

Teaching English for Tourism: Fostering the Development of Field-Specific Skills. A Case Study

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Project description

Aim: to measure the impact of LSP instruction on the students' overall development of communicative skills for socio-professional integration



Project description

Research questions:

- Is there a correlation between effective ESP instruction and the rate of graduate students' employability?
- How does the graduate students' language proficiency affect both their professional and personal development?
- How can we measure the graduate students' professional and personal development?



Project description

Stages:

1. identifying undergraduate and postgraduate students' expectations from ESP classes;
2. **quantifying the impact of ESP courses on graduate students' overall development;**
3. correlating previous findings with the employers' expectations regarding graduate students' linguistic profile and communicative skills.



Premises

- ✓ The **holistic development** of students' communicative skills
- ✓ The correlation between **linguistic** and **employability skills**
- ✓ The focus on a '**pedagogy of employability**' (Luka, 2015)
- ✓ The pedagogy of '**social and emotional learning**' (Gkonou and Mercer, 2018)



Premises

“The quality of tourism product/service lies in **intangible** elements, including the interaction between employees and customers during the service encounter.” (Bailly and Léné, 2014)



Premises

“While technical skills are a part of many excellent educational curricula, **soft skills** need further emphasis in the university curricula so that students learn the importance of soft skills early in their academic programs before they embark on a business career (Wellington qtd.in Robles, 2012).”



Data collection, sampling

- ❑ 17-item questionnaire (16 closed questions, 1 open question)
- ❑ Target group: Tourism graduate students who had attended the mandatory course in *English for Tourism* (2-6 semesters)
- ❑ Total number of respondents: 30
- ❑ Profiling:
 - mostly young, female respondents
 - 1/3 – live abroad
 - 1/3 – work in tourism



Data collection, sampling

age	21-25 23.3%	25-30 63.3%	30-35 13.3%	+35 -		
sex		male 23.3%			female 76.7%	
academic degree		B.A. degree 46.7%		M.A. degree 46.7%		PhD 6.6%
language certificate		yes 73.3%			no 26.7%	
level of language proficiency	A1 3.3%	A2 -	B1 6.7%	B2 40%	C1 30%	C2 20%

Table 1. Respondent profiles



Main findings

86.7% = use English as part of their professional routine

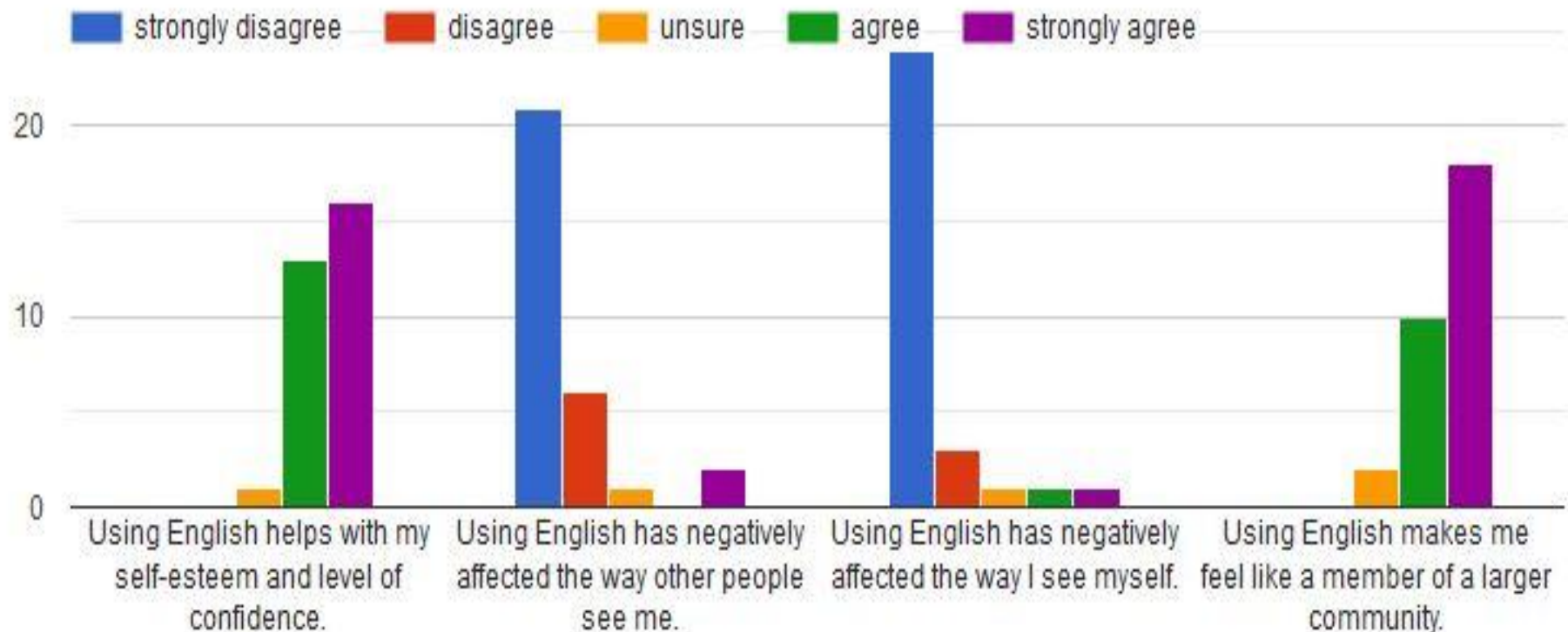
21 out of 30 subjects strongly agreed with the statement: “**English-language instruction was important in getting my job**”

15 out of 30 subjects strongly agreed that they have learnt **domain-specific relevant vocabulary** in the **university** vs. in the **workplace** (19 out of 30)



Main findings

On a scale from 1-5, how much do you agree with the following statements?



Main findings

Open question: “*Could you say a few words about the relevance of your English-language academic instruction on your daily personal & professional activities?*”

Answers point to:

- the importance of communicative activities
- the role of English in a multicultural environment
- the impact of language skills on self-perception



Main findings

“I think that the **communication exercises** we were doing during classes were a great way to get used to talking in English with a wide variety of people who may be totally different and speak on a different fluency level. I also think that presentations of small **projects** were useful for practicing **public speaking in a foreign language**, which may feel very different than doing it in your mother tongue. The writing tasks have helped us greatly in structuring our thoughts and building our skills for a **top-down communication style.**” [s1]



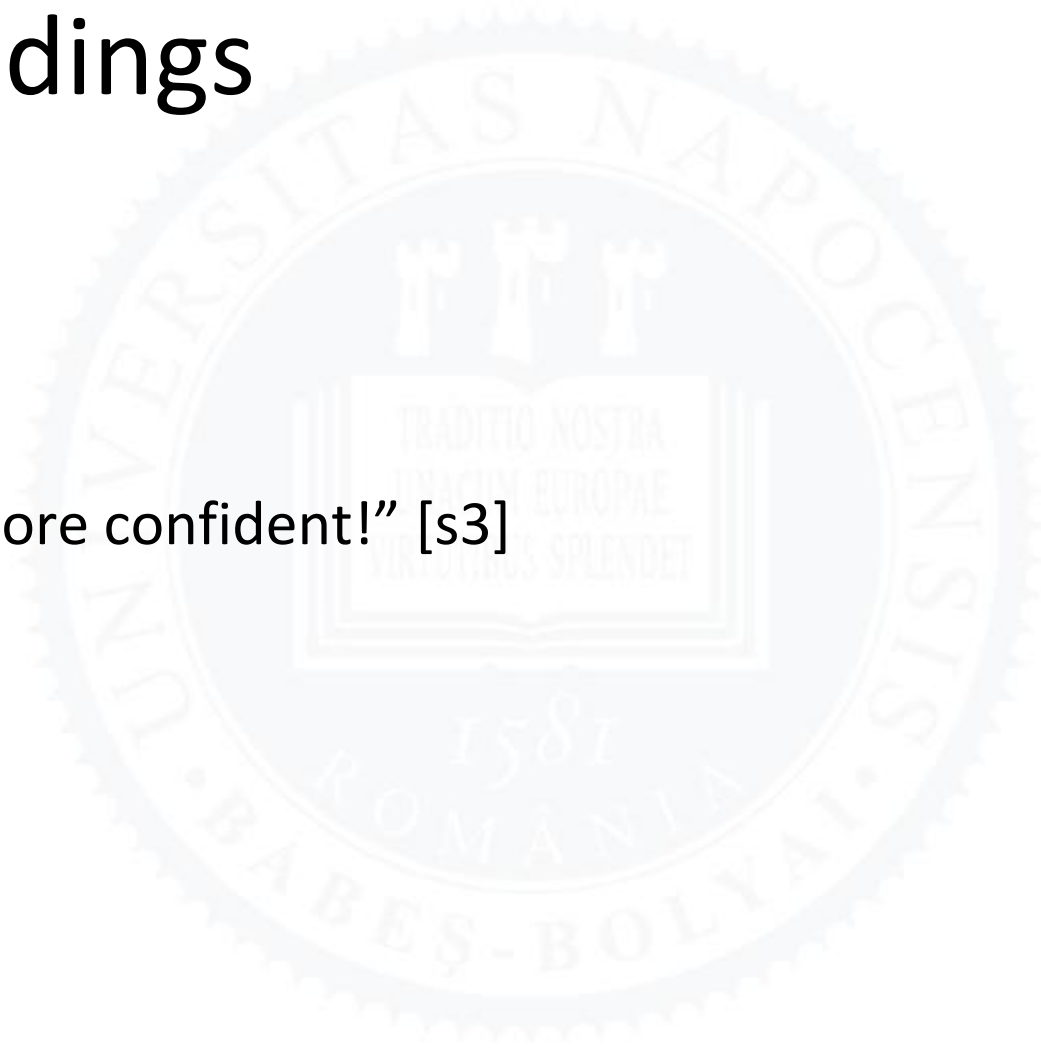
Main findings

“I moved to the United States very shortly after graduating from College so english became my first language right away. I worked in sales for a few years and i was depending on my english skills. Writing was very easy but i found very challenging having a fast pace live conversation. (...) Helps a lot that we learn the correct way of using the english language and that Babes graduates that end up in the US can talk and definetely write, spell a whole lot better than most americans. And i believe that says a lot about the teachers at the University and the dedication and effort they put into learning English properly” [s2]



Main findings

“It made me more confident!” [s3]



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