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**O QUE É O INGLÊS PARA TURISMO?**





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Dissertação apresentada à Universidade de Aveiro para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Línguas Literaturas e Culturas, realizada sob a orientação científica da Doutora Susan Howcroft, Professora Auxiliar do Departamento de Línguas, Literaturas e Culturas da Universidade de Aveiro



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**palavras-chave**

Turismo; línguas; Inglês; ensino; conteúdos do curso; estágio profissional.



## **resumo**

O presente trabalho propõe-se explorar o ensino do Inglês nas Escolas Profissionais e a sua adequação ao mercado de trabalho, mais especificamente em período de estágio realizado pelos alunos do último ano do Curso Profissional de Técnico de Turismo. Através da inquirição dos alunos procurou-se delimitar as suas expectativas e avaliar as suas opiniões sobre os conteúdos lecionados e sua utilidade e uso efetivo no mercado real do trabalho.

A importante colaboração da Escola Profissional de Espinho, dos alunos e das instituições de estágio foi crucial para o desenvolvimento do projeto e para a constatação de que ainda podem ser aperfeiçoados e enriquecidos os currículos nesta área profissional.

**keywords**

Tourism; languages; English; teaching; course contents; professional training.

**abstract**

This work aims to explore English teaching in the Vocational School and its adequacy to the world of work, more specifically during the third year students' traineeship in the Professional Course of Tourism Technicians. Through questionnaires it was possible to outline the students' expectations and evaluate their opinions about the topics taught in the curricula and their usefulness and effective use in the world of work.

It is important to refer the cooperation of the Professional School of Espinho, its students and the tutors and institutions where the students made their training for the development of this project and to conclude that the curricula can still be adapted and enriched in this professional area. .

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## **1. General Introduction**

Tourism is defined as the activities carried out by individuals during their trips and stays in a different place from the one they live in. Usually, tourism activity is related to recreation, although there are other types of tourism, such as health and business (<http://www.conceito.de/turismo> 02/11/2014). However, tourism is not just limited to this definition. There are several activities related to this sector, such as marketing, transportation, the hotel industry and other types of trade and business. Tourism does not just involve the tourists and economics but also governments and other institutions related to the training of the professionals who will work in this sector, to institutions which contribute to the conservation and widespread of information on heritage and patrimony.

According to the World Tourism Organization Magazine 2015, this sector will grow globally by 3.5% by 2020. However, in Europe it is estimated that this sector will grow even more, 4% specifically. These values confirm the importance of tourism in the world economy and guarantees that it is important to train qualified professionals for this area. Moreover, the World Tourism Organization estimates that Europe received more than 29 million international tourists in 2013, ending the year with a total of 563 million tourists. This fact also emphasizes the importance of communication in this process. As mentioned above, this sector involves many activities, not just the ones related specifically to the sector. Therefore, communication plays a very important role in receiving tourists well. In the past, this was not considered an asset. People who lived in a country, spoke the language of their country. However, globalization imposed the evolution of mentalities and it was unsustainable to continue with that situation. As referred to earlier, Tourism is defined as an activity related with recreation, and recreation is related to well-being. So, it is important that tourists feel comfortable in the places they visit. One of the most important factors is hospitality and this, in turn, is related to communication. So, speaking other languages, specifically English, as it is a universal language, is a guarantee of better communication and of a better experience.

English became one of the most important languages in the world. According to Ethnologue. com the number of English speakers is estimated to be 335 million in

101 countries (<https://www.ethnologue.com/statistics/size/05/01/2015>). As a need to establish a *Lingua Franca* to be used as a means of communication in areas such as politics, economics and science was felt, English became the language which enabled communication and understanding between nations. Therefore, the general population became interested in studying and learning this language, and nowadays it is considered an important asset when people want to work in areas which involve communication among speakers of different languages. In these cases, people refer to English as a language used for specific purposes, in this particular case, tourism.

Nowadays, the movement of people around the globe is greater than it was in the past, so there are more people looking for tourism activities and there is also more on offer from tourism operators and other enterprises related to tourism. As is shown in figure 1 below, there are almost 2 billion tourists travelling around the globe. Since there are more people travelling, the professionals involved in Tourism need to prepare themselves better to face this growing sector.



**Figure 1:** International Tourism (World Tourism Organization Magazine 2015)

To reach the tourists, these professionals need to be able to communicate effectively, in a way that meets the needs of the different types of tourists to be understood. English as a *Lingua Franca* and a global language plays this important role and not only enables communication to take place but also means good hospitality and a way to promote a country around the globe.

### **1.1 Motivation for this work**

As a teacher of English in the Professional School of Espinho, I have been in contact with students who aim to perform several roles in the professional world. More specifically, over the last three years, I have started working closer to the Tourism course, as I was designated as a Coordinator of this course. One of the roles of the Coordinator is to establish the bridge between school and enterprises, as I am the one who manages professional training. As a teacher, one of my main concerns is to prepare students for the world of work, as these courses have this main objective. Therefore, I try to produce situations inside the classroom which prepare students for general conversation but also for more specific situations related to the tourism sector. However, I felt that although English is considered a global language, a *Lingua Franca*, and is one of the major languages that students come into contact with everyday, besides their mother tongue, there are many who face several difficulties in dealing with English. This situation, in the specific case of the Tourism course, is very important as students will have to communicate with tourists everyday in their future jobs. More generally, as mentioned before, Tourism is one of the main activities in the world, contributing to global economics in a meaningful way, so it is the teachers' mission to prepare these students as best as they can to perform their duties, so that communication is more effective and tourism becomes an even more pleasurable activity.

### **1.2 Aims of the work**

The general aim of this work is to evaluate the use of the English language by Tourism students, especially during their traineeship, in the last year of the vocational courses. It also aims to evaluate their expectations before the traineeship, according to what they learnt in English classes and contrast this with



what really happened during their professional experience practice. It also establishes communication with the tutors of each professional traineeship in order to evaluate the use of the English language made by the students during that experience. Finally, it aims to understand the contents taught in the professional courses, how they evolved over time and how the use of the foreign language is evaluated during the course but also during the students' professional training.

### **1.3 Methodology**

The methodology of the work starts with an approach to tourism, its importance and the role of the English language, generally and more specifically. Then, there is a description of the vocational courses and their curricula development. Moreover, how the Tourism course evolved throughout the years in the Professional School of Espinho is explored, in terms of contents, evaluation and management of activities. Finally, the students' learning and use of the English language is analyzed using questionnaires given to the students and also to the tutors who accompanied them during their professional training. The results are presented in percentages according to the answers given.

## **2. Tourism, Economics and English**

### **2.1 Tourism as an economic phenomenon**

Tourism is one of the most important economic forces in the world. The World Tourism Organization says that it will be one of the largest industries in the world as it is responsible for creating an enormous number of jobs, employing millions of people directly and indirectly. As can be seen in Figure 2 below, it represents 10% of gross domestic product nowadays, 1/11 jobs, 1,5 trillion dollars in exports, 6% of the world's exports and 30% of services exports. These facts confirm that this is one of the major economic and social phenomena of the century.



**Figure 2: Why Tourism Matters – World Tourism Organization Magazine 2015**

Besides that, nowadays people find that travelling is a way to get to know themselves, make contact with new cultures and have new experiences in different surroundings. Due to low cost airlines, the removal of frontiers between some countries, the internet and global communication, the world is smaller, closer, more interesting and easier to travel around.

## **2.2 Tourism in Portugal**

Portugal is an example of this. In the last few years Portugal has won a lot of prizes that has made it a well-known destination around the world. Portugal was the best European Golf and Beach Destination in 2012 and 2013, according to the World Travel Awards; Porto was the Best European Destination in 2013 and 2014, according to the European Consumers Choice. These are two examples that have made the brand “Portugal” recognized around the world as a desired destination. In 2015, once again, Portugal was awarded 13 prizes in various categories in the World Travel Awards.

In addition, Portugal is also internally considered as a country of tourism. According to the most recent data from the Bank of Portugal, Tourism has been rising in the last decade, between 2000 and 2012, from 5.7 million euros in 2000 to 8.6 million Euros in 2012. This value represents nowadays 5.2% of the Gross

Domestic Product (GDP). The number of foreign tourists is 26 million, which means a rise of 10.1% compared to 2010 and 10.4% compared to 2002. The majority of these tourists, about 81.5% come from ten countries, eight from the European Union, plus Brazil and the United States of America.

According to the national strategy for tourism, *Plano Estratégico Nacional de Turismo* (PENT), short-term objectives are to increase by 3.1% the number of nights stay between 2012 and 2015, foreign demand being the main reason for this growth. It also defines the strategy for the sustainable development of tourism, with objectives such as the development of promotion and distribution on the Internet of information related to Portugal as a destination; adequacy of the variety of means of promotion to the information looked for by tourists; reinforcement of the skills in customer service and management by professional people in this area; reinforcement of skills in critical areas, organizing the availability of better training; providing a quality education for all tourism professionals; providing better education, particularly in real work contexts.

### **2.3 English, Communication and Tourism**

Where does the English language fit into this context? As one of the most spoken languages of the world by non-native speakers, it is the main bridge of communication between many people all around the world. English is the mother tongue in countries like the United States of America, the United Kingdom, India or Canada. In other countries it is the second language and is also the main foreign language taught in schools in many countries around the world. English is the main language of communication in many important political and social organizations around the world, allowing people from different countries to communicate. According to Ammon (1992):

“English has the greatest number of speakers reaching as many as 1.5 billion people;

English is designated an official language of as many as 62 nations;

English is the most dominant language in scientific communication with 70-80 percent of academic publications being published in it;

English is the *de facto* official and working language in most international organizations;

English is the most taught foreign language across the world” (Ammon, 1992:78-81).

It is also concluded by David Crystal that:

“International language dominance is not solely the result of military might. It may take a militarily powerful nation to establish a language, but it takes an economically powerful one to maintain and expand it. (...) The growth of competitive industry and business brought an explosion of international marketing and advertising. The power of the press reached unprecedented levels, soon to be surpassed by the broadcasting media, with their ability to cross national boundaries with electromagnetic ease. Technology, chiefly in the form of movies and records, fuelled new mass entertainment industries which had worldwide impact. The drive to make progress in science and technology fostered an international intellectual and research environment which gave scholarship and further education a high profile. Any language at the centre of such an explosion of international activity would suddenly have found itself with a global status” (Crystal, 2003:10).

English is one of the main requirements to any professional function in the world of work.

Nowadays it is considered a basic function. Some years ago, being fluent in English was not considered an asset to all the people and functions. It was considered a privilege to some people but nowadays not knowing English is an eliminatory condition. English is an important requirement to enable access to education and communication around the world and a bond of communication allowing a greater mobility of people and obviously affecting world tourism.

David Crystal also says:

“The reasons for travelling abroad are many and various. They range from routine business trips to annual holidays, and from religious pilgrimages and sports competitions to military interventions. Each journey has immediate linguistic consequences – a language has to be interpreted, learned, imposed – and over time a travelling trend can develop into a major influence. If there is a contemporary movement towards world English use, therefore, we would expect it to be particularly noticeable in this domain. And so it is” (Crystal, 2003:104).

Therefore, it is also the main language of communication among tourists and tourism professionals. English is one of the main languages of communication in the materials produced to promote destinations in our country, for example in pamphlets, brochures, posters, magazines, leaflets, websites and others in order to familiarize tourists with our countryside, cities and towns, historic buildings, lifestyle, culture and traditions and also with the accommodation available, restaurants and other important information which must be provided to visitors.

All this material should appeal to the tourists, combining a good image with language tourists can understand. One of the main difficulties the translator feels is the proficiency in both languages and cultures, which makes him/her able to identify the finer points of the language they are translating into. Many issues arise when a translator translates proper names, names of monuments, typical dishes and festivals, amongst others, because these things are often very specific to the culture and history of the country, and therefore have no equivalents in English. (Howcroft, 2013). This difficulty can also result from general English teaching due to the approach to general topics. However, future professionals of tourism need to have the most adequate vocabulary and structures to transmit the message in fluent readable English, which is able not just to transmit the message but also to transmit the sensations people are able to in their own language.

The tourism industry requires professionals who are able to create effective promotional materials, not duplicating the original texts. This calls into question the

differences that exist between English for General Purposes and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The boundaries between these two areas are thin. We know that different kinds of professional functions require different language structures and also different vocabulary fields. This is the main difficulty of teaching English in vocational courses: how to enable students to perform everyday tasks in English and how to give them the tools to perform in their jobs because each specific task will require specific structures, vocabulary and skills. Students need to distinguish between common English used for everyday tasks, from English used in their professional tasks because sometimes even the same words can have different meanings if we change the context.

The approach to ESP has also changed throughout time. Firstly, it was known as English for Science and Technology (EST). Today it embodies many types of professions and functions from business to tourism and industry in order to face the challenges of a demanding and shifting world of work. The idea being that if we can identify the specific variety of English the students need, then we can enable the students to concentrate on this and save valuable time. This is far from being a simple task.

According to Robinson (1991), ESP has also evolved in terms of use. First it was very technical, but then it became more focused on real communication. If the language varies according to the situation, it will also vary in terms of profession. Then, we should meet the needs of the learners in every possible scenario that they are probably going to face. The main purpose is to focus on the learner. More attention needs to be given to how languages are acquired and what the learner's individual needs are because a student of ESP is usually studying English to perform a certain role. Although it is important to know how to deal with different situations in teaching and learning, usually ESP courses switch from the general topics to the specific, ideally over a period of time. General English Courses deal with many topics at a more superficial level so that students can learn about many things considered relevant and because it is difficult to predict what needs they will have in the future. So, General English is a kind of introductory type of English for Special Purposes and Vocational English. In conclusion, English teachers have a great challenge ahead: how to manage the teaching and learning of general skills,

so that students have general abilities to speak in English, and specific skills, so that future professionals, for example of tourism, are able to do their jobs more properly and produce accurate materials that would shorten the bridge between us and the tourist we are trying to attract.

### **3. Escola Profissional de Espinho**

CEPROF - Centros Escolares de Ensino Profissional Lda. - is the owner of Escola Profissional de Espinho (ESPE). This entity aims to promote school centres and vocational schools. It is dedicated to the development of teaching and learning through the creation and management of vocational schools. So it aims to contribute to the personal skills of learners, preparing them for active professional lives and improving their professional skills; promoting an approach between schools and businesses; analysing local and regional learning needs; promoting learning options appropriate for each environment and cooperating with national and foreign institutions in the development of Vocational Education and Training (VET).

As Espinho has been one of the counties in Portugal with an exceptionally high rate of unemployment in the last few years, regular learning is not an option for many students. Therefore, ESPE is a way to overcome this situation, providing students with other options to acquire a professional education in the areas which are considered relevant to the development of the county.

ESPE was founded in 1990 as an answer to the local business network which in the beginning did not believe in professional education as a proper answer to their human resources. Throughout the years and facing a more and more competitive market which demands qualified human resources, the community felt the need to provide a solution to this new demand. Therefore, this school has made an effort to have a global and varied network of businesses which take its student as interns as part of their professional training. These institutions recognize the quality of teaching and learning in the school, which is proved by the growing network of businesses and cooperation in important local, regional and national events.

The areas of Tourism and Hotels were a priority in the teaching curricula of ESPE due to the location of the city of Espinho, its proximity to the sea, and also the potential of these learning areas to the country. The professional training on these courses is a special asset because it allows students to improve the skills acquired in learning. As many of these students show valuable personal and professional skills, some of them are hired by the businesses where they have their professional traineeships.

Throughout the years the school's experience in VET, especially in vocational courses, level IV, has required much specialization and adaptation due to the new demands of the world of work and the challenges posed by the mobility of the students. The teaching and learning process in the vocational courses is directed towards the world of work, so the annual plan of activities invests in the development of study visits to companies, seminars about issues related to the world of work and also with professionals in the areas which are linked to each course. Therefore, at a linguistic level, the contents are also adapted to the vocational areas of each course so that students have the necessary tools and competences to face professional challenges when they start working. To make this approach more specific, students also participate in the organization and logistic support of various events, especially in the city of Oporto. Some of the most important events are “Essência do Vinho” and “Fantasporto”. These events enable the students to have contact with different organizations and also with different publics, which also includes tourists with special access needs. Furthermore, professional training in diverse enterprises, such as Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport, Tourism Offices, Museums, and Hotels among others enable the students to develop and manage their competences and also provide experience to be placed in their curriculum. These activities develop and improve the level of competences and abilities of the students which can contribute to a better society and reinforce the connection between education and the world of work.



### **3.1 ESPE Vocational Courses: Tourism – contents and evaluation**

As tourism is a fast developing area in Portugal, it is even more and more important to enable students to acquire the skills needed to perform their professional functions better. The impact of Tourism in the social media has also been playing an important role in attracting students. In ESPE there are 306 students divided into five vocational courses: Tourism, Hotel Reception, Electronics and Event Organization and also courses that provide 9<sup>th</sup> grade qualifications.

In the Tourism course there are three levels – first, second and third year (equivalent to the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades). There are twenty-four students in the first year, and twenty-two in the second and third years, respectively. In total, there are sixty-eight students in the Tourism course, fifty-four female and thirteen male. The average age of the students is seventeen (in the first year, sixteen; in the second, seventeen; and in the third, eighteen).

The majority of the Tourism students are from the district of Oporto, nearly forty-one students come from that area but from different places, especially from villages and non urban centres. The rest of the students are from the district of Aveiro. Only four students are from the city of Espinho.

The number of students in Tourism has also increased throughout the years in the school. In 2007, there were only two classes of this course and throughout the years the number of candidates has increased, so that since 2013 there are always three classes, which correspond to an average of seventy students.

There were also changes in terms of curricula throughout the years. Contents before 2004 comprised four modules in each year of the course. In the first year the students studied “The Family”, its types and importance and the activities done daily by the family, in terms of free-time and school. The second module was related to “The Environment”, pollution (types, causes and consequences), green organizations and ways to protect the environment. The third was about “Innovation and Technology”. The students studied space exploration, technological advances and the pros and cons of technology.

In the second year, the students started with module number five, “National Identity”, and the topics were “What makes a Nation” and “Multi-ethnic societies”.

The following module, number six, was “The European Union”, what it is and what it is for, what makes us European, and the European Currency. Module number seven was about “The Human Rights”. The topic dealt with basic human rights and international organizations.

In the last year, the first module, module nine, was about “Music”, types of music, its history and how it mirrors American History. The next module, module ten, was about the “History of the USA.”. The topics were the Indians, slavery and equality of the sexes. Module eleven was about “Work and Future Career”. The topics approached were the job market, applying for a job, careers (the best choice) and dream job.

The last module of each year, modules number four, eight and twelve were considered specific. In module number four the teachers used the first five chapters of a book called “Check in”, and in module eight the book was the same but the focus was on the last five chapters. In module twelve, the book used in classes was called “Highly Recommended”, and the teachers chose the most relevant chapters related to specific areas of the course.

After the new programme in 2004, the curriculum in English started to be adapted. However, only in the year 2008/2009 did the school start to have only the new curriculum, since all the classes from the previous curriculum had finished the course.

According to the new programme there are nine modules:

- The Professional World and Me
- A World of Many Languages
- The Technological World
- Media and Global Communication
- Young People in the Global Era
- The World around Us
- Young People and Consumerism
- The World of Work
- Communication in the Professional World

In ESPE teachers of English teach three modules per year. In the first year there are seventy-six hours of classes in English with seventy-two in the second and third grades. There is a total of two-hundred and twenty hours of English in the Tourism course.

In the first module, *The Professional World and Me*, the students come into contact with topics and vocabulary related to personal information, daily life at home, school and work place. The family, the rooms and furniture in the house and the subjects at school are part of the vocabulary learnt. In terms of grammar, the items are personal and possessive pronouns, determiners, adjectives and their order in the sentence, and verb tenses: simple present, present progressive/ present continuous.

In the second module, *A World of Many Languages*, the topic is related to the connection between languages and cultures, especially English as a global language, which allows societies to communicate and exchange experiences of culture and others. The subtopics are contact with other languages experiences and cultures through the internet, cinema, email and music, and also mobility through language courses, study trips, tourism and Erasmus. In terms of grammar, the contents are the degrees of adjectives (comparatives and superlatives), verb tenses (present perfect and simple past), modal verbs and coordinative conjunctions

The third module, *The Technological World*, aims to get the students to learn how to identify the influence of technology on the daily lives of individuals and the changes it has brought in terms of personal relationships and work. The subtopics are technological innovation (human and machine, robots and intelligent machines), social changes in the community, education and jobs related to technology and the exploration of other worlds, such as space, digital cities and virtual worlds. In terms of grammar, the contents are countable and uncountable nouns, the use of adjectives and determiners, simple past versus past perfect, the future and if clauses (types 1 and 2).

Module number four is *Media and Global Communication* and its objectives are to improve the criticism of students of the media and information in society. The contents are the evolution of the media, the internet and global communication

and communication and ethics. In terms of grammar the focus is on auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, phrasal and prepositional verbs, reported speech, prepositions of place and time and coordinative sentences.

In the fifth module, Young People in the Global Era, students are invited to explore and analyse topics related to the universe of teenagers. More specifically, the topics are young people today, their values, attitudes, behaviour, dreams and ambitions; young people and the future (work and learning) and the language of teenagers in terms of trends, clothing and music. The grammar items are modal verbs, had better and would rather, phrasal and prepositional verbs, reflexive and emphatic pronouns, the future and the third conditional.

Module number six, the World around Us, is about the environment. The students study threats to the environment, such as ecological disasters, endangered species and consumer habits; demography in terms of the distribution of population throughout the world and mobility, and the intervention of society by acquiring eco-friendly behaviours or engaging in environmental organizations. The grammar contents are verb suffixes and prefixes, passive voice, the infinitive, adverbs and subordinate sentences.

The general topic of module number seven is Young People and Consumerism. Its aim is to enable students to think about their own habits in a consumer society. The main topics are consumer habits in food, clothing and entertaining; advertising and marketing and the rights and duties of the consumer. In terms of grammar the focus is on the formation of nouns, use of indefinite determiners (quantifiers), adverbs and adverbial phrases, and the gerund.

Module number eight is on the World of Work. This module aims to explore the constant changes in the world of work which lead to a continuous investment in learning and knowledge. It also focuses on mobility and flexibility which are also current challenges in the world of work. As sub topics, students explore the changing world of work in terms of rhythm and places to work, job conditions and learning throughout life; teenagers and change in relation to different paths (gap year, time-off, volunteering, etc.), how to choose jobs and leisure. The grammar

items are clauses of reason, purpose clauses, relative pronouns and subordinate sentences.

The last module of the course is module nine, Communication in the Professional World, aims to explore the importance of communication in the professional world not only in personal and professional development but also as a tool to develop interpersonal relationships. The sub topics are the internationalization of the professional world and the role of new technologies in the professional world, such as the use of email and of the cell phone, and the development of international trading through e-commerce and online banking. In terms of grammar, the items are the passive voice, the use of the infinitive and defining and non-defining relative clauses.

From this it is possible to conclude that the modules of the vocational curricula aim to provide students with general knowledge on diverse topics. In the last year of the course there is a major approach on matters related to the world of work, which is the main objective of these types of courses. The structure of the English curricula in vocational courses starts with basic language structures, evolving throughout the modules. One of the main concerns of this structure is to manage the expectations of the students as these contents were already approached in previous years of studying. Therefore, teachers have to find a balance between the new contents at hand and the already learnt ones, so that some students do not feel demotivated by returning to contents they already know. This approach on the vocational course serves as an establishment of a more solid basis of learning for future and more specific contents, which involve understanding native speakers, identifying their needs and producing dialogue structures adapted to the context.

In ESPE, all the modules are available in the “Portal Escolar”, a school web repository where students have all the materials needed for classes. When teachers consider it is necessary to provide more materials, such as auxiliary tables or grammar worksheets, these are also made available on the internet, where students can download them from.

Before 2004, although there was an approach on general topics, there was a higher concern on the specific area of each course. Therefore, books on specific

topics were used to build a specific module at the end of each year. This is an important concern in this type of courses, because of the existence of a traineeship at the end of the course. Throughout the years and contacts with enterprises, it is possible to conclude that there should be given a major preparation for real English and real work situations that students should face in the future because students show difficulties in communication with foreign tourists. Although a global vision of English is given because many different topics are taught and discussed, there should also be a concern for a major approach on specific areas of the courses, which would better prepare these students, whose courses are mainly directed to the job market.

ESPE as a vocational school follows all these contents, but teachers always try to suggest activities related to each course individually. For example, when talking about a job and its routine, the students of tourism will talk about a job in the area of tourism or when exploring a touristic destination, tourism students will explore it as tour agents, in terms of touristic attractions and heritage, and reception students will include accommodation.

There was also an adaptation in the last module of the course. Instead of dealing with communication in the world of work in general, teachers give specific insights into every area. Therefore, students of tourism explore communication on the phone, the influence of culture in communication, how to receive a guest, services at a hotel, check-in and check-out, tour operators, city tours, special interest tours, safaris, trip programs, air companies' procedures and regulations, asking and giving information on buildings, schedules, directions and posture when dealing with different tourists in different cultures. With this approach, the teachers in this school aim to prepare students better according to the professional training each class in each course is going to perform. To build these modules, teachers use specific books, such as "Be my Guest", "English for Business Communication", "Getting Ahead" and "English for International Tourism (Pre-intermediate and Intermediate)". These books were provided by the school. However, some of the approaches of these books are not up-to-date. One example is the reference to travel agencies without exploring online booking, which is one of the methods most used by tourists to book their trips and also references to the fax as a means

of communication, which is a communication tool students do not recognize (Appendices A and B). The school is also trying to develop a vocabulary manual with the most important phrases students have to use while participating in events and in their professional training, as a support to their learning.

In my personal experience building these teaching aids, I have always tried to include what I consider to be the needs of a future tourism professional, according to my contact with the tutors and their opinions about the enterprises' needs. I try to include texts on the topics mentioned above. If the number of hours available to teach the module were to be increased and there were more resources and coordinated strategies, many could be improved. In my view, the changes in the modules should be made focusing on these topics:

- include more authentic texts and materials in cooperation with the enterprises;
- practice dialogues based on the functions the students will perform, for example giving touristic information, describing touristic monuments and paths, giving information on security procedures in touristic animation activities and flights, among others;
- talking on the phone, making reservations for trips or other touristic activities;
- producing written documents about touristic destinations, packages, touristic activities, letters and other formal documents used globally in enterprises;
- teaching vocabulary related to each of the functions the students will perform.

Furthermore, it would also be important to enable students to make contact with the real world of work while they are studying these contents. In the current situation, the study trips are in Portuguese. However, it would also be important that students are in contact with the real world of work situations in other languages, specifically in English.

Evaluation is also a concern when students move from the regular to the vocational curricula. Firstly, the contents taught are different. The vocational curricula start from the basis of the foreign language. Secondly, evaluation is

carried out in modules and not at the end of the term. In addition, students at the secondary level also face the change in grading from a range of 1 to 5 to that of 1 to 20. All these factors are new and different for the students, and there is a period of adaptation.

In the vocational courses students are evaluated in modules, which means that even if they fail module number one, for example, they move on to module number two, and the teacher is responsible for helping the student to successfully complete that module and obtain a positive grade. The methods usually used are a more individual tutorial approach to the student, more exercises and more practice in order to overcome the difficulties each individual student has. Although the curricula explore basic contents of grammar and vocabulary of the language, it is still noticeable that many students have not acquired basic vocabulary and structures when they arrive at the secondary level.

Before attending ESPE, students reveal that there were major difficulties in terms of the most basic structures of English. As a teacher, it is possible to conclude that students bring with them many handicaps in terms of oral and written English, especially in grammar structures and syntax. There is not an independent thinking of the different languages, as the structures in English are mainly a result of translation from Portuguese structures, which results in weak English texts and oral production. Therefore, there is an advantage for these students to attend a professional course, as the English curricula starts with basic language structures, such as personal pronouns and the verb to be. With this, students can recover and remember these structures, overcoming some of the difficulties they reveal from previous years. However, in my view, there should be more emphasis on learning languages, because the time given to the subject during the three years of the course, seventy-two hours per year, is not enough to prepare the students properly for the function they are going to perform daily in their jobs.

Currently, some of these students have overcome their difficulties, but there are still students who reveal difficulties, especially in writing and speaking, which result in weaker grades in testing and modules left behind. In these three classes, with a total of sixty-eight students, there are nineteen students with negative results in all the modules of the course.



In the first year, only two students have negative results; in the second year, eight students have negative results in modules, since three of them left modules behind from the first year; in the third year there are eight students with negative results, since two of them also left two modules from the second year behind. In conclusion, twenty-seven percent of the students have failed to complete modules in the subject of English.

The final evaluation of each module in the school is divided into several parameters, such as: attendance (10%), oral and written participation in class tasks (10%), behaviour in class (10%), final test (50%), final task proposed by the teacher about the topic of the module, usually presented in group in front of the other students (20%). If the students fail to have a positive mark in this first evaluation, they are given the opportunity to try again. In this second opportunity the parameters are the same. However, the student has to make another final task, also proposed by the teacher. This task is individual and, at this time, in written format. Finally, if the student fails again, (s)he has a last opportunity to pass. In this evaluation, the parameters are also the same, although the task proposed by the teacher is different and the student has to have an oral exam. In all the evaluation the parameters related to attendance, oral and written participation in class tasks and behaviour in class are maintained and cannot be altered from the first to the third evaluation. If the students fail to conclude all the evaluations of the module, they have to attend a final exam and the evaluation of the module is only the result of that exam.

The average marks on the modules which were already concluded and evaluated were:

Class	Module	Average marks in testing	Average marks final evaluation	Average marks for the subject	Average mark for the subject
1st year	Module 1	13	13	12,5	12
	Module 2	11	12		
2nd year	Module 4	12	13	12	
	Module 5	11	11		
3rd year	Module 7	13	13	10,5	
	Module 8	9	9		

**Table 1:** Average marks of evaluated modules

Although the average is positive, it could be improved. Some difficulties which contributed to these results are the number of students per class, which makes individual support to each student more difficult, and also, as mentioned before, the basic difficulties that students bring from the primary to the secondary level of studies.

### **3.2 Professional Training**

In the Vocational Courses it is expected that the students acquire abilities related to the world of work. Therefore, all the activities are designed to develop competences connected to the jobs the courses aim to develop and are articulated with the local and surrounding enterprises. These are the main aims of the professional training. It is a moment of learning in the real context of work, full time and without any payment. This experience enables students to experiment and mobilize competences in the area of the course and it aims to be a way of developing abilities and complement the theoretical aspects of their education. Besides the professional experience, the trainee should develop personal competences, such as responsibility, autonomy, organization, punctuality, assiduity and learn to work in a team.

The students perform their professional training in an enterprise related to Tourism. In the past years, as the Coordinator of the course, I was the person who accompanied the students during this period and who was in closer contact with the enterprises. The professional training is performed in enterprises such as tourism information offices, tourism animation enterprises, museums, Port wine cellars, travel agencies, among others.

Until the 2014/2015 school year the students in the third year of the course of Tourism made a professional training in the last year of the course, that usually occurs between the months of April and July. The number of hours they have to complete is 420.

From the year 2013/2014, the students in the first and second year also started to do professional training. In the first and second years, they do 140 hours in the months of June and July, and in the third year 440, within the months of April and July, which adds up to 720 hours. In my view, the improvement in the number of

hours dedicated to professional training is better for the students in terms of preparing them better for the functions they will perform and also enabling them to have a closer relationship to the world of work. The fact that it takes place throughout the years and not just in the third year is also positive, as it allows the students to have a wider perspective of the Tourism sector and its diversity.

In terms of evaluation, it is discussed between the Coordinator of the course, who is in close contact with the enterprises, and the tutor in the enterprise. It is based on the parameters defined by the Pedagogical Council of the school, which are shown in the table below:

<b>AVALIAÇÃO GLOBAL DO ALUNO ESTAGIÁRIO</b>	<b>0 - 20</b>	<b>Média Final</b>
<b>1. O TRABALHADOR</b>		
1.1. Assiduidade		
1.2. Pontualidade		
1.3. Apresentação pessoal		
1.4. Disponibilidade		
1.5. Conhecimentos tecnológicos		
<b>2. NO GRUPO DE TRABALHO</b>		
2.1. Cooperação		
2.2. Relação com colegas		
2.3. Relação com superiores		
2.4. Intervenção/Acolhimento de opiniões		
<b>3. NO TRABALHO</b>		
3.1. Organização		
3.2. Capacidade de Iniciativa		
3.3. Sentido de responsabilidade		
3.4. Interesse pelas atividades		
3.5. Desempenho das tarefas atribuídas		
<b>4. PROPOSTA DE NOTA FINAL</b>		

**Table 2:** Professional Training Evaluation Table

The parameters which are in table 2 are:

- **1. The trainee/worker**
  - 1.1 Assiduity
  - 1.2 Punctuality
  - 1.3 Personal Presentation
  - 1.4 Availability
  - 1.5 Technical Skills
- **2. Group Work**
  - 2.1 Cooperation
  - 2.2 Relationship with colleagues
  - 2.3 Relationship with superiors
  - 2.4 Intervention/ Welcoming people's opinions
- **3. At Work**
  - 3.1 Organization
  - 3.2 Initiative
  - 3.3 Responsibility
  - 3.4 Interest in activities
  - 3.5 Development of the tasks
- **4. Final Mark Proposal**

By analysing the table it is possible to conclude that in terms of Tourism, there are several skills which should be evaluated and are not considered, such as language and communication. In tourism, fluency in foreign languages is very important, so that the professionals can communicate effectively with tourists. Communication is also an important factor because the student needs to feel autonomous to communicate with the tourists and to engage with them in a foreign language, usually English, as it is the global language and *Lingua Franca*. As Tourism is seen as a well-being product, which provides leisure and relaxation to the tourist, tourists need to feel comfortable in a foreign country and one of the main causes of comfort is communication, understanding and being understood. Therefore, a way to overcome this evaluation blank would be to modify the table, as it is proposed below:

<b>AVALIAÇÃO GLOBAL DO ALUNO ESTAGIÁRIO</b>	<b>0 - 20</b>	<b>Média Final</b>
<b>1. O TRABALHADOR</b>		
1.1. Assiduidade		
1.2. Pontualidade		
1.3. Apresentação pessoal		
1.4. Disponibilidade		
<b>2. CONHECIMENTOS TÉCNICOS</b>		
2.1 Conhecimento Tecnológicos		
2.2 Conhecimentos Linguísticos		
<b>3. NO GRUPO DE TRABALHO</b>		
3.1. Cooperação		
3.2. Relação com colegas		
3.3. Relação com superiores		
3.4. Acolhimento de opiniões		
<b>4. NO TRABALHO</b>		
4.1. Organização		
4.2. Capacidade de Iniciativa		
4.3. Sentido de responsabilidade		
4.4. Interesse pelas atividades		
4.5. Desempenho das tarefas atribuídas		
<b>5. PROPOSTA DE NOTA FINAL</b>		

**Table 3:** Professional Training Evaluation Table – Proposal

A new parameter (no. 2, shaded in grey) would be included to evaluate Technical Knowledge, which would include technological knowledge, as the students usually have to use technical software related to the work; and linguistic knowledge, as in the enterprises they have to communicate and put to use their language knowledge, in the area of Tourism it is fundamental to master at least one foreign language, which is English.

#### 4. Research into curricular content

##### 4.1 Research Procedures

As the general aim of this work is to evaluate the use of the English language of the students, especially during their traineeship, the instrument of research chosen was the questionnaire. This was selected because it is simple, common and effective. The questionnaires were given to the students before and after their professional training. These questionnaires were anonymous and in Portuguese, so that the students could answer more assertively and sincerely all the questions. The questions and answers were open, so that the students could express their opinions freely. As can be seen in questions 1, 6 and 8 below, the questionnaire aims to find out about the students' expectations before taking the course itself and also the expectations the students have about the traineeship and the role of languages in their future professional life. Questions 2 to 5, 7 and 9 deal with the students' opinions about the course content and what should be given greater salience.

#### Questionnaire 1 (Pre-training – Students)

Questionário	21/04/2015
<b>No âmbito da realização do mestrado subordinado ao tema “O que é o Inglês para Turismo?” da aluna Patrícia de Oliveira Martins, pede-se a tua colaboração no preenchimento do questionário abaixo apresentado.</b>	
1. No âmbito da disciplina de Inglês quais eram as tuas expectativas quanto aos conteúdos que irias aprender no Curso de Turismo?	<hr/> <hr/>
2. Quais foram os conteúdos/temas que consideraste mais interessantes ao longo do Curso?	<hr/> <hr/>
3. Quais foram os conteúdos/temas que consideraste mais úteis e relevantes tendo em conta o teu futuro profissional como Técnico de Turismo?	<hr/> <hr/>
4. Quais os conteúdos/temas que menos consideraste úteis ou de que menos gostaste?	<hr/> <hr/>

**5. Na tua opinião que conteúdos deveriam ser incluídos e/ou retirados do programa de Inglês tendo em conta a tua formação como Técnico de Turismo?**

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**6. Tendo em conta a aproximação do período de estágio, pensas que aquilo que aprendeste será útil para a tua performance a nível profissional? O que será mais útil e porquê?**

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**7. A que disciplinas consideras que deveria ter tido dedicada maior carga horária durante todo o curso, tendo em conta as funções que irás assumir como técnico de Turismo? Porquê?**

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**8. Na tua opinião, quais foram as disciplinas mais úteis para o teu futuro desempenho profissional?**

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**9. Por fim, escreve alguma observação que consideres relevante quanto às disciplinas e competências trabalhadas ou que deveriam ser trabalhadas durante o curso.**

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**Nota:** Todas as perguntas foram colocadas na língua portuguesa de forma a que todos os alunos pudessem responder de forma mais assertiva a todas as questões colocadas.

After having worked in a professional capacity in their traineeship, the students were asked to complete the questionnaire shown below. This questionnaire asks the students to what extent they used English and what they had learnt in the professional setting and who they used English with. The final question asks the students to say what they would change in the course having had some experience in the traineeship.

## Questionnaire 2 (Post-training – Students)

Questionário

03/07/2015

No âmbito da realização do mestrado subordinado ao tema “O que é o Inglês para Turismo?” da aluna Patrícia de Oliveira Martins, pede-se a tua colaboração no preenchimento do questionário abaixo apresentado.

1. Com que frequência falaste (número de vezes por dia) em inglês durante o estágio?

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2. Qual a nacionalidade de turistas que mais recebeste durante o estágio?

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3. Quais as estruturas que utilizaste com mais frequência na língua inglesa? Numera cada uma das opções de 1 a 5, sendo que 1 foi a menos utilizada e 5 a mais utilizada. Mas são 6 as opções?

Saudar/Cumprimentar	
Fornecer indicações sobre percursos	
Fornecer informações turísticas	
Informar sobre horários dos transportes/refeições/ serviços	
Informar sobre procedimentos/manuseamento de materiais	
Estabelecer conversa informal	
Orientar visitas guiadas (se aplicável)	

4. Se colocaste 3 ou mais na opção "Estabelecer conversa informal" quais os temas normalmente abordados nessas conversas (por exemplo: clima, desporto, gastronomia, transportes, cultura, música, etc.)?

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5. No âmbito dos conteúdos lecionados na disciplina de Inglês, quais consideras que foram úteis para o teu desempenho no estágio? Porquê?

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6. Tendo em conta a tua experiência de estágio, consideras que deveriam ser incluídos e/ou retirados conteúdos do programa de Inglês? Quais e porquê?

A incluir:

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A retirar:

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7. Considerando a tua experiência de estágio, pensas que a carga horária da disciplina é adequada às necessidades do mercado de trabalho? Porquê/Porquê não?

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8. Qual a tua opinião sobre a importância da língua inglesa para o teu futuro desempenho profissional, tendo em conta o estágio realizado?

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9. Por fim, escreve alguma observação que consideres relevante quando à aprendizagem de línguas no Curso Profissional de Técnico de Turismo.

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**Nota:** Todas as perguntas foram colocadas na língua portuguesa de forma a que todos os alunos pudessem responder de forma mais assertiva a todas as questões colocadas.

After the conclusion of the professional training, four profiles were sent to the tutors so that they could choose the language level of the students during their professional training. To build those profiles, the basis was the European Common Framework for Languages, more specifically the Common Reference Levels Table: global scale (Appendix C). From those levels four profiles were built in Portuguese, so that all the tutors could understand clearly what was written. These were the profiles sent to the tutors:

<b>Profile 0</b>	The student did not use a foreign language (English) during his/her professional training.
<b>Profile 1 (A1+ A2)</b>	The student understands the foreign language (English) through the use of simple structures and paced communication. The student is able to read instructions and answer simple questions about where he/she lives or places he/she knows. The trainee is able to write simple messages about immediate needs or topics he/she is used to write about. He/she communicates in controlled and common environments, usually about routines and daily activities. The trainee needs to prepare for communication before actually communicating.
<b>Profile 2 (B1+B2)</b>	The student understands longer enunciations, provided the topic is common. He/she can interpret more elaborate messages by understanding the context. He/she understands daily usage language and speaks with some spontaneity, enabling him/her to communicate with native speakers. The trainee describes events, explaining his/her point of view. He/she writes about more complex topics, being able to emphasize knowledge and points of view.
<b>Profile 3 (C1+C2)</b>	The student understands longer enunciations both direct (orally) or via other means of communication, even when native speakers speak faster. He/she expresses himself/herself spontaneously and fluently, choosing the best expressions and most adequate structures for each context, being able to rearrange speech, if necessary. The student expresses him/herself in a clear and well structured way. He/she can write more complex structures, emphasizing the points which in his/her view are the most important.

These were the profiles sent in Portuguese:

<b>Perfil 0</b>	O aluno não utilizou a língua estrangeira durante o seu estágio.
<b>Perfil 1 (A1+A2)</b>	O aluno compreende a língua estrangeira, através da utilização de estruturas simples e comunicação pausada. É capaz de ler instruções e responder a questões simples sobre locais onde vive e sítios que conhece. É capaz de escrever mensagens simples sobre assuntos de necessidade imediata e com os quais está muito familiarizado. Comunica em contextos previsíveis e de uso corrente, nomeadamente sobre rotinas e atividades diárias. Tem necessidade de preparar a sua argumentação.
<b>Perfil 2 (B1+B2)</b>	O aluno compreende exposições mais longas, desde que o tema seja relativamente familiar. Interpreta mensagens mais elaboradas, seguindo o contexto da argumentação. Compreende textos com linguagem quotidiana e conversa com alguma espontaneidade, o que lhe permite interação com falantes nativos. Descreve acontecimentos, conseguindo explicar o seu ponto de vista. Escreve sobre assuntos mais amplos, conseguindo evidenciar conhecimentos e pontos de vista.
<b>Perfil 3 (C1+C2)</b>	O aluno compreende longas exposições, sejam diretas (oralmente) ou por via de outros meios de comunicação, mesmo quando os falantes nativos articulam a linguagem com maior velocidade. Exprime-se de forma espontânea e fluente, procurando as expressões e estruturas mais adequadas para cada contexto, conseguindo reformular o seu discurso, se necessário. O aluno exprime-se de forma clara e estruturada, redige estruturas mais complexas, pondo em evidência os pontos que considera mais importantes.

There was a need to build a Profile 0 which defined the group of students who did not use the foreign language, as in some enterprises, such as travel agencies and tourist animation enterprises, where the majority of the activities are extreme sports, and the clients are mainly Portuguese.

## 5. Research Results

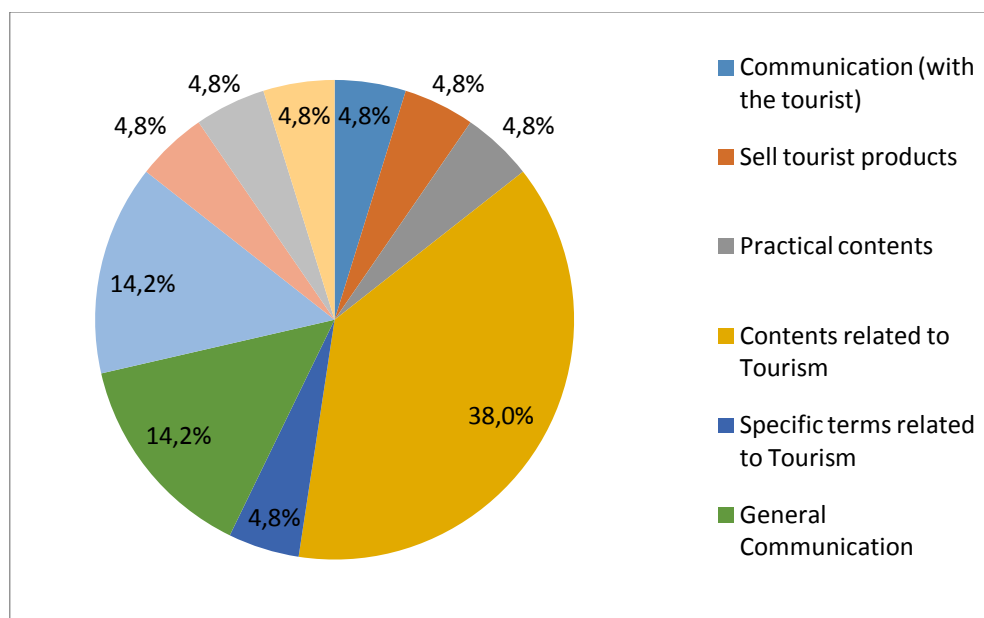
### 5.1 Questionnaire 1 (Pre-training - Students)

Firstly, on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015, the students of the third year were surveyed about their expectations about professional training. This sample was studied because these were the students who did their professional training in this year.

**No âmbito da disciplina de Inglês quais eram as tuas expetativas quanto aos conteúdos que irias aprender no Curso de Turismo?**

What were your expectations about the contents you would learn in the subject of English in the Tourism Course?

#### QUESTION 1



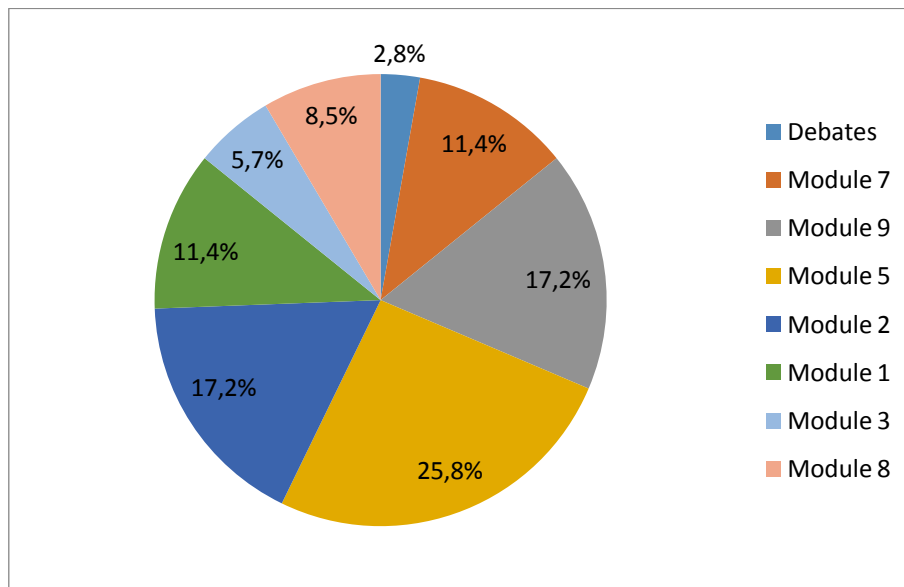
**Figure 3:** Expectations about contents

The majority of the students (38.0%) said that they expected to learn contents related to their professional future, to the area of tourism as the course is vocational. Then, reference to expectations about extra contents related to Tourism that would probably complete the contents taught in the technical subjects is also notable and also the reference to communication as students also expect to communicate more and simulate dialogues related to the Tourism area. All the other answers obtained a percentage of 4.8%, as they were mentioned by only one student.

## QUESTION 2

**Quais foram os conteúdos/ temas que consideraste mais interessantes ao longo do Curso?**

Which contents/topics did you consider more interesting throughout the Course?



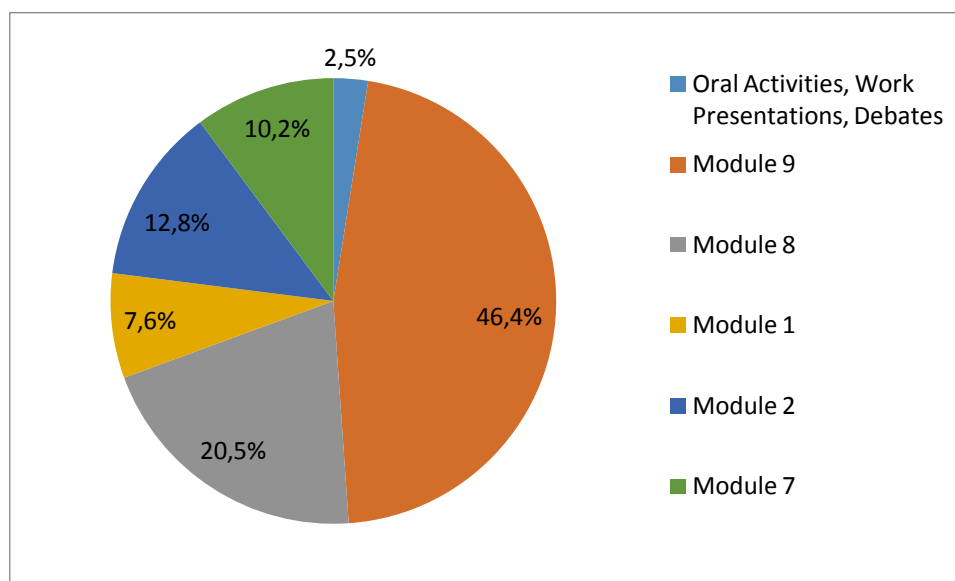
**Figure 4:** The most interesting contents on the Course

As an answer to this question, the majority (25.8%) of the students said that the most interesting content was related to Module 5 – Young People in the Global Era – which is a module that explores topics related to adolescents' problems. After this module, the preference of the students was for module 9 – Communication in the Professional World – which is a module related to the world of work, as mentioned above. It explores topics more related to the Tourism area, dialogues, simulation of real situations and vocabulary. This module had the same percentage (17.2%) of choices as Module 2 – A World of Many Languages – which is about music, films and travelling. On the other hand, the topic the students liked the least was Module 3 – The Technological World – which is about technology. A notable and curious fact is that one of the modules which was not one of the favourite either was Module 8 – The World of Work – which is about useful documents, such as the Curriculum Vitae, letter of recommendation, letter of application and also job interviews.

### QUESTION 3

**Quais foram os conteúdos/temas que consideraste mais úteis e relevantes tendo em conta o teu futuro profissional como Técnico de Turismo?**

Which contents/topics did you consider more useful and relevant bearing in mind your professional future as a Tourism Technician?



**Figure 5:** The most useful and relevant topics of the Course

As it is possible to conclude by analysing the figure the majority of the students (46.4%) considered that the most useful topics throughout the whole course were the ones taught in Module 9, which is the one more related to specific topics of the Tourism course. This module is also more practical. The following topics which were considered more useful for the students were the ones in Module 8, which are also related to the world of work, curricula, letter of application and job interviews, which obtained a percentage of 20.5%.

#### QUESTION 4

Quais os conteúdos/temas que menos consideraste úteis ou que menos gostaste?

Which contents/topics did you consider the least useful or that you least liked?

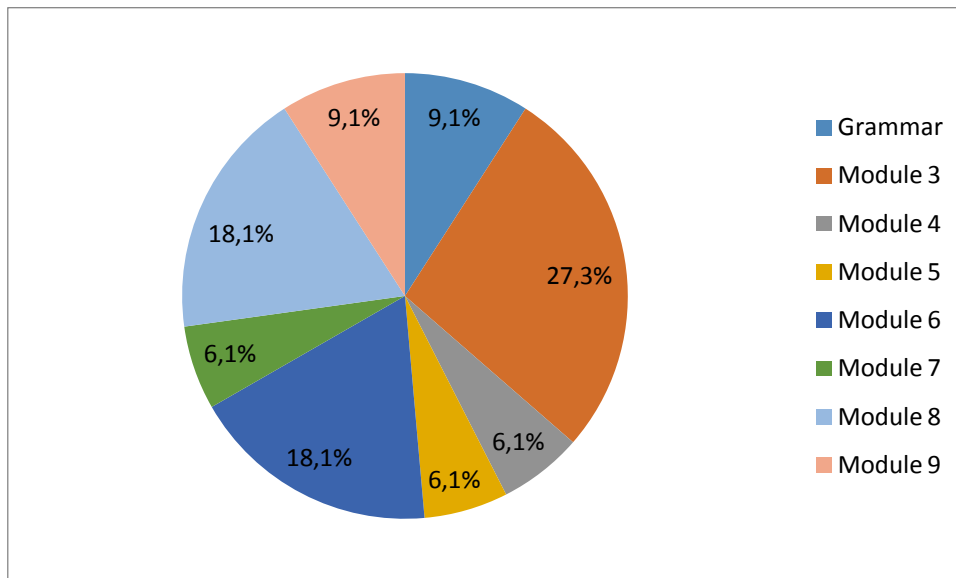


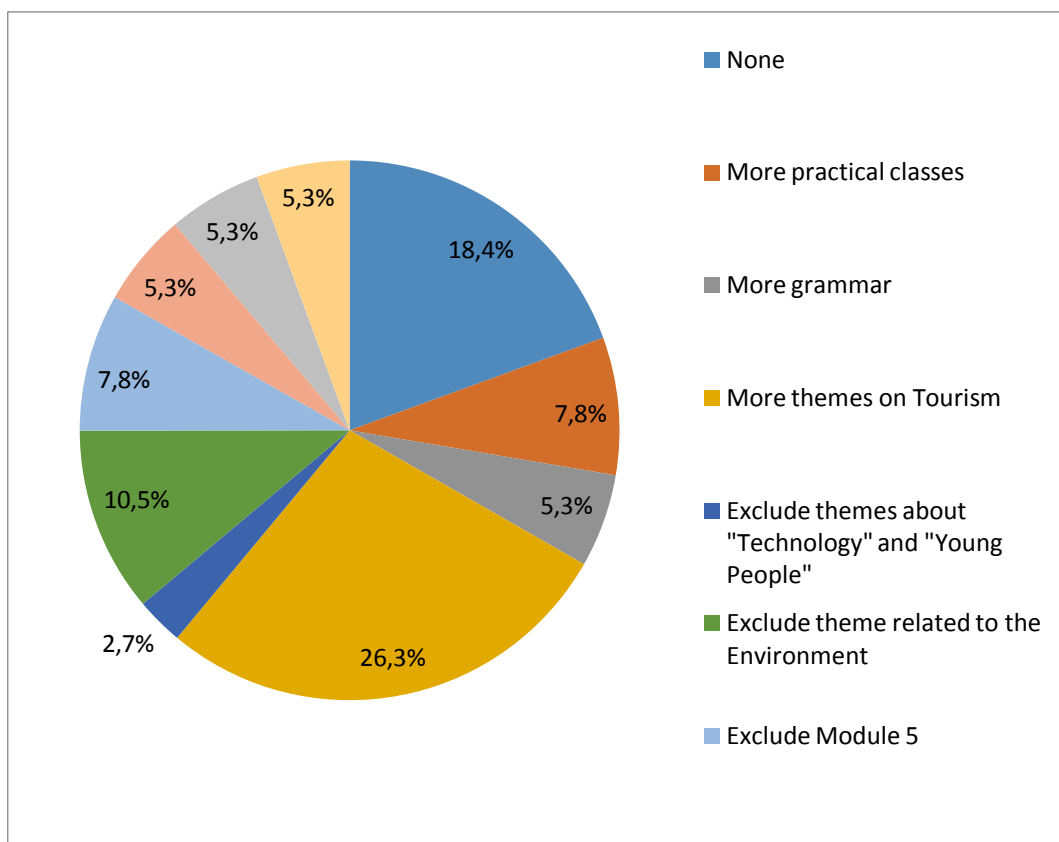
Figure 6: The least useful or favourite topics/ contents

As can be seen from the figure the students say that the topic they considered the least useful or that they liked least was the one explored in Module 3 – the Technological World. This module was about robots, space exploration and technology. However, it is important to mention that three students considered all the topics important and useful because, although they are very different, they helped the students to develop vocabulary in many fields.

## QUESTION 5

**Na tua opinião que conteúdos deveriam ser incluídos e/ou retirados do programa de Inglês tendo em conta a tua formação como Técnico de Turismo?**

In your view, which contents should be included and/or excluded from the English curricula according to your training as a Tourism Technician?



**Figure 7:** Topics to include or exclude from the Curricula

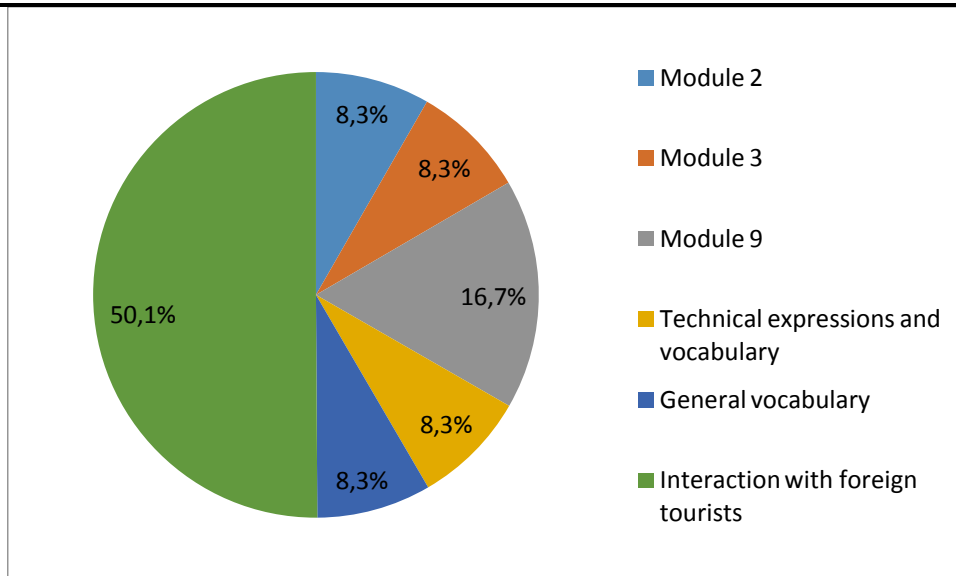
From the graph, it is possible to conclude that the students would like more topics on Tourism to be included in the English subject curricula. This agrees with their expectations about the course. It is also possible to conclude that the topic they would exclude the most is the one related to the environment. It is also important to mention that 18.4% of the students consider no topics should be included or excluded from the curricula.



## QUESTION 6

**Tendo em conta a aproximação do período de estágio, pensas que aquilo que aprendeste será útil para a tua performance a nível profissional? O que será mais útil e porquê?**

As the professional training approaches, which are the competences you learned that you consider to be more useful to your professional performance? Which will be more useful and why?



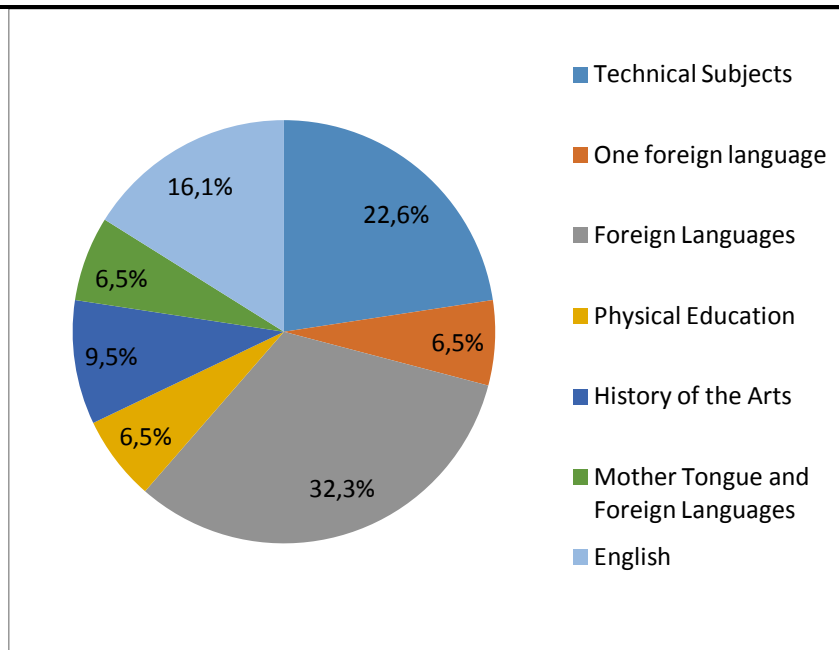
**Figure 8:** The most useful contents in professional training

According to the graph, more than half of the students considered that the most useful contents for their professional performance were the ones related to communication and interaction with foreign tourists, such as dialogues, simulation of real professional situations/roleplay and technical vocabulary. Module 9 is referred to again as one of the most useful contents taught during the course.

## QUESTION 7

**A que disciplinas consideras que deveria ter sido dedicada maior carga horária durante todo o curso, tendo em conta as funções que irás assumir como Técnico de Turismo? Porquê?**

In your view, which subjects should have been given most hours during the course, according to the competences you consider important to a Tourism Technician?



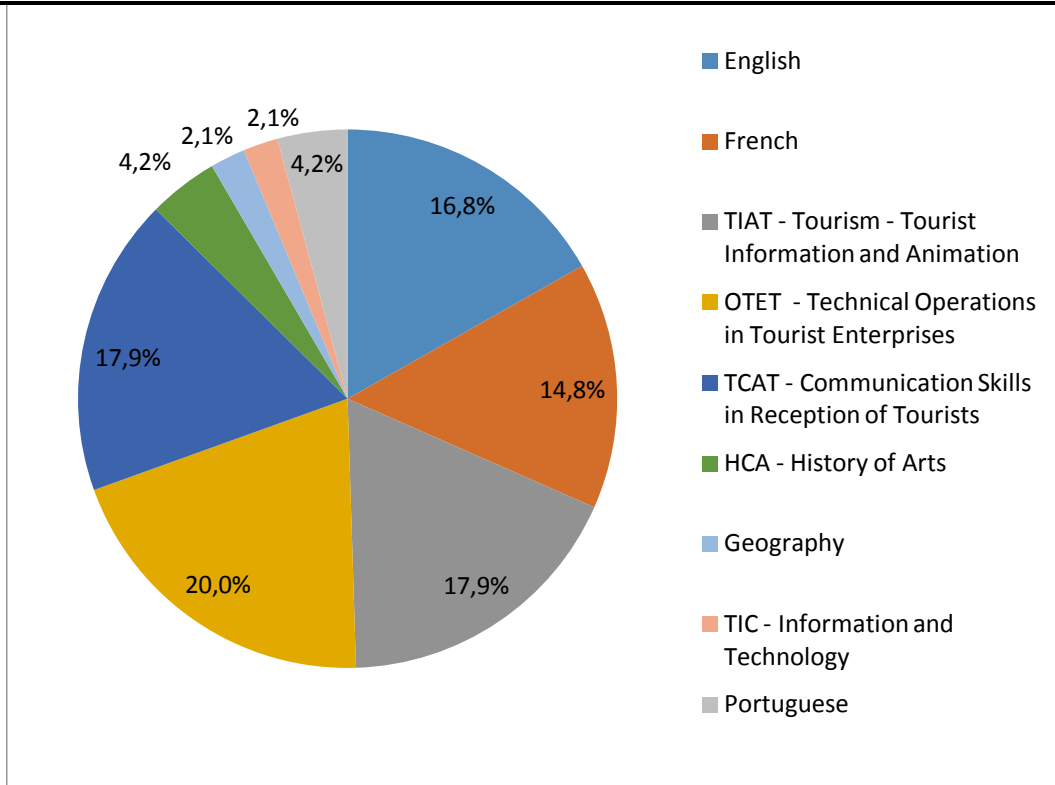
**Figure 9:** Number of hours spent on each **subject**

Students considered that the number of hours dedicated to foreign languages should increase as it is an important tool for the development of the functions of the future professionals of Tourism. Students also mentioned that the number of hours dedicated to technical subjects should increase. It is also important to mention that 16.1% said that the number of hours dedicated to English specifically should be increased.

## QUESTION 8

**Na tua opinião, quais foram as disciplinas mais úteis para o teu futuro desempenho profissional?**

In your view, which subjects were more useful for your future professional performance?



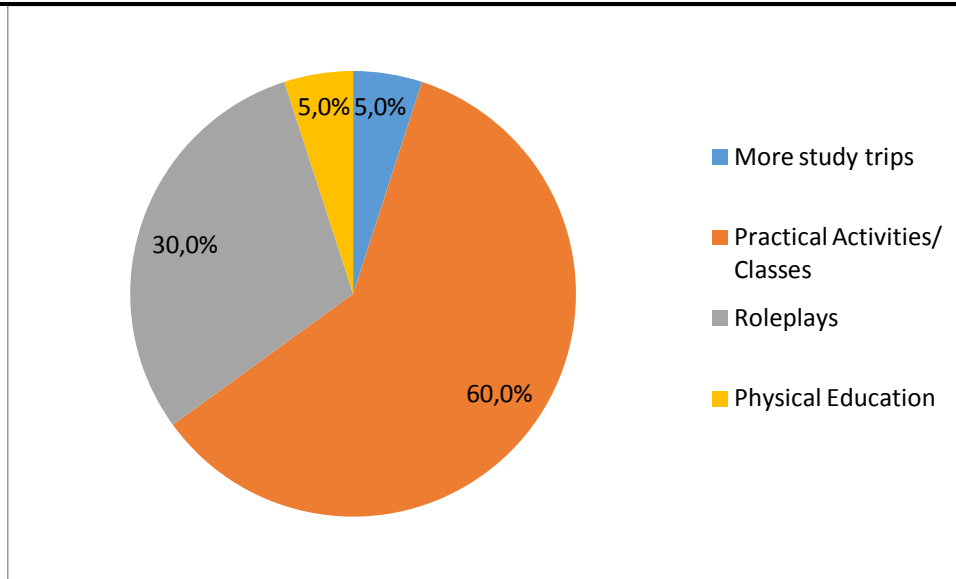
**Figure 10:** The most useful subjects for a Tourism Technician

The students considered that the most useful subject for their professional future was OTET – Operações Técnicas em Empreendimentos Turísticos/Technical Operations in Tourist Enterprises. This subject is followed by TCAT – Técnicas de Comunicação e Acolhimento Turístico/Tourism Communication and Reception Skills – and TIAT – Turismo – Informação e Animação Turísticas/Tourism – Tourist Information and Animation. English was the third subject to be considered the most useful for students with 16.8%. The least useful subjects for the students were Geography and Information and Technology (IT).

## QUESTION 9

**Por fim, escreve alguma observação que consideres relevante quanto às disciplinas e competências trabalhadas ou que deveriam ser trabalhadas durante o curso.**

Finally, write about what you consider relevant about the subjects and competences studied or that should be studied during the course.



**Figure 11:** Some important considerations on competences in the Course

According to what students have written, they consider there should be more practical activities or classes where they can acquire and develop competences related to their future performance as Tourism Technicians. Furthermore, they also consider that role-plays should happen more frequently in classes, so that they can simulate dialogues and situations they will have to face daily in their job.

## 5.2 Questionnaire 2 (Post-training - Students)

Then, on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2015, the students of the third year were asked about their experience in professional training. The sample was the same used in the first questionnaire as the students were the same.

### QUESTION 1

Com que frequência falaste (número de vezes por dia) inglês durante o estágio?

What was the frequency you spoke English during professional training?

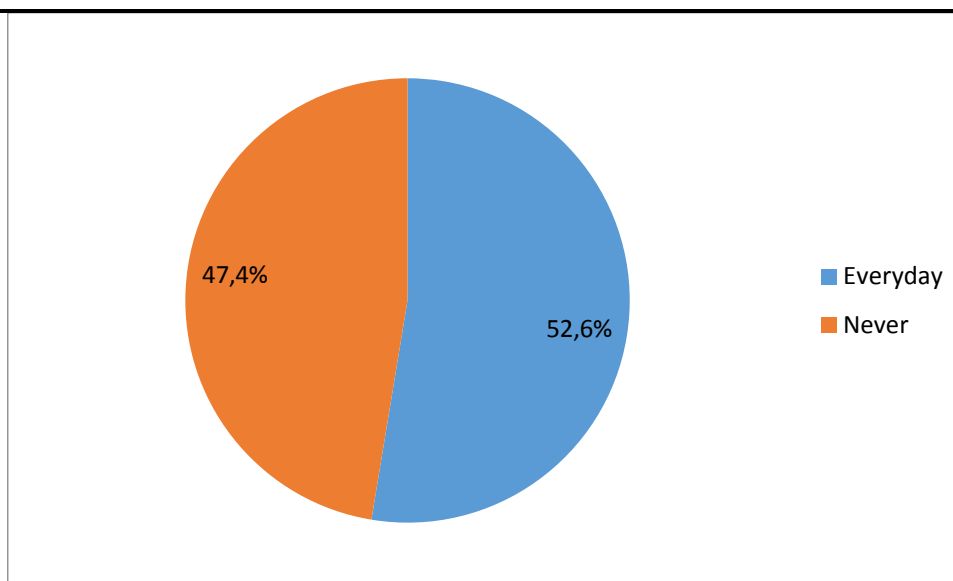


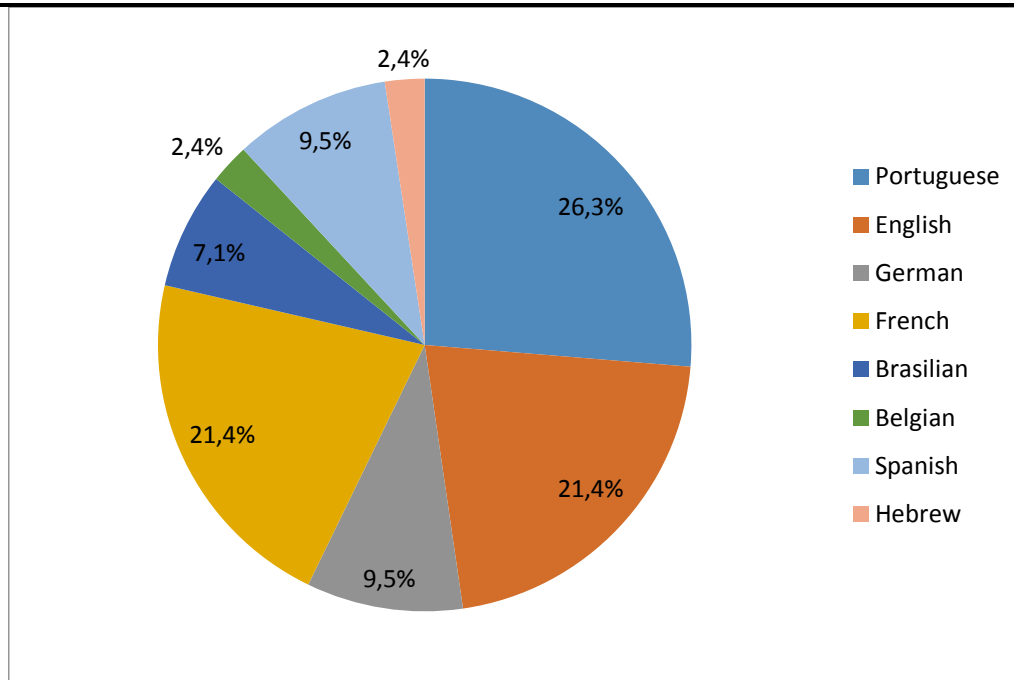
Figure 12: Frequency of speaking English

The majority of the students said they spoke English everyday with the tourists they received. 47.4% said they did not speak English in their professional training. It is important to mention that the students who did not speak English were mainly doing their training in travel agencies and touristic animation enterprises. However, it is possible that some students did not perform their functions fully as they were trainees and not employees of the enterprises they were in or that some of them did not acquire the required abilities and competences to perform their functions in a foreign language, in this case English.

## QUESTION 2

**Qual a nacionalidade de turistas que mais recebeste durante o estágio?**

What was the nationality of the tourists you dealt with most during your professional training?



**Figure 13:** Nationality of the tourists received by the students

By analysing the graph, it is possible to conclude that the majority of tourists received by the students are Portuguese (26.3%), immediately followed by the English (21.4%). In the questionnaires, students mentioned that with tourists from other nationalities, except Brazilians, they usually spoke in English.

### QUESTION 3

Quais as estruturas que utilizaste com mais frequência na língua inglesa? Numera cada uma das opções de 1 a 5, sendo que 1 foi a menos utilizada e 5 a mais utilizada.

Which structures did you use more frequently in the English language? Write 1 to 5, 1 being the least used and 5 the most used.

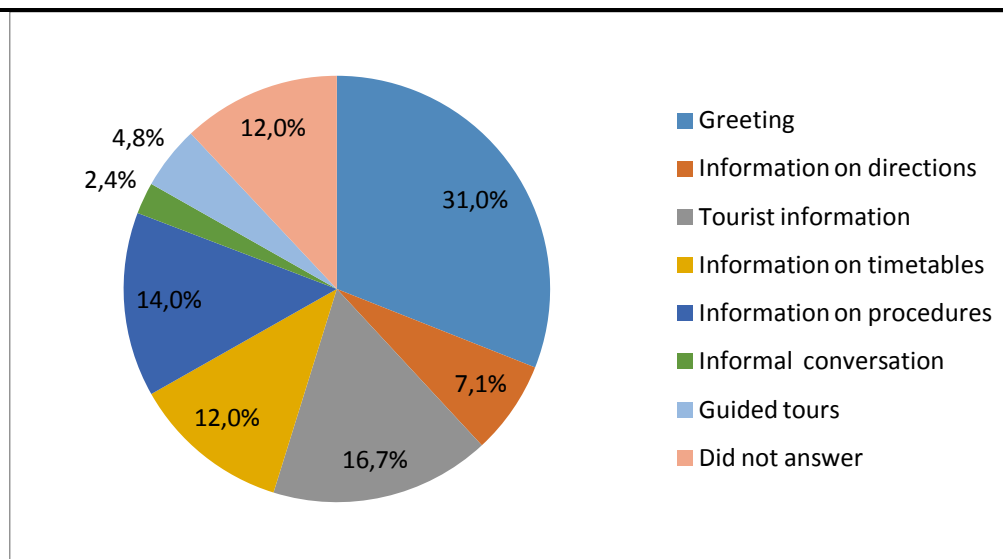


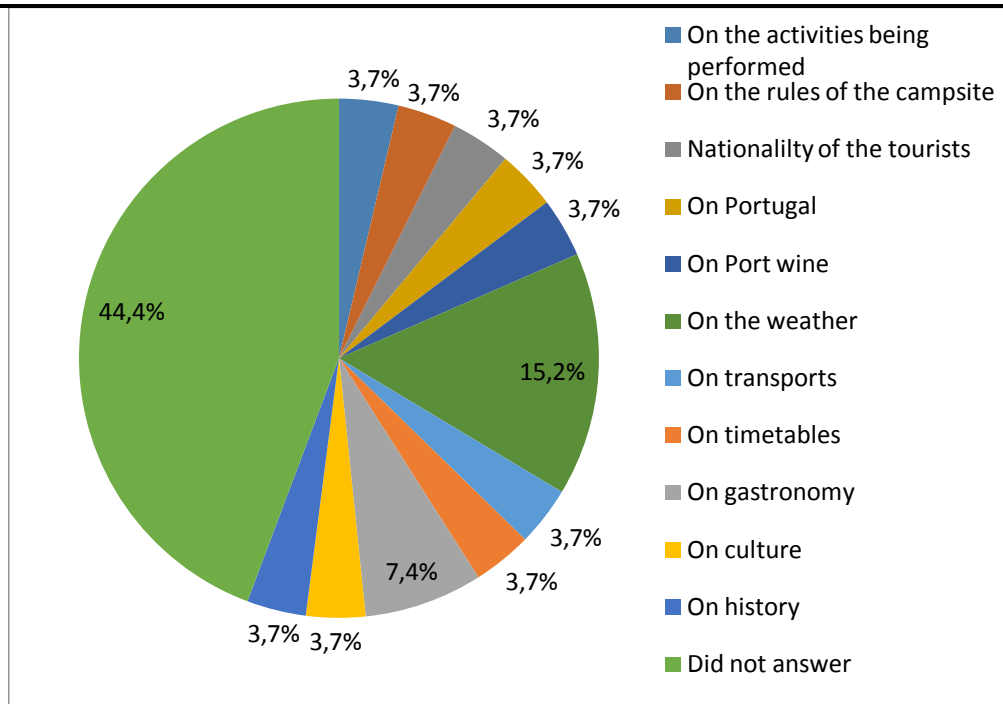
Figure 14: Language structures used by the students

As the students could number the language structures used from 1 to 5, I decided to consider the language structures attributed a 4 or 5. According to the graph, the language structures most used by the students were greeting, giving tourist information to the tourist and informing them on procedures on the activities they were involved in. The least used structure was informal conversation, maybe because it is necessary to use more varied language structures which are not controlled by the students. An informal conversation can lead to different topics and paths which are not limited.

#### QUESTION 4

**Se colocaste 3 ou mais na opção “Estabelecer conversa informal”, quais os temas normalmente abordados nessas conversas (por exemplo: clima, desporto, gastronomia, transportes, cultura, música, etc.)?**

If you numbered “Informal conversation” with 3 or more, what were the normal topics in these conversations (for example: weather, sports, gastronomy, transport, culture, music, etc.)?



**Figure 15:** Conversation topics with tourists

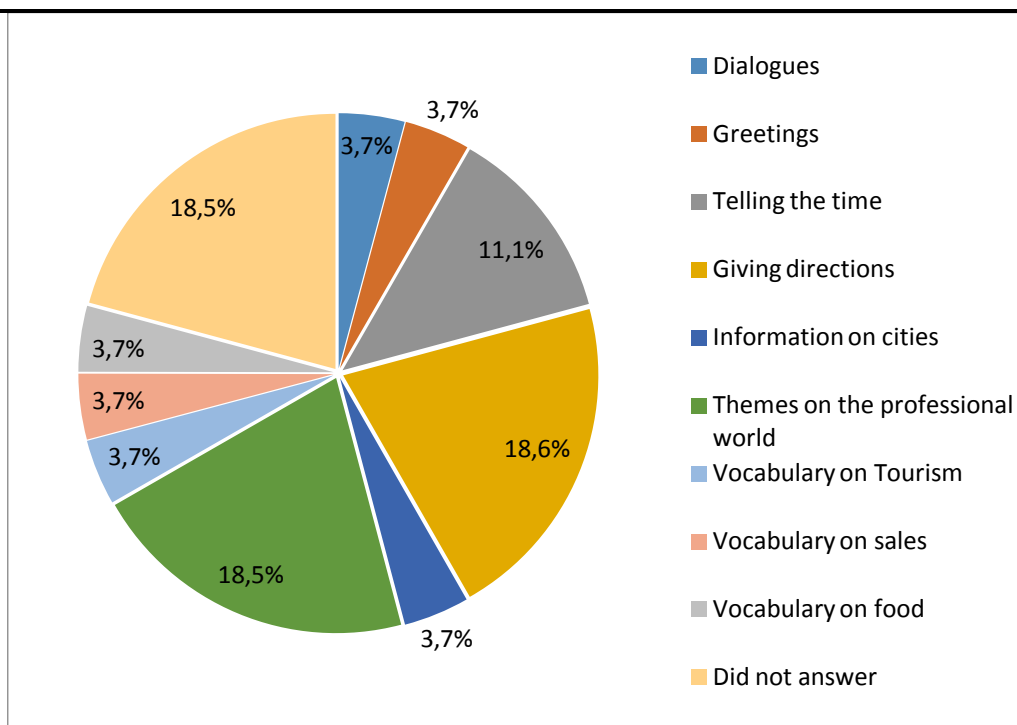
According to the students, the majority of the conversations with tourists were about the activities they were performing. Usually the students explained the tourists what they had to do, what were the rules of certain activities or even throughout the development of the activity it was necessary to give some information about what the tourists were seeing. Then, the second most common topic was the weather, which usually functions as an “ice-breaker”. Gastronomy was also a common topic for these conversations. All the other topics, such as transport, timetables and nationality of the tourists, were only mentioned by one student.



## QUESTION 5

**No âmbito dos conteúdos lecionados na disciplina de Inglês, quais consideras que foram úteis para o teu desempenho no estágio? Porquê?**

As regards the contents taught in the English subject, which do you consider more useful to your performance in your professional training? Why?



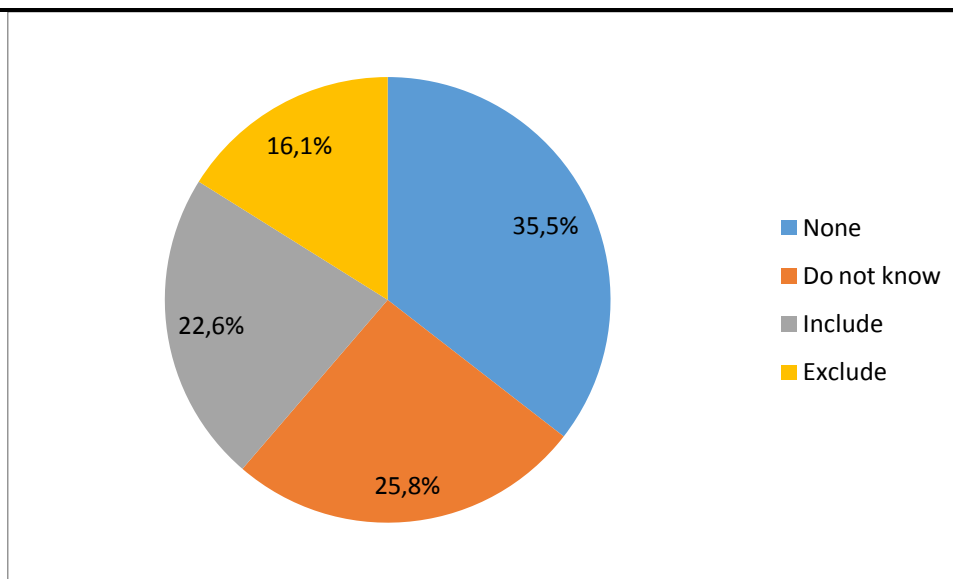
**Figure 16:** Most useful contents in the English subject

As it is possible to conclude, students considered that the most useful topics were the ones related to the professional world as they can use them in their professional training. Some of them continued to refer Module 9 as the most useful of all the contents taught in the course. Other contents referred to were the ones on directions, as tourists frequently asked for these and the one on timetables, especially about knowing how to ask and tell the time. It is also important to see that 11.1% of the answers stated that all the topics were important for their training as Tourist Technicians.

## QUESTION 6

**Tendo em conta a tua experiência de estágio, consideras que deveriam ser incluídos e/ou retirados conteúdos do programa de Inglês? Quais e porquê?**

Considering your Professional training experience, do you think that there are any contents that should be included or excluded from the English subject curricula? Which and why?



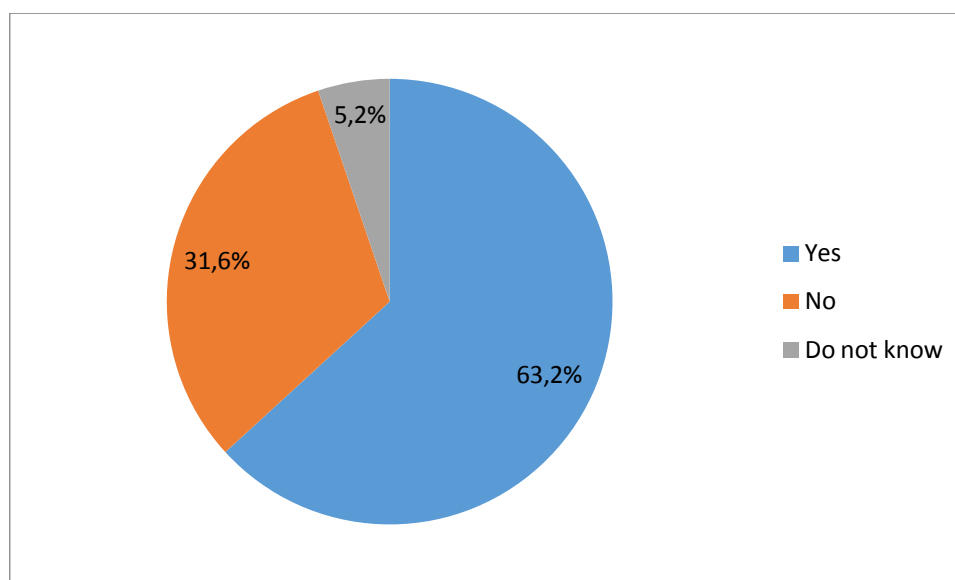
**Figure 17:** Contents to include or exclude from the English subject curricula

According to the graph, the majority of the students (38.7%) consider that the contents of the English subject should be changed in contrast with 35.5% who are happy with the curriculum as it gives them information on many different topics. There are students who suggest change and say that there should be more related to oral activities and practical contents, such as dialogues and role-plays and also vocabulary. In their opinions, they also say that contents related to the environment, young people, grammar and means of communication should be excluded as they do not consider them useful for their performance on their professional training.

## QUESTION 7

**Considerando a tua experiência de estágio, pensas que a carga horária da disciplina é adequada às necessidades do mercado de trabalho?  
Porquê/porque não?**

Considering your professional training experience, do you think that the number of hours given to this subject is adequate for the needs of the world of work?  
Why/why not?



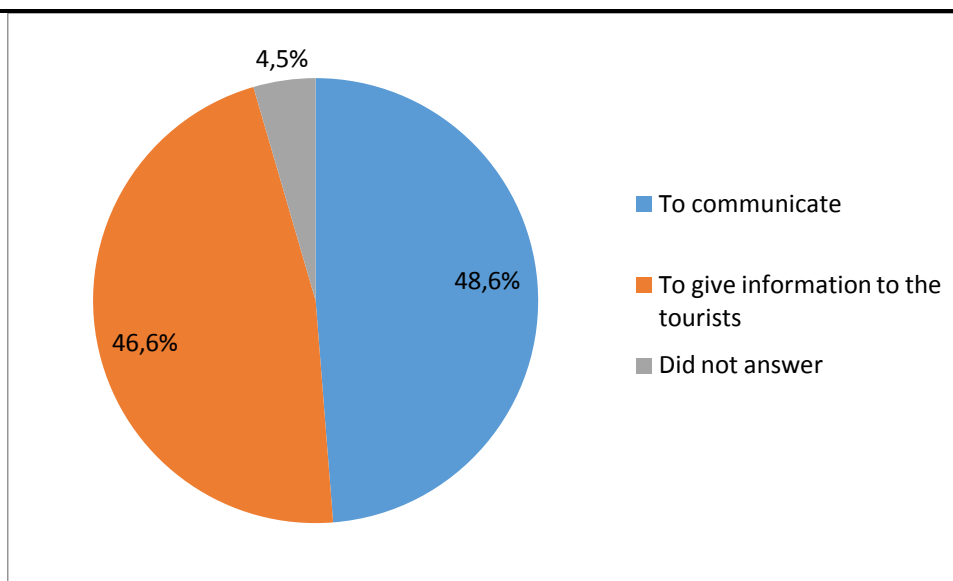
**Figure 18:** Considerations on the number of hours of the English subject

From the students' point of view, the number of hours attributed to the English subject is adequate to the needs of the world of work because it gives them the knowledge they need to perform their functions. However, there is a percentage of 31.6% that says they would like to have more hours of this subject as it would be possible to develop other skills, mainly oral skills which, in their opinion, are the ones they need the most on a daily basis.

## QUESTION 8

**Qual a tua opinião sobre a importância da língua inglesa para o teu futuro desempenho profissional, tendo em conta o estágio realizado?**

What is your opinion on the importance of the English language for your future performance in your job, bearing in mind your current professional training experience?



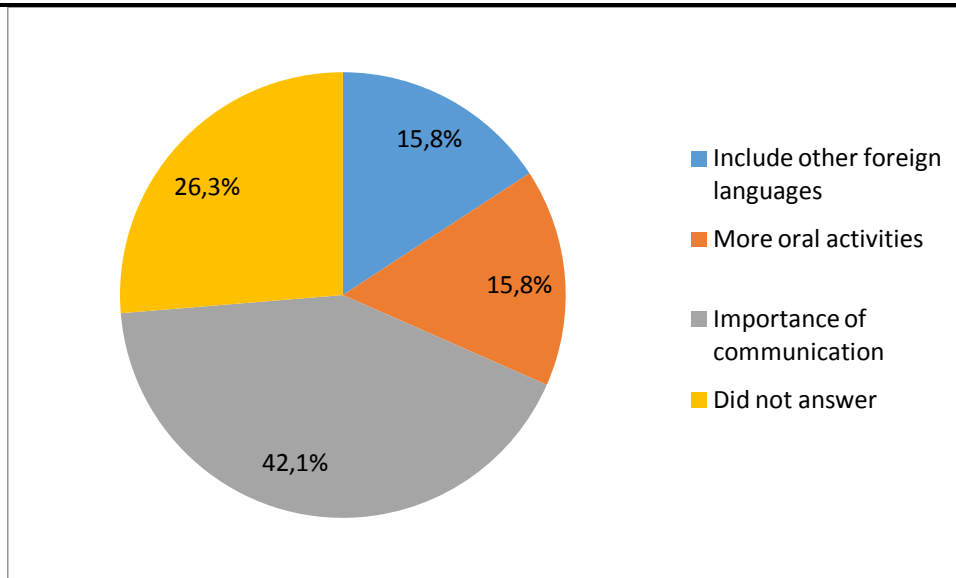
**Figure 19:** Importance of the English language

In this question all the students said the English language was important for their professional future, except one student that did not answer this question. Therefore, this graph refers to the functions where they consider English to be important. Students mentioned the importance of English when they want to communicate with a foreign tourist as it is the global language and allows them not only to communicate with English speaking countries tourists but also with other tourists who know how to speak English. Other students also referred specifically to the need they felt to give information to tourists and that in this function the English language played a very important role.

## QUESTION 9

**Por fim, escreve alguma observação que consideres relevante quanto à aprendizagem de línguas no Curso Profissional de Técnico de Turismo.**

Finally, write any comment you consider important about the teaching and learning of language in the vocational course for Tourism Technicians.

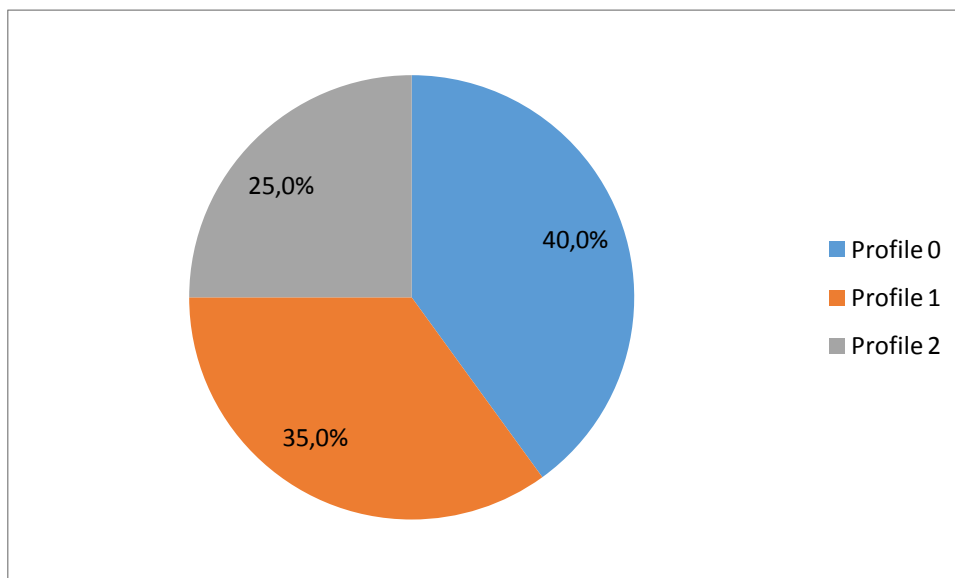


**Figure 20:** Some considerations on the teaching and learning of languages

In this question the majority of the answers (42.1%) emphasized once again the importance of the learning of foreign languages to enable communication as we live in a globalized world and also according to the development of the students' skills as future Tourism professionals. Other students said that it would be useful to include other foreign languages to complement the teaching of English and French. Finally, the need to practice more oral activities in the classroom was also mentioned as students feel they have some difficulties in communicating with tourists.

### 5.2.1 Questionnaire (Tutors)

Firstly, it is important to refer that there were twenty students from the third year doing their professional training in several types of enterprises, from the Museum World of Discoveries, to travel agencies, tourism offices, campsites, cruises, Port wine cellars, hotels and touristic animation enterprises. The results of the tutors' answers are shown in Figure 21 below:



**Figure 21:** Trainees' Language Profile

By analyzing the graph, we can see that the majority of the students showed profile zero – they did not use the foreign language – ,then 35% for profile one and just five students were considered profile two. These five students were doing their professional training in post offices in Ovar, in the Port wine cellars and in Museums.

The seven students with profile one were doing their professional training in the Museum World of Discoveries, in the Port Wine Museum, in Port wine cellars, in Hotels and on cruises. One tutor mentioned that the student in the World of Discoveries developed over the course of the training from a profile one to a profile two.

The remaining students with profile zero were doing their professional training in a local museum, in a campsite, in two touristic animation enterprises and in two travel agencies. In the travel agencies and touristic animation enterprises the

majority of the clients are Portuguese, as the students mentioned in their questionnaires, and that is why the language they use on a daily basis continues to be Portuguese. In travel agencies the clients were also Portuguese, therefore the cause is the same. One tutor mentioned that in the campsite the opportunity was given to the students to speak other languages but the trainees did not feel comfortable having a conversation with the tourists, so they did not perform that function.

### **5.3 Discussion of the results from the questionnaires**

After analysing the students' answers about the contents and activities developed in the English subject lessons, it is possible to find diverse answers. However, all of them get to the similar point which is the expectation and the need the students feel to learn structures which will provide them with the ability to communicate. Therefore, students suggest that more general activities which are not related to specific topics of the course could be eliminated, so that it is possible to introduce more professional situations, vocabulary and role-plays, which are also more stimulating and motivating for the students. When students are given similar questions before and after their professional training, there is a tendency to give the same answer, as they would exclude the same contents referred to earlier. Their opinion on the contents to include is also similar, as they refer to contents which are related to technical knowledge and vocabulary.

However, through experience with students it is possible to conclude that although they consider that activities should be communication oriented, there is widespread resistance to communicating in English among Portuguese students, as they are aware that both interlocutors are Portuguese. To overcome this difficulty, teachers can create role-plays in class but they should be presented in front of all the class, as theatre, so there is no chance students can speak in Portuguese. This strategy would also be good as other students could evaluate their colleagues, correct some errors in terms of language, advise on posture and also use their colleagues dialogues to improve their own abilities. The disadvantage would be the time that such activities would take, therefore allowing

less time for each and every student to be involved and use the language during the whole class.

The more work oriented and realistic these activities are, the more confident the students would feel in communicating with native speakers or with proficient speakers of English as a second language. Finding opportunities for students to practice conversing in English outside the classroom with tourists would also help but is not always easy to arrange. Therefore, to fulfil this need as there are few books just related to the Tourism field, teachers have to research and adapt the general curricula, introducing more activities which are aimed at communication.

As the Tourism course is vocational, its main aim is to prepare students for the professional world. Therefore, the relationship with enterprises is valuable. However, by experience it is possible to affirm that it is a difficult relationship to establish. Although enterprises know the general work schools do in developing the students' capacities, it would be indispensable to establish a closer relationship where schools and enterprises could work together to develop activities which could work in a more effective co-training relationship. The teacher, enterprises and in the end students would have many advantages if there was a closer and more frequent contact between enterprises and schools, since it would be possible to identify and develop the needs of the Tourism sector.

It is also possible to conclude from the analysis of the questionnaire given to the tutors that there are difficulties in terms of vocabulary and communication, mostly oral, which is the vehicle students use most to communicate with tourists. However, it is also important to mention that one of the tutors said that the student had improved her profile from 1 to 2 during the professional training. So, this cooperation has results and is really effective. Therefore, this closer relationship would also enable the development of students' profiles, so that they could perform their functions better and achieve better results.



## **6. General conclusion**

Tourism is a sector which is growing constantly and is influencing the economy of our country, creating employment due to the development it creates. Schools play a very important role in this field as they are the vehicle which prepares the students who will be professionals in this area and one of the most important tools to perform this function is being able to speak foreign languages. English as a *Lingua Franca* and global language is the major form of communication between the professionals and the tourists from the whole world.

Throughout my career and as my experience grows and becomes more diverse, there is a better ability to analyse pedagogical and didactical proposes. This is the objective of this study, to understand what should the approach given to the English language be, so that it meets the needs of the students, the enterprises and the global world of work. As the school is one pole of learning and the enterprises are also one, they should meet in the middle and try to connect the theoretical to the practical contents. As this work is on vocational courses, more specifically tourism, it is important to know their objectives, organization and students' expectations, to understand the choices of how the contents are explored.

However, it is important to keep in mind the changes in the world of Tourism that should also have an impact in learning and in the structures teacher teach, the context they use as examples and the situations they role-play in class. Some of the books published and used by teachers do not follow the evolution of the world of Tourism, the influence of technology in this world and the new procedures introduced by these changes. Many digital applications entered the world of Tourism and influenced the way tourist choose the hotels where they are going to stay, the way they communicate with hotels, travel agencies and tourism enterprises. Students have to be aware of these changes and adapt their strategy to approach this world in a more effective way. Teachers also have to be aware that the use of technology is also important in classes, not just as a way to captivate students but also as a way to introduce new language structures and new ways of communicating with the tourist. This might mean more emphasis on short written communication such as email. Therefore, teachers need to be in

constant development and achieving greater awareness, following the development of the world of Tourism. This is also a reason why the cooperation with the enterprises is important. Teachers, students and the enterprises win with this situation, as teachers have a better knowledge of the structures in the enterprises, and they can better guide the topics they are teaching. Therefore, students get better and more realistic learning and enterprises have better assets to include in their staff.

According to the students, some of the contents could be adjusted to the specific needs of the course and probably this would also meet the needs of the enterprises and produce some evolution in the profiles presented by the tutors, from less proficient to more proficient. As was presented in topic three, the contents approached in the first modules are a return to the basis of the English language structures. However, this can produce some demotivation in some students if the strategies, topics and materials are not different from what the student came into contact with before, and there will be more apathy and indifference towards the subject. This is clear in the answers of the students to the questionnaires, where they say it would be more interesting to have contents related to the Tourism area and not to the environment or technology which are topics they have already explored in other subjects and that in their opinion do not add any important knowledge to the performance of their competences as Tourism Technicians. Therefore, there is a need to change as a way to motivate the students to learning English. However, would not the students consider a three-year approach only on English for Specific Purposes monotonous? Would not their wide knowledge of the English vocabulary and culture be compromised by the use of a focused strategy of teaching/learning? It is possible to conclude by teaching the modules that the variety of contents also motivates some students to speak about their tastes, opinions on the world, on teenagers' lives, among other themes. Thus, an approach on specific English for the Tourism market may give them structures just to deal with those situations and it is known that the role of a tourism professional goes beyond consideration of tourism and automatic procedures. Sometimes it is necessary to act as an ice-breaker to start a conversation, talk about the weather, give some considerations about Portugal,

the Portuguese and their habits and traditions. Then, a specific teaching of English could narrow the students' horizons.

Also according to the students' answers, the main communication needs are in terms of oral skills – comprehension and expression – which are mobilized in the direct contact with native speakers. The majority of the students see their needs in terms of oral communication and not in written communication, producing documents, although it is also considered important, specifically for professionals working in travel agencies. However, also according to the questionnaires, the majority of the students did not actually use the English language in their traineeships, as they were not fully performing their function in the front office or they did not reveal competences which allowed them to put those functions to use. As a teacher, I also consider that the English subject curricula in vocational courses has advantages and disadvantages for the students. On the one hand, it is considered that a variety of topics prepares the students to have communication skills and vocabulary in a range of contents. However, as these courses are vocational and targeting the world of work and these students have to perform functions as professionals of tourism, in their professional training, nowadays in the second and third years, it would be more adequate to adjust the curricula to the real needs of the students, enterprises and Tourism market. The curricula are general and the teaching professionals feel the need to reformulate topics, from the grammar contents to the didactical activities, using the potential of the curricula but enriching it with more adequate contents, vocabulary and strategies for the vocational tourism course, the needs of the students and the enterprises. This specificity based on the analysis of the vocational Tourism course is necessary and fundamental to the students who will be the future professionals of Tourism.

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## **Appendices**





## Appendix 2

# Writing bank

**Guidelines for writing a memo**  
 Memos are usually for internal communication. The level of formality depends on the relationship between the writer and reader. In this case, the language is neutral.

- Use a standard format. It should include:
  - the name of the sender
  - the names of the staff or the department who are to receive the memo
  - the date it was issued
  - the names of any people who are to receive copies
- Be brief and to the point.

This memo uses some common abbreviations:

pls = please    sts = seats    asap = as soon as possible    CC = copy to

**Internal Memo**

---

TO: David                      Date: 15 May

FROM: Sandra, Ops                      CC:

---

**Seat Allocation**

Could you pls arrange to allocate sts 14-A and 14-B for Mr and Mrs Patel asap on 06 May - flight BAH - MCO ULE 707 departing 11.15 and on their return flight on 20 May ULE 708 departing 16.40.

These are passengers who complained about their previous flights and Nigel assured them we would 'look after them' on this year's holiday. Could you pls advise Leisure to take care of them on the flight as well.

Many thanks,  
 Gill

v. tin. jai.

**Guidelines for writing a fax**  
 Faxes should contain a heading. These are usually To / From / Fax number / Date / Subject title / Number of pages. The style may be short or long, formal or informal, depending on the subject and the relationship between the sender and receiver.

This fax contains a lot of abbreviations. But it is best not to overdo abbreviations as your reader may not understand them.

adv = advise    re = concerning    pax = passengers    4 = for    yr = your    Brgds = best regards

**IGW**

17-AUG-2002    12:02    FROM LGW    01264 639102 P.01

**Fax**

TO: Gary Lewis  
 FROM: Jackie Bassett  
 FAX No.: 0033  
 RE: Baggage handling

No. of pages including this one: 1

Further to our talk yesterday, pls adv position re transporting baggage. Surely LGW cannot expect T2 pax to collect all bags on arrival and walk to domestic area and check in.

Would be grateful 4 yr thoughts on above.

Brgds

Jackie Bassett

Example of exercise on writing documents (fax)



Appendix 3

**Global Scale**

<b>Proficient User</b>	<b>C2</b>	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	<b>C1</b>	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
<b>Independent User</b>	<b>B2</b>	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	<b>B1</b>	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
<b>Basic User</b>	<b>A2</b>	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	<b>A1</b>	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Common Framework for Languages - The Common Reference Levels Table:  
global scale