrivals Jan – Oct 2006	tourists	171,021	2,358,151	2,529,172
	nights	725,508	16,120,040	16,845,548
Split-Dalmatia Tourist arrivals Jan – Oct 2006	tourists	197,953	1,325,061	1,523,014
	nights	836,128	7,444,082	8,280,210

Access to holidaymakers was granted by a number of participating hotels and tourist agencies in Croatia. Prospective participants were first contacted as they registered at the hotel/travel agency reception, and were asked to complete a free-response questionnaire – *Pre-interview Respondent Profile*. This brief questionnaire asked holidaymakers to provide information about themselves, their travel, and about the survey – the lead question being “Can you describe your experiences with service providers while on holidays [in Croatia- for overseas visitors?”

Willing respondents had to contact the researcher the following day after their settling-in to acknowledge that they were willing to participate in the survey, and to make arrangements for a meeting place to conduct the interviews. At the end of each day or the morning after, each respondent group was interviewed about their dining-out experiences on an open-ended basis. The resulting material was audio-taped and transcribed for analysis. Although there was some structure to the interview process, it is important to note that the interviewer did not previously agree with respondents about the points to be covered during the interviews. The structured part of the interview dealt only with the pre-interview screening information

CONTENT ANALYSING OF THE RESPONSES

All responses were transcribed taking considerable caution to transcribe exact language used (both English and Croatian) and the manner and context in the way the encounters were described by the respondents. For the Croatian-speaking respondents, responses that were recorded in Croatian language were first transcribed in written Croatian and then translated in English. The English version was then compared with the Croatian written and taped version and adjusted accordingly. The following research questions guided the analysis of data and the categorisation and sub-categorisation of the specific encounters:

- What specific encounters lead to unfavourable experiences? What did the service employees do that caused the respondents to remember these events with loathing? and,
- Were the underlying encounters and employee behaviours that resulted in unfavourable experiences similar or different?

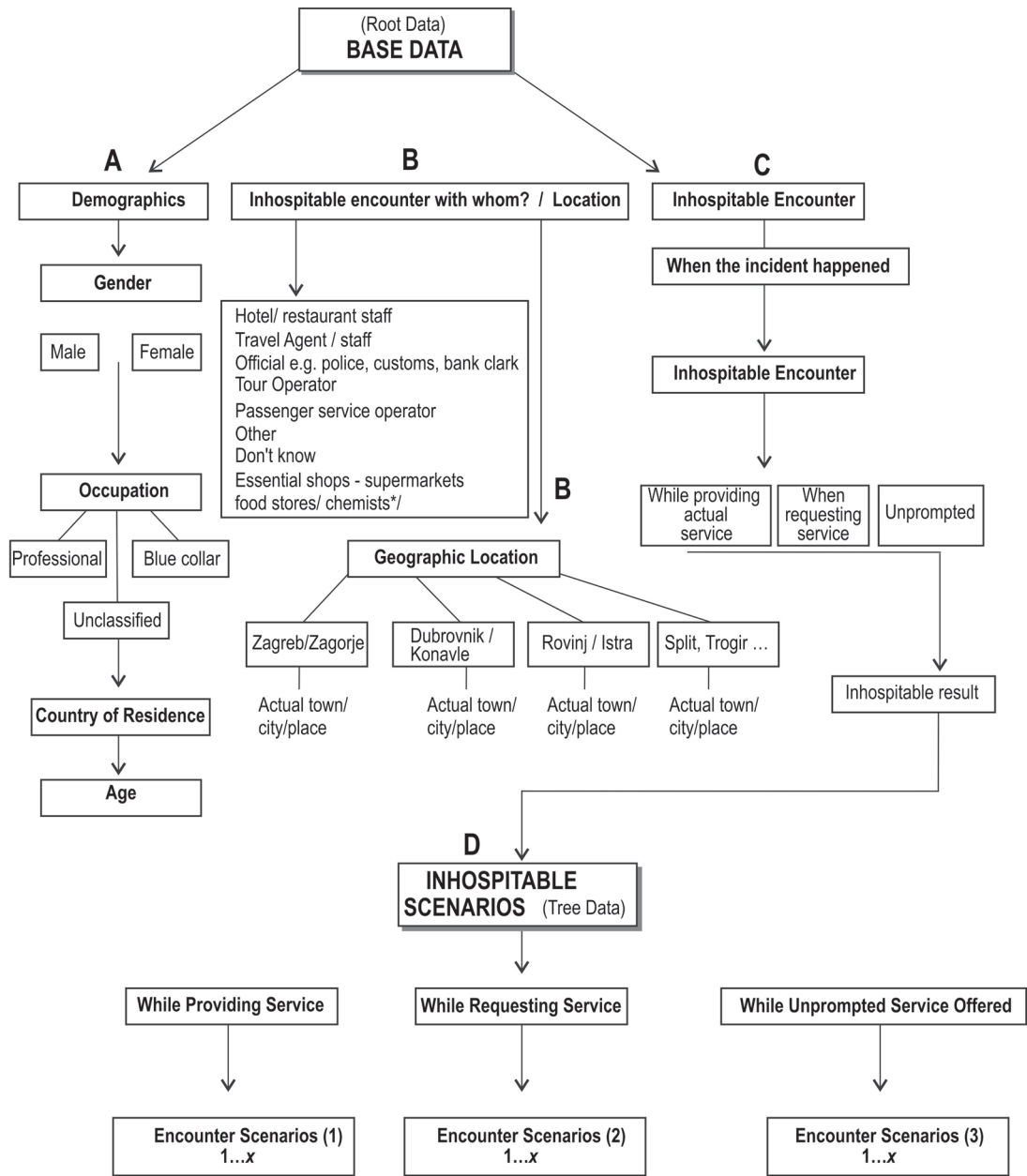
To operationalise study’s objectives and to achieve the responses, raw data was assigned to the Non-Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing (Nud*Ist) programme’s root or base data directory which was then used to generate a foundation structure for subsequent (process is shown in Figure 2 below) classification of and degrees of inhospitable behaviour (tree building) such as:

Figure 2

- section A Base data - demographics;
- section B Inhospitable encounter with whom and where;
- section C Identification and classification of inhospitable behaviour;
- section D Analysis of specific inhospitable encounters or scenarios,

and to identify, content analyse and classify those unfavourable encounters into final unfavourable encounter scenarios:

Figure 2
NUD*IST TREE DIAGRAM USED FOR DATA ENTRY, CONTENT ANALYSIS, AND CLASSIFICATION OF INHOSPITABLE ENCOUNTERS WITH SERVICE STAFF



* this category was included because many tourists while on holidays purchase food items and personal items

Findings and discussion

On average, most interviews lasted about 15 minutes each; however, some were as long as 30 minutes. All emerging narratives were followed up carefully and informants were asked to explain the terms they used. All interviews were recorded and then transcribed. Over a period of about 8 months it was possible to study 12 respondent groups (see Table 3 below) and the narrative data were content analysed for the presence of inhospitable encounters and 'injustices' thus searching for an understanding of tourists' experiences through narration and ethnography. Overall, 275 pages of transcript were content analysed for inhospitable encounters.

The initial analysis and classifications shows that of the total respondents, 95 were males and 105 were females. The occupational profile of the respondents revealed that a total of 119 (59.5%) were in professional occupations,³ 38 (19%) were in 'blue collar' occupations,⁴ and 43 (21.5%) were in the 'unspecified occupations', e.g., respondents who did not wish to identify their occupation.

Table 3
RESPONDENT PROFILES

Respondent (Nationality)	n	Gender		Age range
		m	f	
Croatian	25	14	11	19 - 68
	19	7	12	24 - 53
	15	7	8	32 - 65
	6	3	3	18 - 49
German	14	9	5	20 - 55
	6	2	4	18 - 32
Italian	15	9	6	21 - 48
	8	4	4	34 - 38
	4	2	2	22 - 28
Czech	12	5	7	35 - 47
	9	5	4	20 - 68
UK (English, Scottish)	18	8	10	17 - 70
	8	3	5	20 - 31
Spanish	6	3	3	33 - 41
Hungarian	7	2	5	18 - 23
	5	1	4	15 - 46
Swedish	2	1	1	48 - 55
Australian	6	3	3	19 - 28
Japanese	3	0	3	21 - 24
Chinese	4	2	2	35 - 49
North America (USA (Canada)	8	5	3	38 - 42
TOTAL	200	95	105	

Counties	Period	Actual n
(1) Counties Zagreb and Krapina and Zagorje	June-August 2005	23
(2) County Dubrovnik Neretva	June-August 2005	22
(3) County Istria	July-August 2006	74
(4) County Split-Dalmatia	July-August 2006	81

Overall, there were fewer respondents who had unfavourable experiences. For example, it was found that 53 per cent of respondents experienced reasonable hospitality encounters. However, it soon became apparent that of the 53 per cent (106) all but 34 (67.9%) had something disapproving to report, and 90 (45%) of all the sample were clearly very annoyed and upset about some of the encounters they had with Croatia's service providers. Table 4 provides an overview of the (a) frequency of responses about the inhospitable service staff behaviour by region and (b) when the inhospitable was encountered.

Table 4

FREQUENCIES AND AGGREGATED INHOSPITABLE ENCOUNTERS

Counties	While providing service		While requesting service		Unprompted service		Total responses	% of total
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
(1) Zagreb and Krapina and Zagorje	10	5	6	3	10	5	26	4.6
(2) Dubrovnik- Neretva	4	2	5	2.5	3	1.5	12	2.1
(3) Istria	38	19	83	41.5	25	12.5	146	25.9
(4) Split-Dalmatia	105	52.5	196	98	79	39.5	380	67.4
Total responses							564	

The findings of what tourists perceived as the most inhospitable encounters are discussed next. Respondents abridged but unedited comments and the frequency of inhospitable encounters, are presented in Table 5 "Selected examples of inhospitable encounters", however, for the reader to understand the context of each response, a broader background is presented in the relevant footnotes. Note, for obvious reasons (there were 564 inhospitable encounters recorded) only a selected number of comments is reported in this article.

Most of the inhospitable encounter cases have occurred in the County of Split-Dalmatia (67.4%), followed by County Istria (25.9%), Counties Zagreb and Krapina and Zagorje (4.6%) and in the County Dubrovnik- Neretva (2.1%). As a result of content analysing various customer comments (see the process shown in Figure 2); the findings reveal that in most circumstances, the inhospitable behaviour of the service staff occurred 'while the staff member was actually providing the service' and 'when service was requested'.

Collectively, (see Table 5) the findings presented strong evidence that the failure to respond with hospitable behaviour e.g. with courtesy and politeness, empathy, making an effort in resolving the situation, and willingness to explain why the failure occurred, had a significant impact on the respondents' emotional evaluation of their experiences, and satisfaction. In particular, the findings were consistent with Matilla & Wirtz (2000) and that of Sparks & McColl-Kennedy (2001), who asserted that the customers' judgments of injustice during a service encounter, and recovery, will have a negative impact on their evaluations of the entire process, in the present case, the destination. Importantly, respondent comments have revealed that when the respondents experienced severe levels of inhospitality, the positive influence of both interactional and distributive justice on their emotional state, and satisfaction, judgments decreased, as did the outcome variables such as trust and respect in the service provider.

Table 5

SELECTED EXAMPLES OF INHOSPITABLE ENCOUNTERS

Classification: 'while providing service'	Classification: while requesting service'	Classification 'while unprompted service offered'
"I can't see your reservation – it's not my problem – you have to go somewhere else" ^[5]	"I don't know what dish 'vegetarian' is – it's not on the menu so we don't have it" ^[6]	"this is [wine] crap. I would have ordered xxxx" ^[7]
"why do you want to go to Kumrovec anyway? There is nothing to see there, but if you insist I'll get you a cab" ^[8]	"why do you want to complicate things?... fly direct to Dubrovnik...what [why] do you want to go to Split anyway...?" ^[9]	"I don't know why you [are] bothering... Dalmatians will rip you off blind... bastards they are...rocks...that's all you're going to see there" ^[10]
"why the f**k do you want to drive in here [town centre] anyway" ^[11]	"you'll have to wait until the next stop [f*****g oldies to himself]" ^[12]	"hey you lot...either in or out...I'm to your taxi service...I'm leaving" ^[13]
"hey don't f**k with me...you just go down to the station and get on the train...you will know which one it is when you see it" ^[14]	"I'm not a museum curator... how do I know" ^[15]	"I don't think I can help you...you tried on every pair...you want me to choose?" ^[16]
"my God what now...what is this tax exemption receipt" – these guys are really stupid [to her work colleague] ^[17]	[Jadrolinija office] "are you making fun of me or something or do you think I'm stupid." ^[18]	"she doesn't need it...she already looks like an old crocodile.." ^[19]
"lamb is lamb...it has four legs and a woolly coat." ^[20]	"This is not Yugoslavia you know I work for myself ...so either you pay or you walk." ^[21]	"you better cover them up or they'll burn." ^[22]
"if its rough you'll just have to throw-up." ^[23]	"if you want to borrow an iron it will cost you 5 euro per hour" ^[24]	"you won't like that, and then you'll blame me, leave it ... trust me?" ^[25]
"polite, polite...what's the point of being polite to you when she's asking such stupid questions." ^[26]	"hey... if you wanted a cheaper rate [car rental] take a bus... what do you want me to tell you?" ^[27]	"Why bother going to Krk... the place is full of cheap-charlie tourists." ^[28]
"do I look to you as if I am joking ...hey...you do not have a reservation with us and that's that." ^[29]	(Jadrolinija Office – Brestova) "no... this ferry goes to Greenland... w*****r [to his colleague in Croatian]" ^[30]	"hey don't get sore... you have to understand how many stupid questions like that I get every day." ^[31]
"am I sure is there isn't car-ferry from Rijeka to Venice? Do I look like a Hungarian peasant to you?" ^[32]	"just park it there...nobody will steal it [car]...it's a wreck anyway...who'd want to steal it." ^[33]	"all the milk brands are the same...milk is milk...it comes from cows." ^[34]
"here come f*****g mafiosi." ^[35]	[Jadrolinija office] "go to the bank" ^[36]	"I know you're not going to buy anything... so clear off." ^[37]
"(in Croatian) oh come onf**k off already I don't speak German." ^[38]	"what's wrong... I'll tell you what's wrong [to the colleague] I'm going on my break now....and this idiot can now wait for me if he likes." ^[39]	"so what... it's hot anyway ...but to have peaceI can get her a cattle and she can boil her own water." ^[40]
"you people never learn do you? You come here and eat cheap shit ...now you suffer." ^[41]	"see that big white ship over there...well that's the bloody ship... yeah... it goes to Vis... [to himself] where do these cretins come from?" ^[42]	"what are you... some kind of f*****g girlie." ^[43]

Table 5
CONTINUED

“the chef is in a foul mood today... so things [food] are not so good ... just eat what you can will you ... don't send me in there to complain will you now?” [44]	“you get what you see... and if you like you buy...and if you don't like goodbye.” [45]	“If you don't find it [coach terminal] and you miss the schedule...than it's your bad luck...I'm not a nanny you know.” [46]
“well which is it to be... Hvar or Brac...you're testing my patience now.” [47]		“hey this is not a promenade... you buy something and then you go...[to herself] what the devil do they want to look at.” [48]
“I am not interested if you're not from here [Trogir] ... imagine if we all had to run for piss ... tell your daughter to hold it in next time.” [49]		“don't give them foreigners a f*****g refund... you're mad...what's 20 kuna to them....anyway they can go and watch TV.” [50]
“are you deaf ... f*****g unbelievable...I told you to go in that lane ... now go.” [51]		
“you're bruising my fruit...what if I was to feel your tits... you wouldn't like it... would you.” [52]		
“I'm off to lunch now...come back after three p.m..” [53]		

The results of the analysis have shown that in almost all the cases cited, respondents perceived very low levels of procedural justice, interactional justice, and distributive justice. Critically however, the results have revealed that in very rare instances did service providers make any attempt at recovery of the service failure.

The comments from the respondents about the inhospitable service staff behaviour suggested that the encounters did have an impact in the way they perceived their hosts. Most respondents thought that their hosts were inattentive and rude which was “*quite out of character*” for the positions/jobs that they held, as one respondent commented “*no-one forced them to go into these jobs*”. An important finding however was that some respondents thought that they were somehow at fault in the encounter. For instance, some respondents thought that they were “*inadequate*” or “*thoughtless*” (8, 9, 11, and 15) in dealing with their problems, while others (6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, and 16) felt that they were “*ridiculed*” and “*humiliated*” simply because they were tourists. Because they were made to feel as though they were “*humiliated*”, the latter group displayed considerable anger over the incidents at the time of the interviews; more so than the former group. Significantly, this group of respondents reported that the incidents have marred their holiday experience and that the inhospitable encounter was a nuisance that they were unwilling to accept. Elsurd (2001) eloquently notes that travelling means a conscious, and often unconscious, wooing of risk by the traveller, and this group of travellers were perhaps sampling “*nuisance*” as being that risk. It is, however, their rejection of such experiences as constructed ingredients in individual self-presentations that are of note here. For the respondents, this approach allowed inhospitable encounters, as the unwanted or “*nuisance*” by-products of travel, to be at the time of encounter, more than just a mental construction or mythology of being “*humiliated*.”

That is, the outcome of the interactional justice is one of humiliation, which emotionally, was real enough despite the notion that for travellers some risks may not actually be real when travelling. Interestingly, there was also a strong confirmation that for some travellers, (7) inhospitable experience was connected to the prevailing culture which was strongly linked to the way, in which the traveller (7) experienced the destination, e.g. “...what do you [to the interviewer, chuckling] expect... from our lot ...we’re still stuck in that Balkan mud... a Balkan syndrome... I call it.”

This was both a startling and intriguing response; a kind of negativism laced with dark humour which arguably, has been used to describe the local people’s psyche. When questioned further what he meant by ‘Balkan syndrome’ this was the reply.

“You know it’s hard to explain...it’s not always what people do, but how they feel about themselves and about the others around them... oh yes... and their attitudes... you can just feel this by the way they say things, or by the expression on their faces,” he went on:

“I think this is because our people have been subjugated by so many for so long, that negativism and feelings of deficiency are in our genes and when customers need something which is not straight forward or is out of plain ordinary, this inadequacy kicks-in, except that our lot are a fairly proud lot, so rather than accept or admit that they can’t do something, they lash out, or ‘put you in your place’, and make you have the feeling of it. Something like... why are you bothering me when the sky is / or is not falling.”

Surprisingly, when this issue was raised with other non-native respondents, they concurred by suggesting that they were (service providers) not actually “*deliberately rude*” but that they had this “*odd defeatist attitude*” and “*that they don’t know how to respond*” to their needs, that they were somehow “*imperfect in the way they handled the request/need, but also in the way they saw things in general.*” In this context, the other group of respondents (8,9,11, and 15) were still somewhat ambivalent about the incidents by suggesting that perhaps the whole thing was due to their own limitations e.g. not knowing where to go and what to do.

Although there seemed to be fewer inhospitable service encounters at Dubrovnik-Neretva County, additional comments from the respondents suggest that these were as severe, if not more so, than the ones experienced by the visitors to Zagreb, and Krapina and Zagorje. For instance, the two Swedish respondents were so frightened because they thought that the agent was so aggressive that he was going to hit them; “*of course he wasn’t [going to hit me] but that’s how it felt...you never know do you?*” *I don’t know what we deserved to be treated with such disrespect,...like he almost hated us for some reason,*” added his wife. Clearly, this couple were really shocked by this because as a result they have actually cut short their holidays. For these respondents, the knowledge that “*he wasn’t going to hit*” them, and “*you never know do you*” was a mental construct or mythology of being frightened. That is, the situation was real enough despite the fact that nothing happened. For these travellers, the situation was as real and in the process of conversation e.g. re-telling the story afterwards, they actually said to the researcher that “*they were nearly hit*”. Importantly in this case, the resultant inhospitable behaviour had a tremendous impact in the way these two couple were affected; so much so, that they terminated their holidays in Croatia. Hence, the important question to ask here is what is the degree of action for people who were affected by impoliteness, indignity, and disrespect? In this context Collie, Sparks, & Bradley, (2000) have concluded that that the nature of the interaction, especially when combined with a congruent scenario, that rendered this encounter salient, that is how justly were the respondents treated, is a pivotal factor which made the respondents to alter their holiday plans. Equally, for

respondents (²³ and ²⁴) the inhospitable behaviour of a personal nature was such an affront and hurt, that it altered their perception about the character of the destination's people by qualifying "Dubrovnik might be the jewel of the Adriatic, but the locals are a long way from being graceful... aren't they? These people should know that tourists don't come here just to see the old walls... they want to experience the local culture too... can't say that admire it [culture] very much... So what if I look old... aren't people allowed to get old here? ... Anyway, there are plenty of old ladies here... at the market... in the church... I wonder if they say the same things to their mother?"

Similar views were held by respondents (¹⁹) who thought that under the circumstances (wife being pregnant) the question was perfectly valid and not at all "stupid" and that the agent's outburst was totally unjustified, even if it were a stupid question. This was eloquently qualified by the husband who said "when people are on holidays they often ask silly questions... because there are not from here... they don't know things... and they just want to be reassured... surely if you are in travel business you should know this... it's normal." The mythological interpretation here is that when on holidays people are allowed to be carefree or even silly (Johns & Clarke, 2001) because of the fact that it is a holiday and that people leave their day-to-day lives behind them. Importantly, answering 'silly' questions acts as a kind of reassurance that the visitor's decisions/action is the right one or a safe one (Elsurd, 2001). On the other hand, the "jewel of Adriatic" did very little to alleviate the low levels of interactional and distributive justice, because there was no such "justice" being put forth by the service providers.

As it often happens in one's travels, service-staff-customer encounters are not always positive predispositions. For some respondents, the degree of perceived injustice done to them was obviously quite strong, and is most eloquently summed up by this respondent (³²): "what did I do to him to deserve such a welcoming and gracious remark?" Note also how the respondent's signifier "welcoming" and "gracious" was the allegorical myth for 'rude' and 'inhospitable' manner, but it also highlights the respondent's emotional state in needing to be welcomed in a proper manner (Sparks & McColl-Kennedy, 2001). Importantly, observe also how the respondent instinctively questioned whether his actions had anything to do with the impolite encounter. Other respondents had confirmed that for some travellers, negative experiences are strongly linked to the way in which travellers experience the destination as a whole, for instance, "why such ugliness in this beautiful setting," and "I felt rather ashamed and very upset in front of my children... what on earth will they think of me... where did I bring them" (respondent ⁴¹). In particular, these findings suggest that fairly strong personal feeling and emotions that are lasting arose as a result of the cognitive appraisal of the unpleasant interaction. These findings also suggest that perceived injustice appears to represent a cognitive appraisal dimension, which helps to explain the elicitation of negative emotions during and sometime after the inhospitable encounters. Specifically however, these findings indicate that a low level of perceived justice, that is, being subjected to a particular inhospitable behaviour, is manifest in a higher level of negative emotions such as anger and humiliation, for example "at first I felt like he actually touched me... I was very humiliated and then I was very angry... and I went to the police station to report him... but they just looked at me... so I ended up crying... I've been most unhappy during this holiday... and I didn't even deserve it" (respondent ⁴²); "my wife ended up crying for most of the time on Cres" (respondent ²⁶); "I felt like a criminal... as if I had done something wrong... it's so upsetting... and frightening... I had to wait for him for almost an hour... and others [officers] just laughed at me... it's not fair is it [to the interviewer]?" (respondent ⁴⁶). Very similar post-encounter evaluations were made by other respondents who were interviewed in Region 3 and 4, (e.g. respondents ^{28, 29, 32, 39, 48, and 50}).

Conclusions and implications

The present findings suggest that justice theory is relevant for analysing the quality of service encounters. Specifically, the present study confirmed that perceived justice appeared to represent the respondents' mental appraisal which helped them in explaining and in eliciting of negative (and positive) emotions that they have experienced during and after the encounters with service staff. Hence, it would appear that low levels of perceived justice experienced by our respondents, notably interactional, procedural and distributive, also elicited high levels of negative emotions, notably anger and humiliation (e.g. respondents 22 and 32). These findings confirm earlier research by Matilla & Wirtz (2000) and Sparks & McColl-Kennedy (2001). While the respondent findings reported here might be novel in terms of service encounter research, these results also indicate that in tourist encounters, the interpersonal treatment of visitors significantly affects evaluations of the fairness or justice of the encounter experienced even when such inhospitable encounter stemmed from the unprompted service offered by the provider, for example, "*I just can't get it out of my mind... for goodness sake... we were just looking at the brochure... no one asked him for anything... I guess he thought he'd put us in our place... but it's upsetting to be treated like that*" (respondent ³⁴).

These findings also attest that perceived justice during these inhospitable encounters had both a lasting and a more pervasive influence on visitor evaluations of that encounter than is the case for evaluation of such encounters purely along the mythological dimensions when evaluating destination quality. These results are consistent with those of Collie *et al.*, (2000), who suggested that perceived justice during inhospitable encounters, was a more persuasive determinant of victim's negative feelings than any injustice that might have been caused by the ineffective or inefficient organisational system, for instance, "*I mean of he had no automatic vehicles available... OK... that's fine... just say so... no big deal... but why the sarcasm... why the insult? ... I'll remember this one... hm... it's just stupid.*" (respondent ⁵⁰).

The results of the analysis have important theoretical implications in relation to travellers' perceptions and evaluations of their travel experiences, because existing theoretical frameworks focus primarily on cognitive evaluations of perceived justice associated with inhospitable encounter and/or service failure. The findings of this study suggest that the injustice, perceived or real, also brings out an emotional response which in turn impacts on satisfaction with (a) the service provider, and (b) the destination itself. These findings also present evidence in support of the idea how the narratives of these inhospitable experiences, as one narrative among many, manifest, and how these can be expressed within the travel community. Importantly, these findings provide for a better understanding of this phenomenon by identifying the travellers as narrators and their experiences with the destination's hospitality e.g. its service staff, as a narrative.

The findings had described inhospitable encounters as well as tales of these encounters with the service staff and about their feelings of such encounters as meaningful symbols with which travellers make statements about their holiday experiences. These experiences with service staff are not regarded as fixed states that may or may not be manifest within a person, e.g. waiting to be (re-)told, but importantly, rather as continuous constructs describing collective visitor experiences. As noted earlier, this is closely related to the concepts of "life stories" proposed by Johns and Clarke in 2001, which encompass not only the individual's biographical ordering of events, but also the groups' related experiences that are a part of it (travel), and that are connected through self-narratives. The participants in this study have described the inequity of their encounters and have allowed us an insight into their deeper feelings and the degree to which they experienced various negative emotions in their relationship during the encounters.

Importantly in this context, the study has uncovered that perceived inequities (injustices) are strongly related to a variety of equally strong negative emotions experienced during and post inhospitable encounters.

A practical suggestion and concluding remarks

Education and re-imaging of about what is proper hospitable behaviour toward visitors can play a very critical reversing role when recovering from negative perceptions. For example, both the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the Singaporean Tourism Board have for some years campaigned “let’s be nice to our visitors” vis-à-vis television, radio and its membership, to tourism providers, shopkeepers and the general public. These campaigns, which are still ongoing, have been extremely effective in educating both tourism and non-tourism stake-holders about the value of being hospitable to the visitors; the message being, ‘if we’re not hospitable to our visitors, it will hurt the tourism economy’ (both Singapore and Hong Kong have substantial tourism economies). Interestingly, for both Hong Kong and Singapore, these multi-targeted campaigns have been very cost-effective and relatively inexpensive to produce, because the actors involved, usually well know local TV and movie personalities, have appeared in these *gratis*. Importantly however, the “let’s be nice to our visitors” public campaigns had in the main, a very positive affect in the way tourism service providers conduct themselves.

To conclude, the present study offers valuable insights about hospitality and how visitors relate to the quality of hospitality received. Despite the obvious limitation factors imposed upon this study, evidence arising from analysing the visitor narratives along mythological and justice dimensions suggest that perceived injustice as a result of inhospitable encounter between the service provider and visitor, is a very powerful moderator of negative feedback and feelings about these encounters. The results also suggest that the perceived injustice did not become redundant at passage of time and that in grave instances, these injustices had coloured visitor perceptions about the destination as a whole.

Limitations

Although cataloguing narratives is most appropriate approach to data collection in situations where in-depth information is needed or little is known about the phenomenon, or when very specific information is indispensable to understand the service provider-receiver occurrences, it must be noted that the narratives presented and analysed here represent one shot-in-time about this phenomenon, which affects the study’s generalizability, that is, for the study to be generalizable it would need to be longitudinal, among other issues. The multiplicity of issues that rule how different cultures and nationalities respond to similar inhospitable encounters is also something not addressed in this study, nor are the gender differences. Links between inhospitable staff behaviour and the work environment were not addressed either. Hence, all these present interesting and worthwhile directions for undertaking similar research in the future.

Notes

¹ Incivility **3a**. [ad. F. incivilité (1426 in Hatz.-Darm.), ad. late L. incivilitat-em, f. incivilis; Ill-bred] uncivil, or uncourteous behaviour towards others; want of civility or politeness; discourtesy, rudeness. **3b**. An act of rudeness or ill-breeding. Source: On-line Oxford English Dictionary. http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50114297?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=incivility&first=1&max_to_show=10 Accessed 12 December 2006.

- ² Hospitality 1.a. [a. OF. hospitalité (12-13th c. in Hatz.-Darm.), ad. L. hospitalitas, f. hospitalis]. The act or practice of being hospitable; the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill. Source: On-line Oxford English Dictionary. http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50108352?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=hospitality&first=1&max_to_show=10. Accessed 12 December 2006
- ³ Respondents who worked in professional fields e.g. managers, government officers, doctors, lawyers, accountants, and similar professions.
- ⁴ Respondents who worked as manual workers e.g. construction and factory workers, trades, drivers and similar occupations.
- ⁵ The customer had a valid reservation paid in advance (confirmed email copy) with hotel X – FO Manager refused to acknowledge the hotel’s official email saying that it could have been a fake, and since he could not find the guest’s name on his computer, he wasn’t going to issue the room. Eventually, the guest had to seek accommodation elsewhere.
- ⁶ An English traveller enquiring if the restaurant [at a 5-star hotel] offered vegetarian meals
- ⁷ Croatian couple at a restaurant – when the waiter brought their wine order to the table
- ⁸ Two Italian customers at a travel agent discussing their day-trip itinerary - bus/train services to Kumrovec because they wanted to see Marshal Tito’s home
- ⁹ A couple from Budapest trying to book tickets to Dubrovnik via two-day stopover at Split.
- ¹⁰ A travel agent to an English couple who were talking to each other while perusing a “Kornati” travel brochure
- ¹¹ A Croatian driver from Rijeka with his family on holidays in Zagreb – while being booked by the traffic warden because the driver stopped in a “no stop” zone - he was lost looking for a car park around the town centre of Zagreb.
- ¹² An elderly Croatian female passenger requesting a toilet stop (on coach service Zagreb-Ljubljana)
- ¹³ Tram driver to a family waiting at a tram stop trying to figure out whether the stopped tram was the right one to get on – their two kids were already on it.
- ¹⁴ Two Czech tourists who just bought train tickets to Split wanting to know how to get on the train and which train.
- ¹⁵ A group of visitors asking the hotel’s front desk clerk what kind of things would they see at the city-walls museum.
- ¹⁶ A shop-assistants response after a female customer tried on three different pairs of sun glasses.
- ¹⁷ At a well-known department store a German customer (who understood some Croatian) bought an expensive swim suit and wanted to know if she paid tax on it and if she did will the store provide a tax-exemption receipt for it so that she can be reimbursed at the airport before she leaves the country.
- ¹⁸ An elderly couple from the Sweden asking the Jadrolinija agent if there is a ferry service from Dubrovnik to Kotor.
- ¹⁹ A female customer who overheard the supermarket cashier saying to her co-worker after she bought a tube of moisturizing cream
- ²⁰ At a roast-lamb restaurant at Čilipi a customer asked the waiter what kind of lamb it was
- ²¹ Two young Brittons at Dubrovnik airport asking the taxi driver if the trip (to Dubrovnik) was going to be metered
- ²² An excursion boat attendant (to the Island of Lapad) to the young bikini-clad female passenger – pointing at her breasts
- ²³ A customer who bought a day excursion ticket to the island of Šipan at a travel agency in Dubrovnik asking the agent how rough the sea might be that afternoon (she was pregnant)
- ²⁴ Housekeeper to a guest request at one of Opatija’s leading hotels
- ²⁵ A restaurant waiter to a Canadian customer who ordered a portion of *pršut*
- ²⁶ Same lady’s husband telling the agent that there is no need to be impolite.
- ²⁷ A travel agent in Opatija to a customer enquiring about a car rental rate which he found to be expensive
- ²⁸ A travel agent at Opatija to a couple from Čakovec who were mulling over what to do and see on the Island of Krk.

- ²⁹ A front office clerk arguing with a customer who tried to explain to him that their reservation was mistakenly made onto her husband's middle name
- ³⁰ A Jadrolinija employee to a Croatian visitor from Daruvar who wasn't sure if he was waiting at the right place for a ferry to the Island of Cres.
- ³¹ The Jadrolinija employee at Brestova to the Croatian tourist from Daruvar after the visitor told the employee that there was no need for impoliteness
- ³² A Rovinj travel agent to one of the customers from Hungary who was arranging car-ferry tickets from Rijeka to Italy (agent sold him Rijeka-Bari tickets because there was no Rijeka-Venice service)
- ³³ Concierge at a 5-star hotel in Split to an Italian guest who just checked in and wanted to know if his car was going to be in someone's way
- ³⁴ A supermarket employee's 'offer' of service to two visitors who were trying to select a carton of milk from the choices on the shelves
- ³⁵ A port official (in full uniform) on muster yelling to one of his colleagues at the customs check-point as the ferry to Italy was about to receive its passengers
- ³⁶ A Jadrolinija office staff member screamed at an English tourist who wanted to know if the office accepted euro currency
- ³⁷ A real estate agent in Opatija to two German couple who were 'window shopping' at his shop
- ³⁸ A local bus driver at Pula to a German couple who enquired if the ticket he just sold to them had a time limit on it
- ³⁹ An angry customs officer to his colleague at the ferry frontier – after an inbound visitor had a problem in opening up his suitcase for inspection and had asked the officer if there was anything wrong
- ⁴⁰ A front desk clerk (to his colleague) in reference to a guest (Scottish) who reported that there was no hot water in her bathroom
- ⁴¹ A chemist attendant (male) to a Czech customer who was buying over-the-counter medication for his diarrhoea condition
- ⁴² A port marshal to the author amid the chaos at the ferry terminal in Split (Summer 2006)
- ⁴³ Travel agent's (rent-a-car) staff to a customer from Germany) who wanted to hire an automatic car
- ⁴⁴ A waiter at a restaurant in Split to an Italian guest who was just served a rather odd-looking meal
- ⁴⁵ A supermarket attendant's response to an Italian visitor who wanted to know if the brand of shampoo he wanted came in smaller-volume size
- ⁴⁶ A coach ticketing staff in Split to a group of elderly travellers who were on their way to Makarska
- ⁴⁷ A excursion travel agent in Split to a couple who were trying to decide which island to visit
- ⁴⁸ A rather angry supermarket assistant on Hvar to a group of visitors who were browsing
- ⁴⁹ A traffic policeman handing out a traffic infringement ticket to the Croatian driver with family from Osijek who stopped at a street curb so that his daughter can go to the nearby W.C
- ⁵⁰ A Vis local to the open-air cinema operator when the screening had to be cancelled because of rain
- ⁵¹ A traffic marshal at the Split ferry pier (Stari Grad) to a visitor with his family from Hungary
- ⁵² A fruit stall holder in Makarska to a young Japanese lady who just bought fruit from him and was about to buy some peaches and was feeling them to see if they were ripe
- ⁵³ To a couple of backpackers from Spain who were waiting in the queue and was their turn at the left-luggage office in Split

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