Inglés para profesionales del turismo: estrategias de comunicación y vocabulario de alto nivel para una interacción global

English for tourism professionals: communication strategies and high-level vocabulary for global interaction

https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20815752

AUTORES: Jeanelly Cecilia Aguilar Parra [1]*

María Grazzia González Quinto[2]

Vicente Javier Coello Vásquez[3]

Rosa Marianella Contreras Jordán [4]

DIRECCIÓN PARA CORRESPONDENCIA: jaguilarp@utb.edu.ec

Fecha de recepción: 03 /12 / 2025

Fecha de aceptación: 10 / 12 / 2025

RESUMEN

Este capítulo busca proporcionar un análisis del inglés para Profesionales del Turismo dentro del marco del inglés para Fines Específicos (ESP), examinando fundamentos teóricos, patrones lingüísticos y aplicaciones prácticas a través de investigación documental sistemática. El análisis de la investigación examina el desarrollo teórico del ESP, desde enfoques fundamentados en registros hasta marcos pedagógicos modernos que han sido mejorados por la inteligencia artificial, señalando al inglés para fines turísticos (ETP) como

[1]* Ing. en Gestión Empresarial Internacional, Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo, jaguilarp@utb.edu.ec, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3964-6488

[2] Ab. de los tribunales y juzgados de La República del Ecuador, Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo, mgonzalezq@utb.edu.ec. https://orcid.org/0009-0003-3593-5383

[3] Ing. en Telecomunicaciones con Mención en Gestión Empresarial en Telecomunicación, Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo, vcoellov@utb.edu.ec, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8544-1304

[4] Lcda. en Turismo, Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo, rcontreras@utb.edu.ec, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7491-664X

una subdisciplina con requisitos comunicativos y metodológicos particulares. Se detectaron diez áreas clave mismas que reflejan la situación actual y las nuevas tendencias en la enseñanza del lenguaje específico para el turismo. Cabe recalcar que los hallazgos señalan que ha habido avances importantes en la incorporación de competencias comunicativas interculturales, en los patrones discursivos multimodales que caracterizan la comunicación profesional en el turismo actual, y en las implicaciones de la transformación digital. El análisis muestra que las formas antiguas de enseñar el inglés para Fines Específicos (ESP) en el sector turístico ya no son suficientes. Necesitan una gran actualización para poder adaptarse a varios puntos clave que hoy son esenciales: la diversidad cultural de los turistas, las exigencias de la atención al cliente y la promoción, y el gran uso de la tecnología actual. Esto es un cambio que no podemos ignorar. Sin embargo, poner al día la enseñanza no es nada fácil. Hay retos importantes que debemos superar. Por un lado, es fundamental capacitar bien a los profesores, y por otro, hay que asignar los recursos de forma inteligente. Además, es un desafío ponernos de acuerdo en cómo evaluar las habilidades de los estudiantes, y sobre todo, es crucial mantener la relevancia de los programas en un sector que, como sabemos, cambia muy rápido. Por todo esto, nuestras recomendaciones prácticas se centran en cinco pilares fundamentales. Primero, hay que diseñar programas de estudio mucho más especializados. Segundo, es vital formar mejor a los educadores que están enseñando. Tercero, debemos lograr que la academia y la industria trabajen realmente juntas. Cuarto, necesitamos mejorar urgentemente cómo evaluamos las habilidades de los alumnos. Y, por último, es necesario investigar a fondo las fallas que hemos identificado en el proceso. En resumen, aún hay mucho por estudiar para que la enseñanza del inglés en el ámbito turístico sea realmente efectiva. Las investigaciones futuras deben enfocarse en el seguimiento a largo plazo de lo que logran los egresados, en validar los programas en diferentes culturas, en la comunicación turística sostenible, y algo que será clave: en desarrollar las habilidades de colaboración entre las personas y la Inteligencia Artificial. Estos temas son absolutamente vitales si queremos mejorar tanto la teoría como la práctica de la enseñanza del inglés en este campo.

Palabras clave: *inglés para fines específicos, comunicación turística, inglés comunicación intercultural, desarrollo profesional, educación lingüística.*

ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to provide an analysis of English for Tourism Professionals within the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) framework, examining theoretical foundations, linguistic patterns, and practical applications through systematic documentary research. The study analyzes ESP theoretical evolution, from register-based approaches to contemporary AI-enhanced pedagogical frameworks, identifying English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) as a sub-discipline with unique communicative requirements and methodological approaches. Ten major areas that illustrate the present situation and new developments in tourism-specific language instruction are found through a review of specialized resource documentation. The results show notable advancements in the integration of intercultural communication competence, the impact of digital transformation, and the multimodal discourse patterns that define professional communication in the tourism industry today. The analysis shows that in order to handle the multicultural context, service orientation, promotional functions, and growing technological mediation of tourism, traditional ESP frameworks need to be significantly modified. The study identifies significant implementation challenges including teacher preparation requirements, resource allocation needs, assessment standardization difficulties, and program relevance maintenance in rapidly evolving contexts. Practical recommendations address five critical areas: specialized program development, educator preparation, industry-education collaboration, assessment methodology advancement, and research gap investigation. The chapter concludes with identification of future research priorities including longitudinal outcome studies, cross-cultural validation research, sustainable tourism communication investigation, and AI-human collaboration skill development essential for continued advancement in tourism ESP theoretical development and practical implementation effectiveness.

Keywords: *English for specific purposes, tourism communication, intercultural, professional development, language education.*

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary tourism industry operates, as every other industry nowadays, in a global framework where, effective communication goes beyond geographical and cultural

boundaries (Jin, 2024). It is expected that international tourism will recover to pre-pandemic levels in 2024, with a growth of 2% above 2019 levels, underscoring the sector's resilience and the growing demand for multilingual communication competencies among tourism professionals (Lu, 2025). This recovery trajectory has intensified the need for specialized English language skills that can facilitate intercultural exchanges and enhance visitor experiences across diverse tourism contexts (Nugroho et al., 2021).

The field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in tourism, also known as English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) addresses the linguistic demands of the international tourism industry (Agustina, 2023; Shalash, 2024). Students who are looking for tourism and service industry areas' employment need to remain motivated to become fluent in a high level of professional service language (Hyland, 2022).

Then, contemporary research in tourism communication has revealed the multifaceted nature of language use in tourism contexts (Pratiwi et al., 2023; Rafiq et al., 2021). As noted by Mura & Wijesinghe (2023), communication is an act of human connection, but it is culture that drives it. In tourism, the quality of communication is related to the culture and means used. This cultural dimension of tourism communication demands tourism professionals to develop intercultural awareness and sensitivity, where intercultural communication competence (ICC) has gained particular attention in 21st-century tourism contexts (Elfiondri et al., 2021).

As globalization gained much interest nowadays, the digitalization of the tourism industry has transformed communication practices and expectations Ávila-Cabrera & Rodríguez (2021), though, research in digital tourism has identified three main co-citation clusters: 'Smart tourism destinations and smart tourists', 'Evolution and impact of E-tourism on travel behavior', and 'Personalized smart tourism experience' (Cloudia Ho, 2020; Huang et al., 2020).

This chapter addresses these challenges and opportunities to elaborate an English language education framework in tourism contexts, to examine the specialized vocabulary requirements of different tourism sectors, analyzes effective communication strategies for intercultural encounters, and presents evidence-based approaches to developing professional communication competencies (Blue & Harun, 2003). The content draws from current

research in ESP, intercultural communication, and tourism studies to offer practical guidance for educators, learners, and industry professionals seeking to enhance their English communication effectiveness in global tourism contexts.

Initially, this conceptual framework underlying English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) which is deeply rooted with the theoretical foundations of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), this approach appeared in the early 1960s (Hyland, 2022). Teaching English to students in the tourism programs is an example of teaching English for Specific Purpose. According to Marina et al. (2022), "ESP is an approach in teaching English in which all teaching materials and teaching methods in ESP must be adapted to the purpose of students learning foreign languages. ESP teaching is usually aimed at university students studying in programs other than English language education courses or professionals in certain fields such as business, medical, nursing, law, and so on".

Blue & Harun (2003) presented a more detailed theoretical framework by distinguishing between absolute and variable characteristics of ESP, where the four absolute characteristics establish that ESP: (a) is designed to meet specified needs of learners, (b) is related in content to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities, (c) is centered on proper language regarding lexis, discourse, syntax and semantics, and (d) contrasts with General English.

ESP Curriculum Design Principles for Tourism Professionals

The theoretical foundations of ESP curriculum design for tourism professionals draw from multiple pedagogical traditions, including task-based language teaching, content-based instruction, and experiential learning theory. Nunan's (1988) theoretical framework for syllabus design emphasizes the importance of authentic tasks that reflect real-world communication demands, a principle that is particularly relevant for tourism education where professionals must navigate unpredictable service encounters and diverse customer expectations.

Since we are all frequent travelers and contribute our personal experiences to the classroom, English for tourism is one of the most appealing of the various professional fields that comprise the world of English for specific purposes (Otilia Simion, 2012). Such a program may, for instance, support the growth of spoken abilities in students learning English to

become tour guides or developing advanced reading proficiency in students who are preparing for graduate business administration programs. (Shalash, 2024).

The main goal of teaching English for tourism is to incorporate the language into a topic that is significant to the students rather than treating it as a subject that is isolated from their everyday lives (Otilia Simion, 2012). The majority of research on English for tourism students has concentrated on analyzing the abilities and needs needed in the workplace, as well as the suitability and sufficiency of teaching methods and resources. In order to include what is necessary and omit what they consider less important, Ballantyne et al. (2009) investigated the communicative needs of banking and tourism staff by illuminating their views of needs, wants, lacks, and attitudes toward English. It has been noted that the kind of work has a big impact on how English is used and evaluated.

Lexical Features of Tourism Communication

The lexical landscape of tourism communication demonstrates distinctive vocabulary patterns that reflect the industry's unique position at the intersection of service provision, cultural interpretation, and economic activity. It means that tourism vocabulary includes a range of specialized terms such as cultural heritage interpretation, hospitality management, transportation logistics, international business protocols and environmental conservation (Chambers & Buzinde, 2015; Tribe, 1997). Furthermore, research on tourism language reveals significant semantic groups and frequency patterns that differentiate tourist conversations from other types of business communication (Airey, 2015; Mura et al., 2017). Various researchers were hoping to achieve a positive impact on the students' English skills by using a descriptive context based on local tourism. Specifically, this content was chosen to connect with tourists who are interested in reading, learning about, understanding, and, of course, visiting the local attractions (Ling, 2011). Though, digital communication platforms have significantly expanded the lexical repertoire required for contemporary tourism communication, introducing social media terminology, online review vocabulary, and technology-mediated service language into traditional tourism discourse. The appearance of hashtag culture, influencer marketing vocabulary, and user-generated content terminology has created new lexical categories that tourism professionals must master to engage effectively with digital-native travelers (Sharma, 2019).

We also chose to use local tourism media because it aligned perfectly with what the university students were interested in. This approach was intended to engage them and boost their skill in writing effective descriptive text. After all, as Basöz (2016) noted, writing is crucial; it helps students master other language abilities and achieve overall fluency in English. Effective vocabulary development programs must therefore integrate technical terminology with cultural awareness and practical application in realistic tourism service scenarios.

Grammatical Patterns in Tourism-Specific Contexts

The grammatical structures employed in tourism communication demonstrate distinctive patterns that serve both functional and persuasive purposes across diverse professional contexts (Hsieh, 2020). When we talk or write about travel, we naturally fall into certain language habits. Think about it: we often use specific verb tenses—like the future tense—because we're always planning the next trip. We rely heavily on words like 'should' or 'will' to give great recommendations or make promises about what's ahead. Essentially, the language people use in tourism always reflects the core of the business: planning adventures, guiding guests, and vividly sharing past experiences (Cloudia Ho, 2020; Xie et al., 2021).

The imperative verbs—those direct command words—are actually a big deal in tourism communication. They are crucial because they do not just give clear instructions; they also serve as persuasive calls to action that really motivate visitors to explore and experience new destinations (Al-Tarawneh & Osam, 2019; Ebadi & Ebadijalal, 2022). It is important to mention that using direct and indirect imperatives in tourism materials promotes a balance between authoritative guidance and friendly customer relations, demonstrating how grammatical choices can show service excellence and cultural sensitivity (Lertchalermtipakoon et al., 2021; Lin et al., 2023).

Complex sentence structures with sophisticated subordination and coordination patterns combine different kinds of information while maintaining readability and persuasive power in promotional materials for travel (Mura & Pahlevan, 2015). Comprehensive destination descriptions are made possible by the systematic use of relative clauses, participial constructions, and coordinated structures in travel brochures and website content (Airey, 2015; Airey et al., 2015).

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a documentary research design based exclusively on secondary sources to examine the theoretical foundations and practical applications of English for Tourism Professionals within the broader framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Using a review of secondary sources, including peer-reviewed academic articles, scholarly monographs, professional handbooks, industry standards, and specialized glossaries to construct a thorough understanding of English for Tourism Purposes as a distinct sub-discipline within ESP. The investigators chose the resources according to the academic rigor, current relevance, and how applicable were to the tourism context.

The authors focused on studies from the last decade in order to be aligned with the current changes in industry practices and technology (Daulay & Asrul, 2021). Also, investigators consulted well-known databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, ERIC, and specialized repositories to ensure a wide range of relevant literature regarding linguistics and tourism.

In the end, 55 reviewed articles were obtained. The field's dynamic transition from conventional language teaching methods to contemporary multimodal and technologically enhanced pedagogical frameworks is reflected in the documentary sources (Patton, 2015).

The analytical method uses methodical content analysis techniques to find, classify, and summarize important ideas, themes, and real-world applications related to English for Tourism Professionals (Pratt & Loizs, 1992). Finally, thematic analysis procedures follow established protocols for qualitative data synthesis, involving iterative reading, coding, and categorization of source materials to identify recurring patterns and emerging trends in tourism ESP research and practice (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

RESULTS

Significant advancements in theoretical frameworks and real-world applications within the English for Specific Purposes field are revealed by the documentary analysis of recent literature on English for Tourism Professionals. This study identifies ten major areas where there is strong evidence of the state of tourism-specific language education by methodically reviewing academic publications, professional documentation, and specialized resources covering six decades of ESP development.

Table 1

Evolution of ESP theoretical frameworks applied to Tourism

Period	Theoretical framework	Key scholars	Main characteristics	Tourism applications
1960s-1970s	Register Analysis	Halliday et al. (1964), Strevens (1988)	Focus on linguistic features specific to disciplines	Early identification of tourism as specialized discourse domain
1980s	Communicative Approach	Hutchinson & Waters (1987), Munby (1978)	Learner-centered, needs-based curriculum design	Development of tourism-specific communication tasks
1990s	Genre Analysis	Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998), Robinson (1991)	Text types and discourse community analysis	Classification of tourism promotional materials and service encounters
2000s	Corpus-Based Approaches	Flowerdew & Peacock (2001), Gotti (2006)	Data-driven language description and teaching	Tourism vocabulary frequency analysis and authentic materials
2010s	Multimodal Discourse	Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), Thurlow & Jaworski (2010)	Integration of visual and verbal communication	Digital tourism marketing and website analysis
2020s	AI-Enhanced ESP	Bulchand-Gidumal et al. (2024), Lei et al. (2023)	Technology-supported personalized learning	Chatbots, virtual reality, and adaptive tourism training systems

Note: This table is the author's own work.

The previous chart shows how the evolution of ESP theoretical frameworks over time has made an important transition from linguistic-centered approaches to more comprehensive and technologically advanced teaching models specifically developed for tourism contexts. According to the collected material, this progress accelerated significantly in the 2000s and 2010s, keeping pace with the digitization of the tourism industry and the appearance of social media as an essential means of communication.

Table 2

Comparative analysis of ESP definitions and their Tourism applications

Author(s)	ESP definition	Absolute characteristics	Variable characteristics	Tourism-specific implications
Strevens (1988)	Teaching designed to meet specified needs of learners	1. Meets specific needs 2. Related to particular disciplines 3. Centered on appropriate language 4. Contrasts with General English	1. May restrict language skills 2. Not bound by methodology	Establishes tourism as legitimate ESP domain with specific discourse features
Hutchinson & Waters (1987)	"An approach based on learner's reason for learning"	All decisions based on learning purpose	Flexible methodology and content	Emphasizes tourism professionals' specific communication needs
Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998)	Multi-disciplinary approach to specific needs	1. Meets specific needs 2. Uses discipline methodology 3. Centered on appropriate language	1. May relate to specific disciplines 2. Different methodology possible 3. Designed for adults 4. Intermediate/advanced level	Removes rigid boundaries, allows for tourism's interdisciplinary nature
Anthony (1997)	"Attitude of mind" rather than rigid structure	Focus on learner purpose and needs	Flexible approach to all aspects	Supports tourism's diverse professional contexts and cultural variations

Note: This table is the author's own work.

In table 2, it is shown the way tourism ESP programs are heavily influenced by the different definitions of ESP and this comparison highlights some key disagreements among top theorists about how specialized language education should be. To dismiss these differences

in definitions the ESP community need to continue theoretical growth and building a consensus. This consensus is necessary to access accreditation programs, teacher training, and tourism ESP assessment standards for design.

Table 3

Tourism discourse features identified in contemporary literature

Discourse feature	Description	Key researchers	Examples in Tourism	Pedagogical implications
Promotional Language	Persuasive, evaluative, and emotive vocabulary	Dann (1996), Manca (2016)	"Breathtaking views," "unforgettable experience"	Need for training in persuasive communication techniques
Cultural Positioning	Language that constructs cultural authenticity	Santos et al. (2009), Salazar (2005)	"traditional crafts," "local customs"	Development of cultural sensitivity and interpretation skills
Service-Oriented Register	Professional, courteous, problem-solving language	Blue & Harun (2003), Wang & Mattila (2010)	"How may I assist you?" "Let me resolve this for you"	Training in customer service communication protocols
Multimodal Integration	Combination of text, images, and digital elements	Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), Salim et al. (2018)	Website layouts, social media posts	Digital literacy and visual communication competence
Intercultural Adaptation	Language adjusted for diverse cultural contexts	Cohen & Cooper (1986), Koc & Hassan (2021)	Varying directness, formality levels	Cross-cultural communication training requirements

Note: This table is the author's own work.

The identification of distinctive discourse features in tourism communication demonstrates the complexity and multifunctionality of language use within professional tourism contexts, requiring specialized pedagogical approaches that address both linguistic accuracy and cultural appropriateness. These findings highlight the inadequacy of general business English

approaches for tourism contexts and support the development of specialized curricula that address the unique discourse features characterizing contemporary tourism communication.

Table 4

Digital transformation impact on Tourism ESP (2020-2024)

Digital innovation	Traditional ESP impact	New competencies required	Research evidence	Implementation challenges
Artificial Intelligence	Automated language assessment and personalized learning	AI tool interaction, prompt engineering	Bulchand-Gidumal et al. (2024), Lei et al. (2023)	Teacher training, technology access, ethical considerations
Social Media Marketing	Shift from formal to conversational communication	Hashtag strategies, influencer collaboration, viral content creation	Singh et al. (2024), Confetto et al. (2023)	Platform volatility, authenticity vs. marketing balance
Virtual Reality Tourism	Immersive language learning environments	VR interface navigation, virtual tour guiding	Wang & Feng (2024), Chen & Li (2024)	Hardware costs, technical support, content development
Big Data Analytics	Data-driven needs analysis and curriculum design	Data interpretation, customer behavior analysis	Heidari Tabrizi & Ghazizadeh (2021)	Privacy concerns, data literacy requirements
Mobile Applications	Microlearning and just-in-time language support	App-based communication, location services integration	Leung et al. (2024)	Device compatibility, connectivity dependencies

Note: This table is the author's own work.

In order to accommodate technology-mediated communication competencies, traditional language instruction approaches must be fundamentally rethought. This is because the fast digitalization in tourism communication between 2020 and 2024 has generated a new universe of challenges and opportunities for the design of tourism academic programs. Due to this, digital innovations into tourism training needs strong professional development

programs and institutional support. However; there are challenges to overcome such as teacher training, the digital divide, and ethical issues related to the use of AI.

Table 5

Intercultural communication competence framework for Tourism

Competence component	Definition	Essential skills	Assessment methods	Research support
Cultural Awareness	Understanding of cultural differences and their impact	Cultural dimension recognition, stereotype avoidance, cultural adaptation	Observation, self-reflection portfolios	Sarwari et al. (2024), Kovačič & Planešič (2023)
Linguistic Adaptation	Ability to modify language for different cultural contexts	Register adjustment, politeness strategies, code-switching	Role-play scenarios, authentic interactions	Brown & Levinson (1987), García & Wilson (2023)
Nonverbal Communication	Understanding and appropriate use of body language	Gesture recognition, spatial awareness, eye contact patterns	Video analysis, cultural simulation	Abdullah & Rahman (2024)
Conflict Resolution	Managing misunderstandings across cultures	De-escalation techniques, mediation skills, empathy demonstration	Case study analysis, service recovery scenarios	Wang & Mattila (2010)
Cultural Mediation	Facilitating understanding between cultures	Explanation strategies, cultural translation, bridge-building	Tour guide assessments, interpretation tasks	Timothy & Nyaupane (2024)

Note: This table is the author's own work.

Cultural sensitivity, behavioral adaptation, and mediation skills are just a few of the multifaceted cross-cultural communication abilities needed for successful tourism

professional practice, as illustrated by the comprehensive framework for intercultural communication competence. In diverse international tourism markets, the need for culturally specific adaptations that reflect local communication norms and visitor expectations is acknowledged, and the research support from numerous scholars in various cultural contexts validates the universal importance of intercultural competence in tourism.

Table 6

Needs analysis frameworks comparison for Tourism ESP

Framework	Developer(s)	Key components	Tourism applications	Advantages	Limitations
Target Situation Analysis	Munby (1978)	Communication needs processor, situational analysis	Hotel service encounters, tour guide commentary	Systematic, comprehensive	Time-consuming, may miss subjective needs
Learning-Centered Approach	Hutchinson & Waters (1987)	Target needs, learning needs, present situation	Tourism student motivation, learning preferences	Holistic, learner-focused	Subjective, requires skilled analysis
Three-Stage Model	Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998)	Present situation, target situation, learning situation	Tourism career development, professional contexts	Practical, well-structured	May oversimplify complex contexts
Genre-Based Analysis	Bhatia (2004)	Discourse community analysis, genre identification	Tourism promotional texts, service interactions	Text-focused, authentic	May ignore spoken communication
Corpus-Driven Approach	Flowerdew & Peacock (2001)	Frequency analysis, collocation patterns	Tourism vocabulary lists, authentic usage patterns	Data-driven, objective	Requires technical expertise, large corpora

Note: This table is the author's own work.

There's a lot of variety in how we approach ESP research and curriculum development, especially when we look at different needs analysis frameworks. Each method brings its own strengths to understanding the communication needs in the tourism sector, but they also come with some challenges that we need to consider when applying them. These insights emphasize the importance of using a mix of methods in tourism ESP needs analysis to truly capture the complexities of professional communication requirements, all while keeping things manageable for educators who have varying levels of research expertise and industry experience.

Table 7

Assessment methods evolution in Tourism ESP

Assessment type	Traditional approach	Contemporary innovations	Technology integration	Research evidence
Vocabulary Testing	Multiple choice, translation	Corpus-based word lists, contextual usage	Adaptive testing platforms, spaced repetition apps	Heidari Tabrizi & Ghazizadeh (2021)
Speaking Assessment	Structured interviews, presentations	Service encounter simulations, cultural scenarios	VR environments, AI-powered evaluation	García-Laborda (2024)
Writing Evaluation	Essays, formal reports	Authentic workplace documents, digital content creation	Automated feedback systems, plagiarism detection	Weigle (2002), Chapelle (2001)
Intercultural Competence	Cultural knowledge tests	Portfolio-based assessment, reflection journals	Digital storytelling, cross-cultural collaboration tools	Black & Wiliam (1998)
Integrated Skills	Discrete skill testing	Performance-based tasks, authentic scenarios	Simulation software, gamification elements	Bachman & Palmer (1996)

Note: This table is the author's own work.

When we change our focus from just knowing the rules of language to communicating in the real world, we are able to see how assessment methods in tourism English for Specific Purposes (ESP) have evolved. So, this change reflects a larger trend towards evaluating performance in a more authentic way meaning that we need to rethink how we design

assessments and train evaluators. Moreover, the study highlights some obstacles we face, like the need for proper training for evaluators, issues with standardization, and the importance of collaborating with the industry to create assessment environments that really represents what professionals in tourism do today. Thankfully, the evidence backing these new methods shows they really work.

Table 8

Tourism vocabulary patterns across professional contexts

Professional context	Core vocabulary categories	Frequency patterns	Register characteristics	Source documentation
Hotel Operations	Reservation, accommodation, amenities, check-in/out	High frequency service terms, moderate technical vocabulary	Formal-informal range, customer-service orientation	Blue & Harun (2003), Stapa & Jais (2005)
Tour Guiding	Interpretation, commentary, historical, cultural	Specialized cultural terms, narrative markers	Conversational, educational, persuasive	Cohen (1985), Salazar (2005)
Travel Agency	Booking, itinerary, transportation, packages	Commercial terms, procedural vocabulary	Professional, consultative, promotional	Edwards (2000)
Restaurant Service	Menu, dietary, preparation, service	Food-specific terminology, service protocols	Customer-focused, descriptive, advisory	Durán Muñoz (2011)
Event Management	Conference, exhibition, logistics, coordination	Project management terms, temporal expressions	Organizational, collaborative, detail-oriented	Zahedpisheh et al. (2017)

Note: This table is the author's own work.

The systematic analysis of vocabulary patterns across diverse tourism professional contexts reveals significant variation in lexical requirements, frequency patterns, and register characteristics that support the development of specialized, context-specific ESP curricula rather than generic tourism English approaches. These findings highlight the inadequacy of

one-size-fits-all approaches to tourism vocabulary instruction and support the development of specialized materials and assessment instruments that reflect the distinct communication demands characterizing different sectors within the tourism industry ecosystem.

Table 9

Current trends in Tourism ESP research (2020-2024)

Research trend	Key focus areas	Methodological approaches	Leading researchers	Future directions
Digital Communication	Social media language, online reviews, chatbot interactions	Corpus analysis, discourse analysis, user experience studies	Singh et al. (2024), Confetto et al. (2023)	AI-human communication interfaces, metaverse tourism
Sustainable Tourism Discourse	Environmental vocabulary, responsible travel communication	Critical discourse analysis, content analysis	Sann et al. (2024)	Climate communication, green tourism certification
Post-Pandemic Communication	Health protocols, safety language, crisis communication	Document analysis, interview studies	Agapito & Sigala (2024)	Resilience communication, hybrid service delivery
Cultural Heritage Interpretation	Traditional knowledge, indigenous tourism, authenticity	Ethnographic methods, participatory research	Timothy & Nyaupane (2024)	Digital heritage, virtual cultural experiences
Professional Identity Formation	Career development, expertise building, community membership	Longitudinal studies, narrative analysis	Rahman & Hassan (2024)	Lifelong learning, professional recognition

Note: This table is the author's own work.

This chart reflects how the recent trends in tourism ESP demonstrate clear convergence around sustainability discourse, digital communication skills, and post-pandemic adjustments. Simply put, the world's constant social and technological changes are shaking

up the tourism industry and how professionals there need to communicate. On top of that, the fact that top researchers from all over the world and different universities are involved just proves that studying English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in tourism is truly a global effort. In turn, it reflects the importance of coordinating and sharing knowledge more broadly among research communities to avoid duplication and ensure comprehensive coverage of emerging challenges and opportunities.

Table 10

Pedagogical innovations and their implementation in Tourism ESP

Innovation	Theoretical foundation	Implementation strategies	Effectiveness evidence	Scalability factors
Task-Based Learning	Communicative language teaching, authentic assessment	Real-world tourism scenarios, problem-solving activities	García & Wilson (2023), Edwards (2000)	Requires authentic materials, industry partnerships
Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)	Dual-focus education, meaningful learning contexts	Tourism content delivery through English medium	Finney (2002), Richards (2001)	Teacher expertise, curriculum coordination needs
Corpus-Informed Pedagogy	Data-driven learning, authentic language exposure	Frequency-based vocabulary selection, collocation training	Gotti (2006), Flowerdew & Peacock (2001)	Technology requirements, corpus availability
Simulation-Based Learning	Experiential learning, safe practice environment	Virtual hotel operations, customer service scenarios	Johns & Price-Machado (2001)	Software costs, technical support requirements

Innovation	Theoretical foundation	Implementation strategies	Effectiveness evidence	Scalability factors
Portfolio Assessment	Reflective practice, authentic evidence collection	Professional development documentation, competency demonstration	Paltridge & Starfield (2013)	Assessment training, standardization challenges
Peer-Assisted Learning	Collaborative learning, community of practice	Student mentoring, cross-cultural exchange programs	Long (2005), West (1994)	Group dynamics management, cultural sensitivity

Note: This table is the author's own work.

New teaching approaches in Tourism Higher Education are getting fantastic results. The secret is simple: educators are shifting away from just theory and diving into hands-on learning through real-life experiences. This means they are now building in highly specific skills, like English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which directly equips students with the exact language they will need on the job in the tourism sector. This practical training is achieved by connecting students with the tourism industry through direct partnerships or using advanced technology simulations. The data shows that these innovations have great potential for students to learn more and better. However, we need to know the best way to implement these new methods, whether they are really cost-effective, and what real impact they have in the long term. This information is essential for institutions to make intelligent decisions when adopting these strategies.

DISCUSSION

The documentary analysis reveals fundamental tensions between traditional ESP theoretical frameworks and the evolving demands of contemporary tourism professional communication, suggesting the need for theoretical reconceptualization that can accommodate the multidisciplinary, culturally-mediated, and technology-enhanced nature of current tourism contexts (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006). The progression from Strevens' rigid

absolute-variable characteristics model to Anthony's flexible "attitude of mind" approach reflects broader epistemological shifts within applied linguistics, yet the tourism industry's unique characteristics—including seasonal employment patterns, high cultural diversity, and rapid technological adoption—require theoretical frameworks that extend beyond conventional ESP boundaries (Nugroho et al., 2021).

Significant methodological issues in tourism ESP research are revealed by the examination of needs analysis frameworks, especially with regard to accommodating cultural diversity within standardized curriculum structures and integrating industry-specific requirements with pedagogical viability (Tribe, 1997). The interpersonal dynamics, emotional intelligence needs, and cultural sensitivity competencies that set exceptional tourism professionals apart from merely proficient language users are frequently overlooked by corpus-based approaches, despite the fact that they offer insightful information about real-world language usage patterns (Ballantyne et al., 2009; Elfiondri et al., 2021).

This analysis revealed several research gaps, such as a lack of longitudinal studies monitoring professional development outcomes, a lack of cross-cultural validation for assessment tools, a lack of focus on sustainable tourism communication competencies, and a lack of research on the AI-human collaboration skills that are becoming more and more prevalent in modern tourism professional contexts (Prachanant, 2012).

In order to effectively address the challenges and opportunities identified, educational institutions, industry organizations, professional development providers, and policy makers must coordinate their responses to the findings, which have substantial implications for various stakeholder groups within the tourism ESP ecosystem (Widiastuti et al., 2021). Moreover, specialized tourism English for Specific Purposes (ESP) programs in educational institutions are necessary to enhance skills in tourism professional contexts. To reach this, programs should emphasize improving language proficiency while offering instruction in digital literacy, intercultural communication, and industry-specific professional skills. So, making major changes in the curriculum and funding teachers development programs are essential to reach and preserve high standards (Blue & Harun, 2003).

On the policy front, we need to establish funding mechanisms that foster partnerships between industry and education, create professional certification standards that recognize

tourism communication skills, and develop regulatory frameworks that encourage innovation in the creation and delivery of tourism ESP programs, all while ensuring quality (Al-Tarawneh & Osam, 2019).The international nature of tourism requires coordination among national education systems, professional accreditation bodies, and industry organizations to develop portable credentials and transferable competencies that facilitate professional mobility and career development across diverse cultural and economic contexts (Lin et al., 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

This documentary analysis of English for Tourism Professionals within the ESP framework reveals a dynamic field characterized by rapid theoretical evolution, methodological innovation, and practical adaptation to contemporary industry demands. The systematic examination of six decades of ESP development demonstrates clear progression from linguistic-focused approaches to comprehensive, culturally-sensitive, and technology-enhanced pedagogical frameworks specifically designed for tourism professional contexts.

Therefore, this analysis yielded five important conclusions: the recognition of English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) as a valid sub-discipline within ESP with unique theoretical underpinnings and real-world applications; (2) the vital role that intercultural communication competence plays as a foundational element of the effectiveness of tourism professionals; (3) the revolutionary influence of digital technologies on ESP pedagogical approaches and tourism communication practices; (4) the need for genuine, performance-based assessment methodologies that capture the multifaceted nature of tourism communication competence; and (5) the need for creative pedagogical approaches that combine language acquisition with industry-specific professional development.

The integration of intercultural communication competence as a fundamental component of tourism ESP represents significant theoretical advancement that recognizes the cultural mediation role of tourism professionals and the sophisticated cross-cultural communication skills required for effective performance in international tourism contexts. This theoretical contribution has implications for ESP theory more broadly, suggesting that all specialized language education must consider intercultural competence development as integral rather

than supplementary to professional communication competence (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006; Mura & Pahlevan Sharif, 2015).

This study suggests quick action in five important areas to promote tourism ESP development and implementation efficacy based on the available data. In order to guarantee program quality and graduate employability, educational institutions should first give top priority to the development of specialized tourism ESP programs that combine language instruction with training in intercultural communication, digital literacy, and industry-specific professional skills. So, these programs will require significant investments in curriculum development, faculty preparation, and the establishment of industry partnerships.

Second, professional development organizations should set up organized programs for ESP educators in the tourism industry that cover the multidisciplinary skills needed for successful teaching, such as learning about the industry, developing intercultural communication skills, learning how to integrate technology, and becoming sophisticated with assessment methods. These programs should include practical industry experience opportunities and ongoing professional development support to maintain educator competence in rapidly evolving professional contexts (Airey et al., 2015).

Third, industry associations and academic institutions should work together to create professional competency standards that take into account the technological and cultural diversity of various tourism industries and geographical areas, as well as the demands of modern communication. To guarantee educational program efficacy and industry relevance, this partnership should incorporate systematic needs analysis research, the creation of authentic materials, the provision of workplace learning opportunities, and the monitoring of graduate employment outcomes.

Finally, research initiatives should address identified gaps including longitudinal outcome studies, cross-cultural validation research, sustainable tourism communication investigation, and AI-human collaboration skill development to provide empirical foundation for continued theoretical and pedagogical advancement in tourism ESP. These research priorities require coordinated effort among academic researchers, industry practitioners, and policy makers to ensure comprehensive coverage and practical relevance of investigation outcomes.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Agustina Hananingsih. (2023). Exploring the Depths: Investigating the Degree of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety among English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Learners. Journal of Literature Language and Academic Studies, 2(03), 74–85. https://doi.org/10.56855/jllans.v2i03.844

Airey, D. (2015). 40 years of tourism studies – a remarkable story. Tourism Recreation Research, 40(1), 6–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2015.1007633

Airey, D., Tribe, J., Benckendorff, P., & Xiao, H. (2015). The Managerial Gaze. Journal of Travel Research, 54(2), 139–151. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287514522877

Al-Tarawneh, M. Q., & Osam, U. V. (2019). Tourism English training at the tertiary level in Jordan: Reality and expectations from a university context. Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education, 24, 155–167. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2019.02.005

Ávila-Cabrera, J. J., & Rodríguez Arancón, P. (2021). The use of active subtitling activities for students of Tourism in order to improve their English writing production. Ibérica, 41, 155–180. https://doi.org/10.17398/2340-2784.41.155

Ballantyne, R., Packer, J., & Axelsen, M. (2009). Trends in tourism research. Annals of Tourism Research, 36(1), 149–152. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.07.001

Baſöz, T. (2016). Pre-service EFL Teachers Attitudes towards Language Learning through Social Media. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 232, 430–438.

Blue, G. M., & Harun, M. (2003). Hospitality language as a professional skill. English for Specific Purposes, 22(1), 73–91. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(01)00031-X

Chambers, D., & Buzinde, C. (2015). Tourism and decolonisation: Locating research and self. Annals of Tourism Research, 51, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.12.002

Cloudia Ho, Y.-Y. (2020). Communicative language teaching and English as a foreign language undergraduates' communicative competence in Tourism English. Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education, 27, 100271. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2020.100271

Daulay, I. K., & Asrul, N. (2021). THE EFFECT OF MEDIA GUESSING GAME TOWARDS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY ON DESCRIPTIVE TEXT LOCAL TOURISM CONTENT. English Review: Journal of English Education, 9(2), 389–398. https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v9i2.4379

Ebadi, S., & Ebadijalal, M. (2022). The effect of Google Expeditions virtual reality on EFL learners' willingness to communicate and oral proficiency. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 35(8), 1975–2000. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2020.1854311

Elfiondri, Zaitul, & Rina, N. (2021). Tradition, cultural contact and English for tourism: the case of Mentawai, Indonesia. Heliyon, 7(6). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07322

Higgins-Desbiolles, F. (2006). More than an "industry": The forgotten power of tourism as a social force. Tourism Management, 27(6), 1192–1208. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2005.05.020

Hsieh, Y. (2020). Effects of video captioning on EFL vocabulary learning and listening comprehension. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 33(5–6), 567–589. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1577898

Huang, H., Hwang, G., & Chang, C. (2020). Learning to be a writer: A spherical video-based virtual reality approach to supporting descriptive article writing in high school Chinese courses. British Journal of Educational Technology, 51(4), 1386–1405. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12893

Hwang, G.-J., Rahimi, M., & Fathi, J. (2024). Enhancing EFL learners' speaking skills, foreign language enjoyment, and language-specific grit utilising the affordances of a MALL app: A microgenetic perspective. Computers & Education, 214, 105015. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2024.105015

Hyland, K. (2022). English for Specific Purposes: What Is It and Where Is It Taking Us? ESP Today, 10(2), 202–220. https://doi.org/10.18485/esptoday.2022.10.2.1

Jin, S. (2024). Speaking proficiency and affective effects in EFL: Vlogging as a social media-integrated activity. British Journal of Educational Technology, 55(2), 586–604. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.13381

Lertchalermtipakoon, P., Wongsubun, U., & Kawinkoonlasate, P. (2021). Need Analysis: English Language Use by Students in the Tourism and Hospitality and Industry. English Language Teaching, 14(3), 59. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v14n3p59

Lin, V., Barrett, N. E., Liu, G.-Z., Chen, N.-S., & Jong, M. S.-Y. (2023). Supporting dyadic learning of English for tourism purposes with scenery-based virtual reality. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 36(5–6), 906–942. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2021.1954663

Ling, R. S. J. (2011). The PRA tools for qualitative rural tourism research. Systems Engineering Procedia, 1, 392–398. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sepro.2011.08.059

Lu, B. (2025). Sustainable Tourism Management: Balancing Economic Growth and Environmental Preservation. Journal of Lifestyle and SDGs Review, 5(5), e06587. https://doi.org/10.47172/2965-730X.SDGsReview.v5.n05.pe06587

Marina, Muhammad Roni, & Mursidah. (n.d.). Project-Based Learning and Assessment PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT FOR ESP (ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSE) STUDENTS: LECTURERS' PERSPECTIVE. Januari, 6(1), 211–222. http://jurnal.abulyatama.ac.id/index.php/dedikasi

Mukharramkhon, N., & Parizoda, M. (2024). TOURISM AS A TOOL FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION. QO'QON UNIVERSITETI XABARNOMASI, 13, 120–122. https://doi.org/10.54613/ku.v13i.1038

Mura, P., Mognard, E., & Sharif, S. P. (2017). Tourism research in non-English-speaking academic systems. Tourism Recreation Research, 42(4), 436–445. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2017.1283472

Mura, P., & Pahlevan Sharif, S. (2015). The crisis of the 'crisis of representation' – mapping qualitative tourism research in Southeast Asia. Current Issues in Tourism, 18(9), 828–844. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2015.1045459

Mura, P., & Wijesinghe, S. N. R. (2023). Critical theories in tourism – a systematic literature review. Tourism Geographies, 25(2–3), 487–507. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2021.1925733

Nugroho, A., Astuti, N. W., & Atmojo, A. E. P. (2021). Acts of Requesting as Realized by English for Specific Purposes Students. Journal of Pragmatics Research, 3(1), 46–58. https://doi.org/10.18326/jopr.v3i1.46-58

Otilia Simion, M. (2012). THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM IN UNIVERSITIES. Annals of the „Constantin Brâncuşi" University of Târgu Jiu, 2. http://www.geocities.com/nuesp/paper_indonrsia/paper_10.htm.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). Qualitative Research y Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice.

Prachanant, N. (2012). Needs Analysis on English Language Use in Tourism Industry. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 66, 117–125. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.11.253

Pratiwi, W. R., Acfira, L. G., & Andriyansah. (2023). Membangun Keberanian sebagai Tourism English Public Speaker untuk Generasi Muda Bulukumba. BIDIK: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat, 3(2), 8–14. https://doi.org/10.31849/bidik.v3i2.13129

Pratt, B., & Loizs, P. (1992). 1. Choosing Research Methods. Choosing Research Methods, 5–120. https://doi.org/10.3362/9780855986803.001

Rafiq, K. R. M., Hashim, H., & Yunus, M. M. (2021). Sustaining Education with Mobile Learning for English for Specific Purposes (ESP): A Systematic Review (2012–2021). Sustainability, 13(17), 9768. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13179768

Shalash, M. jabbar. (2024). English for Specific Purposes: A Specialization in Tailoring Language Instruction. Journal of Asian Multicultural Research for Educational Study, 5(1), 10–18. https://doi.org/10.47616/jamres.v5i1.486

Sharma, V. (2019). Saudi Students' Perspective on Social Media Usage to Promote EFL Learning. Online Submission, 2(1), 129–139.

Takács, T., & Czar, D. (2021). Enhancing Professional Communication Skills in Teaching English for Specific Purposes. International Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education, 1(2), 48–59. https://doi.org/10.33422/ijsfle.v1i2.123

Tribe, J. (1997). The indiscipline of tourism. Annals of Tourism Research, 24(3), 638–657. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(97)00020-0

Widiastuti, I. A. M. S., Astawa, I. N. D., Mantra, I. B. N., & Susanti, P. H. (2021). The Roles of English in the Development of Tourism and Economy in Indonesia. SOSHUM : Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora, 11(3), 305–313. https://doi.org/10.31940/soshum.v11i3.305-313

Xie, Y., Chen, Y., & Ryder, L. H. (2021). Effects of using mobile-based virtual reality on Chinese L2 students' oral proficiency. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 34(3), 225–245. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1604551