

**Exploring the Relevance of the English Language Content in Hospitality and  
Tourism Communication Courses Offered at Two South African Technical and  
Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges**

**By**

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## DECLARATION

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I declare that the doctoral thesis entitled: Exploring the Relevance of the Language Content in Hospitality and Tourism Communication courses Offered at Two South African Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges is my own original work. All the cited sources have been acknowledged. I declare that this doctoral thesis has not been previously submitted to another institution for any other qualification programme.

**Signature:**



Date: 30/07/2025

Mr Baloyi

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## **DEDICATION**

In memory of my late parents Mr Risimati Samuel Chivirika Baloyi and Mrs Mudjadji Vosiwana Baloyi. This thesis is dedicated to you. Your words of encouragement, support, love, and prayers continued to guide me until I fulfilled what I promised to achieve. I have indeed managed to achieve the qualification you wished for me. I have managed to put on the red gown that you wished to see me wearing. Thanks for everything. I continue to remember and love you. Above all, if it were not for God's wish and support, this effort to achieve this qualification would have been in vain. To God the Father, the creator of universe, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I salute.

To my wife Joyce and our children Chivirikani Tricia and Ringetani Françoise Baloyi, your support, love, and words of encouragement are not measurable. It is through your permission and support that I have attained this qualification. To my siblings Almina, Sarah, Alex, Moses, and Calvin, I thank you too. This work is dedicated to you and your children as well as to the Xinghema Clan.

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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in South Africa, specifically at two Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) colleges in the Tshwane and Vhembe districts, from 2022 to 2025. It aimed to evaluate the relevance of the English language content used in the hospitality and tourism communication courses as they relate to the National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) offered by these two TVET colleges. It also sought to explore how well the English language content itself is aligned with practices within the hospitality and tourism communication. The main research question of the study was: In what ways is the English language content of the communication courses of the two NATED programmes provided by the two TVET colleges relevant to both hospitality and tourism communication skills requirements? The study employed an interpretivist research paradigm and an exploratory research design, and was guided by English for specific purposes (ESP) as its overarching approach. It had 38 participants consisting of lecturers ( $n = 15$ ) and N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication students ( $n = 23$ ) from both colleges. Overall, the study analysed ten data sets garnered from the two data collection methods mentioned earlier. The ten data sets were as follows: the first two data sets were the English language content of the two textbooks, N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication, used at the two TVET colleges; the second two data sets were about the interviews with two groups of lecturers at the Tshwane TVET College; the third two data sets related to the interviews with two groups of lecturers at the Vhembe TVET College; and the fourth data sets pertained to the interviews with four groups of students, two groups from each TVET college.

Some of the key findings of the study revealed that the prescribed textbooks contain decontextualised language structures, the courses predominantly focus on language structures or forms that do not encourage students how to apply them to real-world hospitality and tourism contexts. Participants mentioned that the English language content should be revised and realigned by tailoring it to suit the hospitality and tourism fields. To do so, the jargon and phraseology of the two textbooks need to be contextualised. The study makes recommendations and conclusions. For instance, it argues that the English language content and communication skills of the N6 Communication course and the N5 Tourism Communication course need to be tailored to suit the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism fields. In addition, the study presented a brief proposed sample alternative chapter model for the English language content to exemplify the expected kind of language to be used in the specified textbooks. The findings of this study have implications for policymakers, students, and lecturers in the TVET college contexts.

**Keywords:** English for specific purposes (ESP), English language content in context, technical education, vocational language, intercultural communication, National Accredited Technical Education and Training

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introducing Issues

### 1.0 Introduction and Background

This study explores the relevance of the National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses taught to hospitality and tourism students in two Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in South Africa. These communication courses are necessary for all students who enrol for the National Qualification Framework Level 6 (N6 Certificate or N6 Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism). After completing 18 months of study and fulfilling the syllabus requirements, students obtain an N6 certificate. Thereafter, they may proceed with their studies and complete practical work in industry for another 18 months. Upon completion of the programme, they obtain an N6 Diploma. All NATED courses have two qualifications. These are the N6 National Certificate and the N6 National Diploma.

NATED courses start from N4 and end at N6. The N6 National Certificate is the third and final theoretical course. To qualify for an N6 certificate or for a diploma, students can enrol for any of the following qualifications: Financial Management, Business Management, Marketing Management, Educare, Legal Secretary, Human Resource Management, and Management Assistant. The entry requirements for an N6 National Certificate is an N5 National Senior Certificate and the entry requirements for an N6 National Diploma is an N6 National Certificate. The notion of exploring the communication courses is geared towards establishing if the courses' content contains the English language content that helps students to apply the jargon, phrases and sentences that speak to practices applicable to hospitality and tourism. According to Ramadan and Chen (2018), TVET offers an education that prepares an individual for a specific career. Relevant language skills, occupational course content in context, and the relevance of language use equip and brace students to apply their knowledge in diverse contexts. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to equip students with the English language content knowledge and communication skills relevant to their field of study.

This study considers communication skills and language content that is well-versed in occupational needs. Relevant course content knowledge that contains phraseology and communication skills that are specific to hospitality and tourism jargon develop competent and work-ready graduates. The term 'specific' refers to the specific purpose of learning Hospitality and Tourism courses. Teaching communication skills by applying language content knowledge in hospitality and tourism aligns the students with abilities to communicate content knowledge relevant to their study. Communication courses for hospitality and tourism students, like any other course designed to address specific purposes, must equip students with the English language content and communication skills that enhance their competence in their field of work.

Basturkmen (2021) highlights that the English for specific purposes (ESP) instruction does not aim to develop a general linguistic competence but, rather, to develop the set of linguistic competencies that will enable learners to enter or make progress in their chosen field of study, such as economics, accounting, and or occupation such as tour guides. In addition, Vora (2022) states that effective teaching of an ESP course, such as NATED Communications courses, should be achieved through textbooks, which contain job-related English lessons, and which can be effectively delivered through the use of new technology and supplemented by extracurricular activities.

To determine the credibility of the relevance of the English language content used in the communication courses, the phraseology in the course content, and the meta-discourse embedded in the subject guidelines for hospitality and tourism courses were explored and analysed. Rautenbach et al. (2018) argue that a specific language should be applied in specific occupational or professional settings. In the same way, relevant language and communication skills must be taught to TVET hospitality and tourism students. An occupation-driven course content is, without doubt, a subject content that could be used in the business world, and in various other areas. For example, the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, Environmental Affairs and Tourism White Paper (1996) states that one of the requirements for improving tourism, and the services rendered therein, is to enhance the communication skills, and by extension, the language skills of employees in this industry.

### **1.1 A Brief Description of the Existing Communication Course**

The current NATED (N) Communication courses' aims include making students aware of the importance of staying motivated and being productive in the work environment (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2025). They equip students with strategies to take decisions responsibly. Students are made aware of the possibility of conflicts and stress in the workplace and how to deal with this. The course also introduces the students to skills of drafting concise communication, such as writing business letters, goodwill correspondence, reports, press releases, programs, and graphic communication, and trains students to evaluate situations and facts, draw conclusions, and provide solutions. It also equips students with skills in reading, speaking, listening, and writing. The English language content section generally focuses on equipping students with skills of extension and reduction of notes, constructions of sentences within specific grammatical structures such as simple past tense, and direct and indirect speech, active and passive voice, and linking words etc.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The problem addressed by this study is that NATED communication courses for hospitality and tourism students in South African TVET colleges employ a generic English language content rather than ESP-informed, industry-tailored content, resulting in a misalignment between what is taught and what is required in workplace contexts. Clarke and Winch (2007, p. 9-10) argue that “vocational education is confined to preparing young people and adults for working life, a process often regarded as of a rather technical and practical nature and this type of vocational education embraces both elements of civic and academic education”. This means that students who study NATED communication courses need to learn to develop vocation-based language and communication skills. As a proponent of equipping students with relevant vocational language content and communication skills, and in support of a need to infuse skills that are relevant to a specific field of study and workplace, Rautenbach et al. (2018) maintain that to train graduates who can communicate well upon entry into the hospitality and tourism industry, the teaching of English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) would have to play an important role.

In the case of the NATED communication courses, the English language content does not reflect the language required in specific industries as it deals with language content in general. It does not embrace the jargon, phraseology, and syntax that address hospitality and tourism. Field et al. (2014) agrees that there are challenges within South African TVET colleges, as many recent studies have highlighted the huge gap between the skills employers expect and those possessed by graduates employed directly from South African TVET colleges. To draw on similar views, Thakalekoala, 's (2021) study states that there is often a mismatch between the functioning of TVET colleges and the needs of industry and there is a limited collaboration between colleges and employers. The study also maintains that curricula are not always aligned with labour market requirements, contributing to skills deficits among graduates. The DHET's recent findings show employers' perceptions of TVET graduates. The findings raise issues about curriculum relevance and preparedness for productive employment, including skills gaps (DHET, 2025).

Despite the inclusion of communication skills in current curricula, there remains a gap between generic communication content and the specific lexical, pragmatic, and structural language skills required in the hospitality and tourism industry. This study, therefore, addresses the need to realign the NATED communication courses by narrowing the generic English language content with industry-specific English vocabulary, sentence structures, and questioning techniques relevant to hospitality and tourism contexts. Also, there is a need to investigate the perspectives of beneficiaries of the programme (students) as well as the agents (lecturers) about the relevance of the English language content concerning the practices in the workplace.

### 1.3 Research Assumptions

The following research assumptions underpin the study:

- ESP principles are appropriate and applicable to vocational education contexts.
- Participant perspectives (lecturers and students) provide valid data on curriculum effectiveness.
- Prescribed textbooks reflect the intended and taught curriculum.
- Workplace communication needs can be identified and codified.

### 1.4 Research Questions

The study explored the English language content of the NATED communication courses to determine if it is relevant to equip students with the necessary English language content and communication skills required in the fields of hospitality and tourism. The main research question that the study sought to address is: In what ways is the English language content of the communication courses of students who study NATED programmes at TVET colleges relevant to both hospitality and tourism communication skills requirements? Below are the subsidiary questions:

- To what extent are the English language content and communication skills embodied in the NATED communication courses relevant to the hospitality and tourism fields of study?
- To what extent do the English language content and communication skills taught in these courses reflect the elements of ESP?
- Do the NATED N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses' assessment questions require students to demonstrate context-specific English language application?
- What are the perceptions of students regarding the relevance of the English language content to their career path?
- What are the perceptions of lecturers regarding the relevance of the English language content of these communication courses to hospitality and tourism?

**Table 1.1:** Types of methods used for collecting data.

<b>Method type</b>	<b>Participants</b>
Semi-structured interviews	TVET lecturers and students
Semi-structured interviews	TVET lecturers and Students

Focus-group interview on alternative model chapter for tourism language content	TVET lecturers
Document analysis	Segments of the English language content sections in the prescribed N6 Communication and N5 Tourism communication courses.

## 1.5 Definitions of Key Terms

This section serves to define the key terms used in this study. These terms include English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English language content in context, technical education, vocational language, communication skills and National Accredited Technical Education and Training (NATED). The functional use of the terms and how they contribute to shaping the study is also explained.

### 1.5.1 English for specific purposes

The Industrial Revolution led to significant developments in science and technology. It also resulted in the introduction of new technical and scientific terms into the English vocabulary. These terms were created for specialised use, a concept known as English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The term *specific* in ESP refers to a given specific purpose for learning English (Prabhakar, 2018). Mohamed and Alani (2022) add that ESP is a general expression used to refer to an approach that instructors adopt in teaching English that includes a certain content for any specific purpose and learning of that type of English. Moreover, they argue that this type of English is designed to fulfil certain needs that are specific for a certain learner profile including the act of practicing the use of specific spoken and specific written English required to accomplish specific official or academic work.

Relating to this study, TVET college communication courses, specifically the N6 Communication courses and the N5 Tourism Communication courses are supposed to be designed to teach students' communication and writing needs required in their intended field work. The syllabi should contain vocabulary, phrases and all types of linguistic features that encourage tourism register. This definition and explanations of the ESP would be used to determine the kind of English language content embedded in the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses.

### **1.5.2 Language content in context**

The term *context* has been used in various fields of study, such as pragmatics, linguistics, and education and its meanings change according to the field of study in which it is used. This is so because context bears the connotation of a tangible and intangible space within which an event occurs and many factors should be considered when language is applied including the characteristics of the people in the learning environment (e.g., age, gender, or culture), the physical characteristics (e.g., location, design, or classroom size), the learning and teaching resources available, the nature of the course taught, the type of institution, and the time component (Alshumaimeri, 2023). Drawing from these features, English language in context for TVET college curriculum refers to the specific lexis that communicates specific tourism activities. This definition will be used to explore the kind of English language content for TVET colleges' N6 Communication and N5 Tourism courses to determine its relevance in them.

### **1.5.3 Technical education**

Technical education refers to the branch of education that facilitates the learning of practical and applied skills, together with fundamental scientific knowledge. It is a form of learning that focuses on acquiring practical and applicable skills, as well as fundamental scientific information. It is a specialised style of instruction aimed at equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed for various sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, tourism and commerce. The objective of technical education is to furnish the nation's industry with proficient and skilled workforce, and enhance efficiency and productivity (Olowe, 2024).

The question I may ask is: Looking at the English language content of the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism courses at TVET colleges, are the communication skills and the English language content aligned to the communication skills required in the field of tourism? This descriptive definition provided above is applied to guide the exploration process of the kind of the English language content that is contained in the N6 Communication course and the N5 Tourism course.

### **1.5.4 Vocational language**

Technical and vocational education and training requires that language in the curriculum be tailored to address the specific communication needs of the students. The curriculum should accommodate linguistic features that are present in the fields of tourism and hospitality. The relevant English language content and communication skills in tourism and hospitality play a great role when service providers interact with the clients. This implies that for the English language in the N6 Communication course and in the N5 Tourism

Communication course to be vocational, its linguistic features should be tied to communicating or addressing the activities that occur in the context of tourism. Both the teaching objectives and the assessment techniques must be developed to require students to learn to apply vocational vocabulary and sentence constructions that accommodate tourism register. Therefore, the existence of the register that talks and expresses tourism was explored in the N6 Communication and in the N5 Tourism Communication course to determine its relevance in them.

### **1.5.5 Intercultural communication**

Intercultural communication refers to the process of interacting with people who are different from oneself in fundamental ways related to appearance, language, and worldviews. For many people, this phenomenon is part of their everyday lives, for example, in multilingual, multicultural communities or in culturally diverse families (Godwin-Jones, 2023). This term is used to guide the process of exploring the content of the English language section of the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses to find out if there are sections that encourage the teaching and assessment of intercultural communication. This would be helpful because tour guides and other employees in the tourism sector interact with tourists from different linguistic backgrounds. Thus, there is a need to encourage policy and curriculum developers to design the English language content that accommodates different languages and cultures.

### **1.5.6 National Accredited Technical Education and Training**

In South Africa, the National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) or Report 191 programmes, is a theoretical component of the artisanal training system for apprentices employed by both public and private sector firms. Recently, students have been allowed to enrol for NATED programmes without being employed or obtaining employer sponsorships. The courses are presented over six trimesters (for engineering studies) or three semesters (for business and services programmes) (GTAC, 2021).

## **1.6. The Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are to:

- To determine the extent to which the English language content and communication skills embodied in the NATED communication courses are relevant to the hospitality and tourism fields of study.
- To explore the extent to which the English language content and communication skills taught in these courses reflect the elements of ESP.

- To establish whether the NATED N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses' assessment questions require students to demonstrate context-specific English language application.
- To investigate the perceptions of students regarding the relevance of the English language content to their career path?
- To examine the perceptions of lecturers regarding the relevance of the English language content of these communication courses to hospitality and tourism.

Based on the findings of the study, especially those drawn from lecturer perceptions, a model course design framework of the relevant English language content for tourism and hospitality is proposed for TVET colleges.

### **1.7 The Rationale of the Study**

The English language content of the NATED N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses is generic and lacks coherence with the hospitality and tourism context in terms of language aspects and communication skills. The jargon and the language content are not contextualised. Since relevant language content and communication skills form fundamental requirements for the effective functioning of the service providers, it is important to explore the courses to determine their relevance to the context of the hospitality and tourism industry.

Madileng (2022:75) argues that the “National Certificate (Vocational) English curriculum follows an outcomes-based approach in its design, but the indicated content knowledge is vague and unspecified”. This also serves as a major reason for researching how assessment is done in the NATED Communication courses. The curriculum cannot provide a basis against which content knowledge can be selected, as it does not give prominence to a solid content knowledge of the subject. In addition, DHET (2013) posits that the current mix of programmes and qualifications in the TVET colleges is complex to administer, difficult for learners and parents to understand, and often poorly quality-assured. Therefore, this study also intends to uncover how the English language content in the NATED communication courses is fit for purpose.

### **1.8 Conceptual Framework: English for Specific Purposes**

A conceptual framework represents the organisation of central ideas and central concepts from theories, key findings from research, policy statements, and other professional wisdom that guides the research project (Shikalepo, 2020). ESP serves as a conceptual framework of this study. Hui (2017) states that ESP is the bridge concept between English for General Purposes (EGP) and students' needs. In addition, Liu and Zhang (2020) state that needs analysis aims to present learners' wants and needs, and what learners

lack, before designing a course. It is an undeniable fact that needs analysis is one of the fundamental principles for establishing the purpose of a curriculum or a course.

The English language content and communication needs of the students who enrol for courses in hospitality and tourism programmes must be analysed. Based on the outcomes of the analysis, subject guidelines and lesson plans must be informed by the identified needs, and those needs must be addressed using the ESP approach. Fayzulloeva et al. (2020) assert that the purpose of conducting needs analysis is to identify learners' needs and design a curriculum, and thereafter, structure lesson plans, accordingly. As such, students' occupational needs would also be addressed since the process of analysing their needs would be done in consideration of the expectations of the hospitality and tourism environment. The problem addressed by this study is that NATED communication courses for hospitality and tourism students in South African TVET colleges employ generic English language content rather than an ESP-informed, industry-specific content, resulting in a misalignment between what is taught and what is required in workplace contexts.

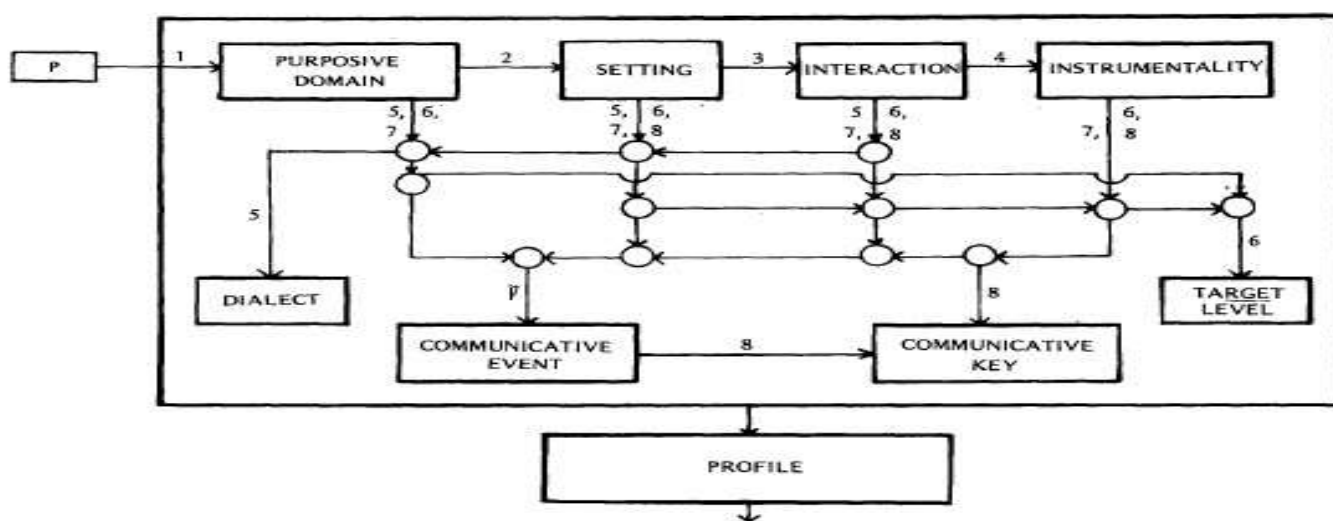
To support this, Nimasari (2018) maintains that needs analysis is the essential element to design a set of pedagogy framework. Hospitality and tourism within the TVET context are the focus to which communication activities in the communication courses must be directed. Therefore, the English language content of the communication courses must refer to hospitality and tourism activities in all aspects, including their lexis and their pragmatic aspects. Relevance Theory (RT) states that "human linguistic communication requires both the knowledge of some linguistic code and a general ability to draw inferences" (Assimakopoulos, 2017, p.1). Considering the aforesaid, the English language content of the communication courses must be centred on hospitality and tourism context rather than on generic context. The teaching and learning activities and questions set for assessment purposes must draw on ESP principles, aims, and objectives. In a way, the communication courses' language content needs to communicate business activities in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Figure 1.1 shows a diagrammatic model accentuating steps necessary to be taken when the needs analysis is applied to develop a teaching and learning programme's English language content, discern it to gauge its relevance to a specific language context, and infuse it in a syllabus for a specific field of study. Thereafter, the model is described and explained in the context of the expected syllabus for the English language content for a tourism and hospitality communication course.

This figure depicts a specialist domain, and in the case of this study, this refers to the two communication courses (N6 Communication courses and N5 Tourism Communication courses) offered at TVET colleges. First, the specialist domain influences the language and culture to be taught/learned. In the case of the communication

course for tourism and hospitality, the domains would call for the study and knowledge of terminologies, genres, discourses, and cultures interconnected to tourism and hospitality. The specialist domain also influences the knowledge required of lectures for the communication course, and the type of training they should receive.

**Figure 1.1** Communication needs processor (CNP) (Adapted from Niemiec 2017, p. 225 and Munby, 1978).



The target situation must be identified. In this study, the target situation is the TVET college setting, and the fields to be focused on are the tourism and hospitality industries. This implies that the linguistic features that should be embedded in the prescribed textbooks, syllabi, and examination question papers must be vocational. Also, the English language content of the evaluation process or assessment techniques must seek to test students' abilities using an assessment technique that is embedded with vocational phrases, jargon, and content knowledge from the tourism and hospitality perspectives. The content of this figure was used comparatively with the content of the communication courses i.e., its linguistic language features, the content of the examination question papers' language content, to investigate the level of the connectivity and interrelatedness with the English language content and knowledge required in the fields of tourism and hospitality.

## 1.9 Literature Review

Sajeevanie (2021) asserts that to develop a research idea and evaluate the research findings, it is important to review literature that relates to the discipline being explored. The following sub-section presents a preliminary review of the literature about the relevance of the English language content of the communication courses mentioned above. The reviewed literature acts as a lens for exploring the relevance of the English language content of the two courses to the hospitality and tourism fields. A literature review of how these communication courses address the needs of the students is provided. First, the focus is on explaining the history of TVET colleges in South Africa. This is followed by a brief discussion of what

communication courses entail. Lastly, a brief discussion of the teaching and learning materials suitable for TVET college students enrolled for certificates in hospitality and tourism management is presented.

### **1.9.1 History of the South African TVET colleges and the NATED programmes**

Calero and Rodríguez-López (2020) state that technical vocational education and training is a key element of lifelong learning systems that aims to equip people with the technical knowledge, expertise, skills, and competencies required in the labour market and, at the same time, with the personal skills for their future lives in society. Public Further Education and Training (FET) colleges were merged into 50 new FET colleges as an important endeavour to develop a new system, which gave rise to the new TVET college system in the country (Continuing Education and Training Act, (Act No. 16 of 2006). For many years, the NATED programmes' (usually abbreviated as N1, N2, N3, N4, N5, and N6) courses have been the basic theoretical qualification for entry into the trade. Subsequently, the National Certificate Vocational (NCV) curriculum was introduced for TVET colleges with the assumption that it would improve education and training, integrate the various strands of the post-school system, and set out modalities for ways in which the unskilled labour force can be skilled and thus, contribute to a sustainable South African economy (DHET, 2013). On realising that the two qualifications did not serve the same purposes, and due to the outcry from industries about the importance of the NATED programmes, the National N Certificate could not be phased out. The NATED courses were viewed by the industry as constituting an integral part of apprenticeships, as well as incorporating some business initiatives, unlike the NCV programmes (DHET, 2013a).

The Department of Higher Education realised that some N courses (the N4, N5, and N6) programmes are above the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 4. These courses also represented a useful trajectory for graduates from the TVET sector and for part-time adult students who wanted to enter higher education. This is evident at some universities of technology, which acknowledge the articulation between the TVET and university qualifications. Strong views were expressed in support of the revitalisation of the N programmes, which underpin artisan training, as the NATED programme curricula had not been revised for a prolonged period and were widely regarded as outdated (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2020; SAQA, 2023). Concerns were raised by curriculum developers, researchers at higher institutions of learning, and industries that N courses were essentially irrelevant (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2020; Skills Portal, 2022; Durban University of Technology, 2021; University of South Africa, 2025). Despite the above raised concerns, voices in the industry argued that the N courses should not be abandoned but should instead be modernised as a vital component of artisan training (DHET, 2013a). These innovations had an impact on the TVET college curriculum design.

The shortcomings were indicated in the course content and technical qualifications of the TVET college lecturers. Kennedy and Kerre (2018) established that the majority of the TVET lecturers had inadequate work experience. TVET colleges are viewed as ineffective in preparing students for employment; neither do they create sufficient opportunities for graduates to access the workplace (Oosthuizen et al., 2022). TVET Colleges should play a crucial role in assisting students from socio-economically deprived or poverty-stricken environments to access employer networks that could potentially improve their chances of employment. To do so, they should equip students with the relevant English language skills that prepare them to be ready for employment.

### **1.9.2 What communication skills are and why they are important**

Rathee and Rajain (2018) suggest that communication incorporates many different domains. These domains include face-to-face interactions (e.g., premium located meetings), digital literacy including virtual environments, for instance, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, e-portfolios, the email, texting, and social media. Effective communication skills are crucial for any corporate professional. They not only improve and enhance sharing of ideas with others, but they also advance good interaction among employees and serve as a means by which knowledge can be clearly understood. Mohamed (2006) and Komba (2012) state that students' abilities to communicate in and about their subjects of specialization have not improved even though all students take communication courses. This implies that a lot still needs to be done to improve communication courses so that they address the kind of communication that caters for the needs of the students.

This study draws on the definition of communication from Komba (2015) which states that effective communication involves the choice of the best communication channel for a specific purpose, the technical knowledge to use the channel appropriately, the presentation of information in an appropriate manner for the target audience, and the ability to understand messages and responses received from others. In TVET colleges, the communication courses are offered to students who study N courses, including those who specialise in hospitality and tourism.

Salmani Nodoushan (2020) states that, as its name clearly shows, ESP can be defined in terms of the 'purposes' and the 'specificity' of the purposes for which the teaching of English is felt necessary. In the same vein, I view communication courses' specificity to communicate what is expected in the specific field as of high importance. This entails the importance of the needs of the learners who study communication courses with the aim of responding to the specific requirements of the target situation. Contextualising a communication course would need the application of English language content and communication skills for specific purposes in the NATED communication courses. That would mean narrowing the

communication courses' English language content and communication skills to embrace the hospitality and tourism content.

There is a wide angle and a narrow angle of applying the English language content and communication skills in communication courses. The wide angle is that institutions of higher learning design courses that are driven or guided by generic principles of communication. For example, English for academic purposes covers a wide range of academics and professionals regardless of the different fields of their specialisation (Cambridge University Press, 2025). In English for academic purposes, all enrolled students, i.e., students for political science, economic management, etc., study English for academic purposes to gain insight into how to read, communicate, and write following the necessary academic conventions.

At a wider range, ESP researchers focus on a systematic and contextualised survey of the discursive, generic, social, and organisational dimensions and features of the specialised domain, which they put under scrutiny. They build a comprehensive picture of the professional and specialised varieties of English and communication skills that are used within that domain. They borrow operative concepts and methodological tools from other disciplines and integrate them to shed light on the specialised domain they seek to study (Détourbe, 2017). Contrary to that, the narrow-angle's focus is on the milieu, discourse, and culture of the discourse communities that are under scrutiny (Bruce, 2008). The context of this study is communication courses for hospitality and tourism. To this effect, the English language content and communication skills in the courses need to be coherent and cohesive within the contents of these two fields. To support the aforesaid point, Fitria (2020) asserts that there is a need to assess the students' needs and integrate the motivation, the subject matter, and the content for the teaching of relevant skills. Course designers should be encouraged to develop communication courses to contain disciplinary knowledge and consult students to draw on information pertaining to their expectations. Based on this, this study draws on the characteristics of ESP as stipulated by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) when they argue that:

- the ESP programme is designed to meet the requirements of the specific disciplines or vocation-specific needs of students with English as first or second additive language ability as a requirement to communicate for study purposes in a specific field;
- ESP based materials and methods are developed or adapted to address students' needs and provide activities that are appropriate to specific disciplines; and
- students are expected to acquire knowledge and learn concepts from their disciplines or specialisation.

The argument then is, if the application of English language content and communication skills differs from one context to the other, it should be possible to establish the characteristics of a specific field and make

such features the foundation of students' communication course. The aim should be to design courses that would empower students to communicate effectively and adequately in a target situation, that is, the situation in which they would use to communicate what they learn. The section below reflects on the importance of using relevant teaching and learning materials to teach communication courses. All the materials used to teach students should be suitable for use in their chosen vocations and they should be adapted to address the specific needs of the students.

### **1.9.3 Content in the teaching and learning materials for TVET courses**

This study contends that all forms of teaching and learning materials are meant to serve a specific purpose. The specific field of study needs specific kind of language content and communication skills, and the language used in the development of such material must be to serve a specific purpose. In support of the aforesaid, Mamadaliyeva and Shoiraxon (2025) state that specific fields of study require the language content and communication skills that are tailored to the communicative tasks and vocabulary of that field, a key principle for the ESP instruction, which focuses on the needs analysis and specialised language use for professional or academic purposes. Although the importance of giving adequate attention to the process of developing teaching and learning materials is emphasised, Tomlinson and Farajnezhad (2022) assert that the material has the potential to become relevant to the learners when they fill gaps with their ideas, interpretations, and discussions. It is only at this level that the material acquires significance and becomes beneficial for the learners.

Materials can be adapted and developed further. Adaptation is essential in making materials relevant and more effective for learning development. The argument is that the language, i.e., grammar, lexis, register, skills, discourse, and genres of activities in those specific contexts/vocations must be actualised through the usage of the ESP to cover occupational aspects such as trade and vocation. In support of this argument, Basturkmen (2003) points out that although there is general agreement about the centrality of students' needs and the description of language use in various disciplines and occupations, there are differences in how these terms are understood. The above view is supported by the White Paper (DHET, 2013b, pp. 14-19) that argues for the improvement of the quality of the TVET college offerings, namely, relevant programmes, the upgrading of lecturers' qualifications, and the improvement of partnerships with employees. For the courses' teaching materials to address the needs of the students, consideration must be given to exploring the methodological principles and approaches of teachers.

In the main, the basic principles and approaches applicable to the development of the ESP-driven course material ought to be adhered to. An analysis must focus on the material and aim to provide a specific objective. "It asks questions about what the materials contain, what they aim to achieve, and what they ask

learners to do” (Tomlinson and Farajnezhad, 2022, p. 1). The English language content of the communication courses were explored and evaluated to establish if it is valid and reliable in the effective application of communication skills that are specific to hospitality and tourism fields. The phraseology and instructions in the questions for assessment activities were also explored.

### **1.10 Exploratory Research Methodology**

Methods are included and described in the methodology to provide clarity on the modes of data collection (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2019). The chosen methodology for this research is a qualitative exploratory research (QER) methodology. Adedoyin (2020), argues that the progenitors of QER methodology can be linked to anthropology, philosophy, psychology, history, and sociology, with the main aim of focusing on the systematic explanation and analysis of phenomena. QER methods have also been attracting more attention in the field of hospitality and tourism management. Anas and Ishag (2022) posit that QER methodology is used to understand people’s beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviour, and interactions. It generates non-numerical data. The integration of QER into intervention studies is a research strategy that is gaining increased attention across disciplines.

From the aforesaid, the study employed QER to examine the relevance of the English language content of the two NATED communication courses offered at two TVET colleges. To obtain lecturers’ perceptions on the relevance of the courses’ English language content to hospitality and tourism fields, in-depth interviews were conducted with the lecturers and their students. To determine the extent of the relevance of the English language content, the prescribed textbooks for the syllabi were explored, analysed, and critiqued. Anas and Ishag (2022) argues that the QER includes small group discussions for investigating beliefs and attitudes to establish the views on a focused topic. Thus, QER was employed to illuminate the extent to which the communication courses could effectively contribute to equipping TVET college students with the English language content and communicative skills that are tailored to suit the fields of hospitality and tourism.

#### **1.10.1 Exploratory research design**

Raman, and Sambamoorthy (2023) state that a research design encompasses the structured plan and strategic approach crafted to effectively address research questions or issues. The research design of this study is exploratory, and it is in two folds, namely: survey of pertinent literature and experience survey. It is rooted in survey of pertinent literature because it involved exploring and analysing the literature of the English language content of the two afore-mentioned communication courses to gain insight into what a reliable English language content of the communication syllabus of these two courses should contain. Also,

it included experience survey because it involved interviewing individuals who possessed the practical experience about the English language content of the NATED N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses. In this regard, the literature with the in-depth content of the English language content of the two communication courses were carefully analysed. In addition, respondents with diverse experiences were carefully targeted for the purpose of conducting interviews to gain insight from their experience of the two communication courses. So, the exploratory research design constitutes the blueprint of how I collected, analysed and interpreted the data for this study (Thakur, 2021).

### **1.10.2 Research paradigm**

This study followed an interpretivist research paradigm. Interpretivism is more concerned with studying and interpreting variables and factors related to context. Alharahsheh, and Pius, (2019) assert that an interpretivist considers humans as different from physical phenomena as they create further depth in meanings, with the assumption that human beings cannot be explored in the same way as physical phenomena. To gain in-depth insights, the collected data were analysed and interpreted rigorously. The major aim was to understand the relevance of the English language content sections in the NATED communication courses. I formulated the research problem and set the questions that guided the research process. The participants' experiences were uncovered through engaging them in discussion and through conducting structured interviews.

### **1.10.3 Population and sampling**

According to Johnson and Christensen (2014), a population in research is defined as the entire set of values, entities, or individuals that a researcher is interested in and from which a sample is drawn. In this study, the population consists of each member of the population and so a sample is drawn from the population. The sample is therefore a subset of subjects (in this study TVET college lecturers and students involved in the NATED communication courses) that is representative of the entire population. Sampling utilised in an enquiry saves time, money, and effort. This study applied convenience sampling.

Taherdoost (2016, p.22) states that convenience sampling is easy to use because it focuses on selecting participants who are easily accessible and readily available. These criteria could be geographic proximity, availability at a particular time, ease of accessibility, or willingness to volunteer. Convenience sampling was used to identify and access participants. In this study, lecturers were sampled from the two targeted colleges. The focus was on four campuses within the two targeted colleges. This implies that two campuses were sampled in each college. The total population from the two TVET colleges was 20 313 but the targeted population consisted of approximately 1062 students who registered for the two communication courses.

At the Tshwane TVET College campus, 11 lecturers participated, while at the Vhembe TVET college campus, 4 lectures participated, making a total of 15 when combined. All of them had experience in teaching the N6 and the N5 communication courses. From the students' cohorts, 12 students from the Tshwane TVET college campus and 11 students from the Vhembe TVET college participated. In all, 38 participants took part in this study. Using convenient sampling method, students were sampled from the total number of learners who registered for the NATED 6 Communication course and the NATED N5 Tourism Communication courses. An interview was conducted to collect data. A sample of 15 lecturers was deemed sufficient based on Guest et al.'s (2013) study that saturation in homogeneous samples often occurs within 6-12 interviews. The 23 student participants represented purposive maximum variation sampling across gender, course levels (N5 vs N6), and institutions to capture diverse perspectives. Again, a sample of 11 lecturers was deemed sufficient following Guest et al.'s study about the interview saturation. The 23 student participants represented purposive maximum variation sampling across gender, course levels (N5 vs N6), and institutions to capture diverse perspectives.

#### **1.10.4 Data collection process**

Two instruments were used to collect data for this study. First, interviews were conducted to collect information about the lecturers' perceptions of the relevance of the English language content of the two communication courses. Secondly, students who learn these communication courses were interviewed. Semi-structured interviews were used. Thirdly, the language segments in the N6 Communication course and in the N5 Tourism Communication courses were analysed and, then, the data were extracted. The data were collected from the two targeted TVET colleges: one from Limpopo Province and the other from Gauteng Province. The aim was to compare urban and rural colleges in terms of their economic resources and facilities and how these impact on practice and teaching activities. The two targeted colleges teach the same curriculum. The rural TVET College in Limpopo (Vhembe TVET College) was chosen to establish the effect of the contextual factors on the development of communication skills among hospitality and tourism students.

Vhembe TVET College has two dominate languages, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga, while Tshwane TVET College, is highly intercultural and multilingual. The intercultural communication is one of the key factors at Tshwane TVET College because of its multilingual nature. The effect of these two factors was compared analytically to measure their influence on the development of communication skills among hospitality and tourism students at these two TVET colleges.

### **1.10.5 Document review and analysis**

Document review and analysis were used to analyse the English language content of the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses. Qualitative researchers rely on various means to collect data. In some cases, they create the data, but sometimes they use pre-existing data (Morgan, 2022). Document review and analysis require that the data be reviewed, scrutinised and interpreted to extract meaning, achieve understanding, and expand verifiable knowledge. Documentary review and analysis instruments are often designed to explore latent meaning in the data (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Thematic analysis was used as a component of the document review and analysis approach. The English language content segments in the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses were identified and scrutinised to identify the presence and the lack of customised English language content. One important advantage when analysing documents is that data remains stable.

### **1.10.6 Interviews**

In this study, conversational interviews were conducted on a person-to-person basis through semi-structured interviews. Eight such interviews were conducted: four with lecturers and four with students at both colleges. The data collected through interviews usually play a more active role than questionnaires in eliciting narrative data that allow researchers to investigate people's views in greater depth (Morgan, 2022). An interview guide was developed and used to guide the interview process, and a list of questions were formulated. Semi-structured and structured questions were used. This allowed sufficient flexibility in the structure of the questioning to allow interviewees to respond promptly to what is relevant. As questions were prepared in advance, time was not wasted. One more advantage of using an interview guide is that both the interviewee and the interviewer are not bound to meeting at a particular setting. An interview can also be conducted online.

The interviews were guided by an interview protocol and schedule prepared beforehand by the interviewer. Activities that can be done before the interview include the interviewer reminding the interviewee of the research work being done, the interview process for the day, the rights of the interviewee, and post-interview activities (Adosi, 2020). All the interviews were geared towards gathering the information to gain the in-depth perceptions of the participants about the relevance of the English language content of hospitality and tourism and to acquire the understanding of the lecturers' knowledge and their consideration of ESP principles when preparing teaching materials.

## 1.11 Data Analysis

Qualitative content analysis was applied to analyse all the data. Creswell (2003) concur on the meaning of data analysis. They claim that the term alludes to the process of sifting, organising, summarising, and synthesising data to obtain results and reach conclusions. As proponents of summarising, synthesising, and organising data during analysis, Bogdan and Biklen (2007) contend that data analysis is an activity for logically searching and organising the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that the researcher has accumulated to increase his or her own understanding of the topic. Adhering to this definition, the data were analysed through deductive methods. The English Language content of the two NATED communication courses was matched with the ESP principles of effective communication to deduce its relevance to these two courses. The data collected through interviews was analysed by comparing it with the principles of ESP as an approach that guides the developing of teaching and learning materials for ESP. The data was also analysed thematically. Braun and Clarke (2012) define thematic analysis (TA) as a systematic method to identify, organise, and offer insight into established patterns of meaning across a particular data set. TA, therefore, allows the researcher to achieve an understanding of collective or shared meanings and experiences. The English language content in the communication courses was analysed in themes and language features that relate to the hospitality and tourism context.

The salient patterns of language features such as jargon and syntax in the context of hospitality and tourism were *analysed* and thereafter reflected analytically. The main purpose of using themes to analyse the data was to identify what is common to the way ESP is employed in teaching and assessing students at TVET colleges, and the way in which lecturers address the needs of their students. This approach to data analysis was used because it allowed me to identify the relations between the topic and the research objectives being explored. In addition, this approach to data analysis is flexible as it allowed me to focus on the data in numerous ways. Through deductive methods, the identified patterns in themes were classified.

## 1.12 Quality criteria: Reliability, Validity and Objectivity

Qualitative research, according to Morrow (2005), ensues from several disciplines, paradigms, and epistemologies. It incorporates multiple standards of quality, including validity, credibility, rigour, and trustworthiness. The criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research are closely associated with the paradigmatic framework of the discipline in which an investigation is conducted and concluded (Morrow (2005). To maintain and sustain the credibility and trustworthiness of the collected data, multiple data sources were used. The collection of data was conducted over a prolonged period, and I constantly engaged with the participants by conducting interviews. For the transferability of the outcome of the research to other contexts, the outcomes were discussed and debated in relation to the available literature. The

dependability of the outcome was ensured by collecting data until the data saturation point was reached. In addition, throughout the process, data was explored and re-examined.

### **1.12.1 Reliability**

Nunan (1992) states that reliability is the extent to which a replication of one's study would yield similar results. He further points out that the concepts of internal and external reliability must also be considered. Reliability alludes to the consistency of the results obtained from the same research (internal) and the degree to which a researcher can reproduce a study and produce similar results to those obtained in the original study. Therefore, reliability is measured by consistency within (by a researcher) and without (by other researchers) in the study. Other scholars assert that, although it is agreed that reliability is important when constructing research work, it is not always attained because of the range of variables related to teachers and the environment that may impact on a study (Freeman and Lewis, 1998).

### **1.12.2 Validity**

Van der Horst and McDonald (1997) define validity as research that sets out to investigate what it purported to investigate. This sounds simplistic but according to Nunan's definition (1992) validity is the level to which one generalises findings from the subjects and situations to other subjects and situations. According to Barry (1999), validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences made from test scores. Text validation involves gathering evidence to support such inferences. A variety of inferences may be made from the facts or views produced by a given text, and there are many ways of accumulating evidence to support any inference. Although evidence may be accumulated in many ways, validity always refers to the degree to which that evidence supports the inferences that are made from the purpose of the text.

In my view, validity has to do with checking if an instrument designed to measure something is measuring it in the way that it is expected to measure it. I used this concept to establish if the English language content of the two courses designed for students at the two afore-mentioned TVET colleges do contain the specific English language content and communication skills that students intend to apply after completing their N6 Certificate or N5 Diploma in hospitality and tourism.

## **1.13 Significance of the Study**

Little research has been conducted on the curriculum and pedagogy that relates to NATED communication programmes in South African TVET colleges. Conducting a study that focuses on exploring the presence

or the absence of ESP-driven English language content in hospitality and tourism courses will offer benefits to these the programmes. The study will also provide recommendations for improving the two communication courses it investigated. The findings of the study will, moreover, indicate as to why it is important to understand the language composition of the examined hospitality and tourism courses. Such understanding will contribute towards continuous research and debates on how to design the relevant English language content for vocational curricula which are considerate of the students' needs. Perhaps, more importantly, the findings in the study could initiate and provide a topic of conversation between all levels of the TVET system concerning vocational education student performance, throughput, employment, and self-employment rates. The next sub-section explains the limitations of the study.

### **1.14 Limitations of the Study**

The limitation of the study are herein outlined. The focus is limited to communication syllabi with specific focus on only N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses. The focus was further narrowed to only explore the English language content sections of the syllabi. The N6 Communication course has 13 modules, but only module 4 entitled *Presentation Communication* and module 6 entitled *Language Usage* were investigated. The focus was only on these two sections because the other modules do not cover language usage. In N5 Tourism Communication course, there are 5 chapters, but only chapter 3 entitled *presentation communication* is dedicated to teaching the language content. Although the TVET system consists of the National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF), an industry sector and competency standards, and a national TVET quality assurance system, this study solely covered the TVET college section. Also, only two TVET colleges out of 50 in South Africa were selected. This implied that the participation and coverage were limited to these two TVET colleges. As such, the findings of this study are not necessarily generalisable.

### **1.15 Delimitation of the Study**

This study is delimited to the exploration of the relevance of the English language content offered at two TVET colleges. The focus was on English within the framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), with particular attention to English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). The study was confined to the TVET context and did not include universities, secondary schools, or primary education institutions. It concentrated only on two tourism and hospitality communication courses. All programmes outside the selected departments were excluded from the investigation. In addition, the study explored and examined lecturers' and students' perceptions regarding the relevance of the English language content of the two NATED communication courses. Moreover, the study was conducted within a specific academic period and did not investigate the longitudinal curriculum changes over time.

## 1.16 Ethical Considerations

To conduct this research, ethical considerations were of paramount importance; therefore, I applied for the ethical clearance from the University of South Africa. Permission was granted, and I was issued with a certificate with the number Rec-240816-052. Its CREC reference was 53301846-CREC\_CHS\_2025. Letters requesting permission to conduct this study were sent to the two TVET colleges mentioned above. Both TVET colleges, Vhembe TVET College and Tshwane TVET College, granted me permission to conduct my study at their campuses. I visited these TVET colleges and conducted a preliminary interview aimed at gaining the background knowledge of the activities in the NATED communication courses' English language content sections. Only willing participants were interviewed, and benevolence, respect, and justice was exercised throughout the process. The participants were informed that their names (real names) would not be used but pseudonyms would be used in place of their names. All participants were provided with the content of the ethical clearance certificate and consent letters asking them to participate in the study. I sought to protect the rights of the participants and avoid any unnecessary harm to them during the data collection process. Below is the outline of the thesis chapters.

## 1.17 Outline of the Chapters

**Chapter 1** outlines the introduction and the background of the English language content of the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses taught at the two TVET colleges.

**Chapter 2** reviews the literature relevant to the English language content of the two NATED communication courses (the N6 Communication course and N5 Tourism Communication course). This is discussed within the context of hospitality and tourism.

**Chapter 3** discusses all the methodological issues such as the research approach, the research paradigm, the research design, research sites, the population, participants, and data collection methods and analysis.

**Chapter 4** presents the findings of the study and their discussion.

**Chapter 5** presents a brief sample chapter developed to serve as a model for the ESP driven English language content in the context of hospitality and tourism.

**Chapter 6** presents a summary of the findings, recommendations, limitations, future research, and the conclusion.

## **1.18 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the study. It outlined its purpose and the content of the NATED Communication courses under investigation. It presented the research problem that underpins the study, along with the research questions, objectives, and the rationale. The conceptual framework and a brief review of the relevant literature were also highlighted. In addition, the chapter reflected on the research methodology employed, including the data analysis process. Key quality criteria, reliability, validity, and objectivity, were discussed. These were followed by a discussion of the study's significance and limitations, and its delimitation. Ethical considerations were also described, and the chapter concluded with an outline of the subsequent chapters. The following chapter presents the literature reviewed and explored to determine the extent to which the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses contain the English language content relevant to the hospitality and tourism requirements.

## CHAPTER 2

### Literature Review: Exploration of Literature for English Communication Courses in Specific Context

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses with a view to determining the relevance of their English language content to hospitality and tourism from the ESP perspective. The review is done to examine the extent to which literature argues for the inclusion of specific English language content in communication courses for TVET colleges. The literature suggests that the syllabus of communication courses for specific fields should cover the English language content related to the targeted fields (Smith et al., 2017; Jones and Brown, 2020). The literature debate includes the application of generic language content versus discipline-specific language in context. Traditional, generic language content fails to prepare students for the communicative demands of their professional contexts (Gupta and Patel, 2017; Smith and Johnson, 2018). This debate is particularly prominent in vocational and professional education in which communication competence is tied to employability and workplace performance. Although generic communication courses are valued for foundational skills, Smith and Johnson (2018) contend that they overlook industry-specific discourse practices, terminologies, and interactional norms

#### 2.1 Global Journey of TVET Colleges: An In-depth Historical Exploration

The historical development of TVET has evolved internationally, reflected diverse approaches, and to a certain extent responded to the unique needs of various countries. One notable example is Germany, where the dual apprenticeship system has been the mainstay of TVET for centuries. Germany's model intertwines practical training with classroom education which creates a symbiotic relationship between educational institutions and industries (Rauner and Maclean, 2008). This historical evolution has not only contributed to Germany's robust workforce, but has also served as a benchmark for vocational education globally. Switzerland also stands as a good example of the international history of TVET. Renowned for its apprenticeship system, Switzerland prioritises the integration of theoretical knowledge with hands-on experience, fostering a skilled workforce closely aligned with industry needs (Caves and Mehaut, 2019). This model has gained global recognition, influencing TVET practices and highlighting the effectiveness of collaboration between educational institutions and employers.

In the United States, the historical landscape of TVET was significantly shaped by the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. This legislation marked a turning point by providing federal support for vocational education in

secondary schools, which fostered the growth of vocational training programs across the nation (Rojewski, 2002). The act laid the foundation for the integration of vocational education into the broader educational landscape and the recognition of its crucial role in preparing a skilled workforce. In the context of China, the historical development of TVET serves as proof of the country's strategic response to its developing economy. In recent decades, China has invested substantially in modernising its vocational education system to equip its workforce with the skills necessary for technological and industrial progress (Zhou and Lei, 2019). This proactive approach highlights the integral role TVET plays in supporting the economic growth and development.

Australia's TVET history is exemplified by the establishment of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions (Goozee, 2001). These institutions have been pivotal in providing vocational education and training. The TVET institutions aligned the evolving needs of industries, and fostered a versatile and skilled workforce (Wheelan et al., 2013). The Australian experience signals the adaptability of TVET to meet the changing demands of the workforce and economy. In the Nordic countries, including Finland and Sweden, the integration of TVET into comprehensive education systems has been a historic cornerstone. These nations prioritise high-quality vocational education. They positioned it to be on par with academic routes and emphasised the importance of providing diverse and respected educational pathways (Evans, 2003). This approach has contributed to creating a balanced and well-prepared workforce.

The TVET colleges in African countries point to a diverse set of historical, cultural, and economic factors. One notable example is South Africa, where TVET colleges have undergone significant transformations. Historically, the apartheid era resulted in a fragmented and unequal education system, impacting TVET as well. In the post-apartheid era, there has been a concerted effort to restructure and elevate TVET colleges to address skills shortages and enhance employability (Rampersad, 2015). The South African government has focused on improving infrastructure, curriculum relevance, and industry partnerships to align TVET with the country's economic needs. In Nigeria, the evolution of TVET has been influenced by a similar recognition of the importance of vocational skills. The Nigerian government took initiatives to modernize TVET and emphasize the need for a skilled workforce to drive economic development (Ogunlela and Adebola, 2018). Efforts included curriculum revisions, the introduction of new technologies, and collaborations with industries to ensure that graduates are well-prepared for the job market.

Kenya's TVET landscape has also witnessed developments in response to changing economic dynamics (. The Kenyan government, recognizing the important role of TVET in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, has invested in upgrading the infrastructure and enhancing the quality of vocational education. Initiatives like the Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunities Project aim to strengthen the TVET sector by improving access and relevance (Gideon et al., 2022). In Ghana, TVET colleges have

evolved to address the country's economic needs and promote self-employment and the government's initiatives such as the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) aim to coordinate and streamline TVET programmes (Owusu-Ansah, 2018). These efforts focused on creating a robust framework that aligns with industry demands and fosters entrepreneurship.

The East African region, including countries like Rwanda and Tanzania, has also seen strides in the development of TVET. Rwanda has undertaken comprehensive reforms to integrate TVET into its education system by emphasising its role in supporting economic development and reducing unemployment (Murenzi, 2019). The overarching trend across these African countries is a growing acknowledgment of the vital role TVET plays in addressing unemployment, nurturing entrepreneurship, and supporting economic growth. Efforts to improve infrastructure, curriculum relevance, and industry collaboration reflect a commitment to creating a skilled and adaptable workforce. However, challenges such as funding, perception, curriculum adaptation to meet specific needs and coordination persist, requiring sustained efforts to fully realise the potential of TVET in these nations.

Fürstenau et al. (2014) state that in countries like Germany and Switzerland, the language content forms part of the historical evolution of dual vocational systems, and integrates workplace learning and classroom instruction, where technical terminology, occupational standards, and apprenticeship regulations are delivered primarily in German. The precision of vocational language, particularly in engineering, manufacturing, and skilled trades has historically supported industry alignment and standardisation. Similarly, Switzerland's multilingual context (German, French, Italian, and Romansh) demonstrates how language policy directly influences curriculum development, mobility, and cross-regional recognition of qualifications (Fürstenau et al., 2014). Thus, I argue that language content plays a central role in shaping national TVET identity and coherence.

In contrast, Fürstenau et al. (2014) argue that in Nigeria, the historical development of TVET reflects colonial legacy and post-colonial reforms, where English serves as the official language of instruction despite the country's linguistic diversity. Here, language content affects accessibility and inclusivity. The reliance on English in technical education can create barriers for learners whose foundational education occurred in Indigenous languages. Therefore, linking language to the historical exploration of Nigerian TVET, highlights how linguistic policy intersects with equity, curriculum relevance, and workforce preparedness. Across these contexts, language also influences globalisation and international collaboration in TVET. As TVET colleges engage in international partnerships, student mobility programmes, and skills transfer initiatives, English often functions as a global lingua franca, while local languages preserve contextual relevance. Thus, the role of the language content connects directly to historical development,

policy frameworks, curriculum design, inclusivity, and internationalisation within each country's TVET journey.

The development of TVET colleges in African countries reflects a complex interplay of historical, cultural, and economic factors. As these nations face the challenges and opportunities associated with vocational education, the recognition of TVET's crucial role in addressing skills gaps and driving economic development remains a common thread. Drawing from the experiences of each country, African countries could refine and strengthen their TVET systems to meet the evolving needs of their societies. Since this study focuses on South African TVET settings, below is a focused and specific exploration of the history of the TVET colleges.

## **2.2 The History of TVET Colleges in South Africa**

The historical development of vocational and technical education inclusive of apprenticeship, which was then regulated, standardised, and shifted into TVET colleges in South Africa, evolved against the backdrop of a long history of *unfree black labour* spanning several years. It was initiated in 1922 and then refined in 1948 through the De Villiers Commission (Gamble, 2021). At the moment, the narrative of TVET colleges in South Africa, as outlined by the Department of Higher Education and Training, reveals both accomplishments and challenges. The establishment of 50 TVET colleges stands out as a commendable achievement. This was aimed to address the country's pressing need for vocational training (South African Government, 2019). However, these successes are marred by multifaceted challenges, particularly in education quality, access and equity, and alignment with the job market.

Quality of education emerges as a critical concern highlighted by the DHET's 2018 report as it emphasised the urgent need for improvement. The expansion of institutions has not necessarily translated into a high standard of education, and it raises fears about the impact on employability and national economic development. Challenges extend to issues of access and equity, with rural areas facing limited or inadequate access to TVET education. This has exacerbated the existing inequalities and hindered workforce development (UNESCO, 2022). The alignment of TVET programmes with the needs of the job market is another challenge, (Smith et al., 2021). This highlights the necessity for programmes that are responsive to the dynamic labour market, ensuring relevant skills set for graduates and averting potential unemployment issues. To address these challenges, the DHET (2018) emphasises the importance of adopting a holistic approach and the encompassing of needs-driven communication courses as instructional frameworks. To argue for a need to have an effective TVET courses, Avramenko (2023) asserts that the multicultural context of South Africa highlights the need for communication competence aligned with the country's needs and linguistic diversity.

The DHET (2018) further stresses the necessity of addressing gaps impacting the Continuity of Professional Development (CPD) in TVET colleges. This includes advocating for a diversified range of CPD needs instead of a one-size-fits-all approach and recognising the diverse requirements across institutions and disciplines. The post-apartheid era in 1994 marked a turning point for TVET colleges in South Africa, with the new government recognising their important role in addressing skills shortages and fostering economic development (Diedericks and Theron, 2018). However, persistent challenges, such as inadequate funding, limited resources, poor infrastructure, irrelevant course content, and a shortage of qualified lecturers, impede progress. Despite government efforts to address these issues, a substantial investment is still needed to ensure high-quality education and relevant curricula aligned with industry needs (Chiumbu and Ramrathan, 2021).

A notable challenge is the high dropout rate among TVET students, attributed to a lack of support, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Diale and Ntsaluba, 2020). The World Bank (2006) highlights the importance of addressing youth unemployment to mitigate security concerns. Despite challenges, there have been successes, including increased enrolment and new programmes (DHET, 2020). Efforts to improve the quality of education and support services are evident in the implementation of the National Plan for Post-School Education and Training (NPSET) (DHET, 2015). The transformative period since 1994 has seen increased government emphasis on education and training (Diedericks and Theron, 2018).

The historical development of TVET colleges in South Africa reveals a complex interplay of successes and challenges. Addressing issues of education quality, access and equity, and alignment with the job market requires a comprehensive approach that incorporates ESP to guide the processes of designing NATED communication courses. Doing so would eliminate the misconception that vocational education is limited to manual work. This aligns with Sherif's (1978) view that TVET offers skills across different careers, maximising opportunities for future success. The history of communication courses is presented below.

### **2.3 The History of English Communication Courses**

Communication courses have a rich history dating back centuries. They evolved from focusing on reading and translation to an emphasis on practical communication skills. The 15th century saw the emergence of English language teaching, primarily designed for Latin learners but incorporating English grammar (Baugh and Cable, 2002). The Renaissance period marked a shift towards practical communication skills. It emphasised speaking, writing and pronunciation in specific contexts (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). The British Empire's influence in the 19th century fuelled the global demand for English language courses. This led to the founding of the British Council in 1934 (Pennycook, 2017).

Throughout the 20th century, English communication courses evolved. This century witnessed the popularity of the audio-lingual method in the 1950s and the emergence of the communicative approach in the 1970s and 1980s that focused on real-life communication skills (Brown, 2007; Canale and Swain, 1980). In contemporary times, English communication courses are widely available in traditional and online settings, and they cater to over 1.5 billion English speakers globally (Crystal, 2003).

In South Africa, English is the primary language for instruction, including in TVET colleges (Baloyi, 2025). The importance of English communication courses is highlighted, especially in sectors like hospitality and tourism, as they are expected to develop a language content that is informed by specific industrial needs. To support this, Smith (2022) states that the subject content must be designed for specific purposes and be aligned with the needs of different students. The efficacy of TVET colleges, particularly for hospitality and tourism, relies on the relevance of the English language content and communication skills taught and their alignment with specific fields of study or work.

Emphasising the need for context-driven communication, recent research highlights the critical role of keeping course content up-to-date and tailored to diverse occupational sectors (Smith and Johnson, 2018). Effective communication depends on how language content and communication skills in communication courses are tailored to address the specific needs of students, particularly in the hospitality and tourism industry. There is a growing emphasis on aligning language content and communication skills with specific contexts, ensuring practical applicability for students in their professional responsibilities (Smith, 2020).

## **2.4 Intercultural Communication in Hospitality and Tourism**

Intercultural communication, a fundamental aspect of human interaction, is a dynamic skill that plays a significant role in promoting understanding and collaboration among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. It encompasses the exchange of information, ideas, and emotions among people with distinct cultural norms, values, and communication styles. As defined by Samovar et al. (2019), intercultural communication refers to the symbolic exchange process whereby individuals from two or more different cultural communities attempt to negotiate shared meanings in an interactive situation. In a heavily interconnected world, where globalisation has brought diverse cultures into closer contact, the significance of intercultural communication is highlighted.

Intercultural communication skills are indispensable in social settings (Avramenko, 2023). This implies that it is suitable for application even in the hospitality and tourism industry to exert a profound influence on guest interactions and overall business operations. Effective communication skills, specifically tailored to a given context, play a major role in developing and improving the guest experience. Personalised and

attentive communication, such as warm welcomes and active listening, fosters positive impressions and contributes significantly to guest satisfaction (Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

In the era of globalisation, tourists come from different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds. This necessitates a heightened emphasis on cultural sensitivity in communication. Hofstede (1980) notes that sensitivity to context reduces the risk of misunderstandings, and includes encouragement of inclusivity and a welcoming environment. Integrating intercultural communication skills equips professionals to manage conflicts that may arise from guest complaints, internal staff disagreements, or differing perspectives among team members (De Dreu and Gelfand, 2008). Continuous improvement in the hospitality industry relies on effective intercultural communication skills in gathering, analysing, and communicating guest feedback professionally (Johnston and Fern, 2018).

The ensuring of guest safety during unexpected crises needs to be a top priority. It requires effective crisis communication skills that encompasses an intercultural approach to embrace hospitality and tourism contexts (Ritchie and Jiang, 2019). Integrating intercultural communication in crisis training prepares staff to respond promptly and effectively in diverse situations to safeguard both guests and the reputation of the establishment. Personalisation, a key factor in guest satisfaction and loyalty, is facilitated by effective communication skills that enable staff to tailor interactions to individual preferences (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). In addition to all that, effective teamwork and collaboration within hospitality establishments are vital for smooth operations because it emphasises the need for personalised communication skills that foster a harmonious work environment.

Several studies advocate for the integration of hospitality and tourism content into language courses, such as English communication course to improve learners' communicative competence (Martin and Tucker, 2021; Gao et al., 2020). Exposure to authentic materials, including brochures, menus, hotel reviews, and customer service scenarios, enables learners to acquire context-specific language practice and inspires them to be culture-conscious and sensitive. Incorporating intercultural communication into education fosters cultural competence among learners. This enables them to develop and advance their intercultural communication skills (Jin and Lin, 2022). This exposure helps students understand cultural distinctions and adapt their communication styles to effectively engage with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. It also provides an opportunity for the development of professional skills and competencies tailored to the hospitality and tourism industry.

The sub-section below presents examples of how phrases, lexis, jargon, and sentences could be situated in an English communication course. It is of paramount importance to always note that these skills are the

cornerstone to succeed in applying language content and communication skills in an industry where guest satisfaction and service quality are paramount.

#### **2.4.1 Field-specific phraseology in communication courses**

Shehadeh (2020) asserts that research contextualising takes various shapes and forms. The first form is done about the established literature and prior studies while the second one is by linking it to (a) the specific context in which it was conducted, like an institution and workplace (micro-level); and (b) the location or general setting of the study like geographic territory and location (macro-level). Here, I follow Shehadeh's (2020) view and include contextualised language phrases and clauses in the language sections of the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses to ensure clear and specific communication that talks to the context of hospitality and tourism to help customising the syllabus, achieve the goal of addressing students' communicative needs and meet customer needs and expectations in hospitality and tourism. O'Fallon and Rutherford (2011) emphasise the importance of clear communication in their book *Hotel Management and Operations*. They point out that without proper context, a phrase like *early check-in* can be vague. To avoid confusion, it is crucial to contextualise it by saying something like, *We can accommodate an early check-in at 10 a.m.*, which provides guests with specific information and sets clear expectations. I use this kind of example to guide the process of exploring the kind of English language content used in the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses.

In communication context, personalisation and contextualisation are key drivers of customer satisfaction (McCole et al., 2010). McCole et al. (2010) support their argument by providing a relevant example: They use, *Would you like the chef's special recommendation tonight?*, as an example of how contextualisation can enhance the guest experience. This personalised suggestion, with its evening context, demonstrates attentiveness, and can significantly elevate the overall dining experience. Tourism often involves interactions with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. As noted by Hall (1990), context matters greatly in avoiding cultural misunderstandings. For instance, a simple phrase like *thumbs-up* can convey positivity in Western cultures but be offensive in some Asian countries. Being aware of such cultural contexts helps hospitality professionals create a more inclusive and welcoming environment.

The effective use of contextual phrases and clauses helps to manage guest expectations. Fernandez-Muniz et al. (2007) provide a clarifying example of how one can express a clear and contextualised message by articulating that when communicating fire evacuation instructions. They argue that a statement like this, *Please proceed to the nearest exit, which is located to your left/right*, can make a significant difference in ensuring guest safety. Consistently providing contextualised phrases and clauses when serving clients can

build trust and loyalty among tourists and guests. As emphasised by Kim (2010) in his study on customer loyalty in the hospitality industry, personalised and context-aware service is a key factor. When guests feel understood and valued, they are more likely to return and recommend the establishment to others, contributing to long-term success.

#### **2.4.2 Mastering contextualised communication and the role of lexis in English communication courses**

Contextualised lexis refers to the use of vocabulary and language elements within specific, situational contexts (Jo, A. 2025). In language learning and communication, understanding lexis about its surrounding context is paramount for effective comprehension and application (Brown, 2021). The utilisation of contextualised lexis enhances language content and communication skills by allowing learners to grasp the distinctive meanings and appropriate usage of words and phrases within diverse settings (Jo, A. 2025). This approach not only facilitates a deeper understanding of language in context but also promotes practical application. This enables individuals to communicate more fluently and accurately in real-life situations that are context driven (Hyland, 2019).

In this sub-section, I examine how lexis is applied in the communication courses to determine if they are used to critically enable students to master communication effectively. As emphasised by Sinclair (1991), lexis, when properly contextualised, helps convey precise meanings. Avramenko (2023) adds that cultural contacts and the interplay of language codes involved in interactions, particularly in the etymological composition of the English vocabulary, the hybrid structure of words and phrases, the formation of common speech behaviour patterns, etiquette clichés, and the productivity of code-switching, play a meaningful role in equipping speakers with relevant communication skills. For instance, the word *suite* in a hotel context signifies a spacious room with separate living and sleeping areas. Without contextualisation, this term might lead to misunderstandings if guests have different expectations regarding the room's features. Concerning the enhancement of the guest experience, which often leads to the success of their touring and hospitality, Pizam and Mansfeld (2009), argue that using the appropriate lexis can significantly enhance the guest experience. For example, a hotel staff member greeting a guest with, *Welcome to our beachfront resort*, sets the context, instantly communicating the property's prime location and creating a positive first impression.

Lexis carries value in conveying the safety and emergency information to guests. During emergencies, using unambiguous language can save lives. Using specific context related lexis, such as contextualised field specific jargon, contributes to building brand identity in the hospitality and tourism industry. Ekinici et al. (2007), highlight that a consistent use of brand-specific vocabulary and terminology reinforces brand recognition. For example, a luxury hotel chain may consistently use lexis such as *elegance*, *opulence*, and *unparalleled service* to create a brand identity associated with luxury and sophistication.

The explored literature on the role of lexis guided my process of determining the relevance of the lexis applied to the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses.

### **2.4.3 The importance of contextualised field specific jargon in communication courses**

In the process of developing and enhancing language content to be effective, the application of jargon that talks to the field of the study can be used to streamline communication. This could lead to the usage of industry-specific terminology that professionals and clients in business and management activities understand (Agudilla, 2024). For example, in the hospitality sector, the term *RevPAR* (Revenue per Available Room) is commonly used in hotels to measure financial performance. A Properly contextualised jargon like *Our RevPAR* helps to ensure that colleagues and stakeholders in the hotel industry comprehend key performance metrics (Smith, 2018). This example highlights the relevance of industry-specific jargon in context, such as the acronym, RevPAR, in facilitating clear communication and understanding the specific field of hospitality and tourism. The communication courses' English language content sections can use various specialised terminologies to streamline the focus and be specific. To exemplify this further, terms such as *bed and breakfast* (B&B), *conciierge*, and *all-inclusive*, specify the role and the purpose of what is expected. Activities that seek to teach and assess students' language and communication skills should be developed to accommodate sentences contextualised in the setting.

Utilising industry-specific jargon in context conveys expertise and credibility to customers and guests within business and management activities. A chef explaining the menu with terms like *sous-vide* and *deglaze* demonstrates culinary knowledge. This not only enhances the dining experience but also establishes trust in the chef's skills (Jones and Miller, 2017). Contextualised jargon allows for more efficient and precise communication. In aviation, for instance, pilots and air traffic controllers use standardised jargon to ensure safety and accuracy. Phrases like *Roger that* or *Mayday* have clear meanings, reducing the risk of miscommunication during critical moments (FAA, n.d.).

Gudykunst and Kim (2017) state that in a globalised industry like tourism, being culturally sensitive to jargon is crucial, some terms may have different connotations in various cultures. Proper contextualisation ensures that jargon does not inadvertently offend or confuse guests from diverse backgrounds. This study promotes and advocates that English communication courses embrace and integrate the jargon that addresses the context of the hospitality and tourism industry. Below is the discussion of the specific communication skills: verbal, non-verbal, interpersonal, customer service, and cross-cultural communication.

#### **2.4.4 Specific communication skills: Verbal, non-verbal, interpersonal, customer service, and cross-cultural communication**

Communication is a multifaceted process involving the exchange of thoughts and emotions through various means such as written, verbal, or visual interactions (Obamiro, 2011; Taylor, 2005; Yetim and Cengiz, 2012). Tanković et al. (2023) emphasise the critical role of effective business communication, particularly in the service industry, where it forms the essence of service delivery. Verbal communication skills are crucial for employees and clients. Students must learn to present context-relevant messages clearly. Smith and Johnson (2018) highlights the importance of active listening and responsive communication to engage effectively with tourists and guests. Non-verbal communication skills, including body language and gestures, are essential for conveying empathy and attentiveness (Brown, 2021). Interpersonal communication skills are equally vital, requiring students to cultivate empathy and acquire conflict resolution techniques for harmonious guest and colleague interactions (Jones, 2018).

Customer service communication is a key focus as it emphasises the ability to handle guest inquiries and complaints. Smith (2020) asserts that, equipped with relevant communication skills, students can enhance the overall guest experience by providing comprehensive information about services and amenities. Written communication skills, particularly email etiquette, are essential for maintaining professionalism. Brown (2021) suggests that students should master the language content and communication skills necessary for composing various written documents in hospitality and tourism, ensuring clarity and effectiveness. Cross-cultural communication is imperative in the globalised tourism industry. Ritchie and Jiang (2019) note that students need to be conscious of different cultural norms, fostering an inclusive environment for guests from diverse backgrounds. Crisis communication skills are vital due to the unpredictability of events in the sector. Ritchie and Jiang (2019), and Coombs (2007) emphasise the need to equip students with the skills to respond to emergencies, communicate safety procedures, and manage public relations during crises.

Negotiation and conflict resolution skills are indispensable, given the inevitability of conflicts. Communication courses' language content section should teach techniques for resolving conflicts and mediating disputes specific to hospitality and tourism (De Dreu and Gelfand, 2008). Requesting and administering customer feedback is crucial, and students should learn service recovery techniques within a specified context. Johnston and Fern (2018) emphasise the importance of a well-rounded communication course that includes customer feedback to enhance service quality.

Multilingual proficiency is a powerful asset in the hospitality industry. Alred et al. (2016) highlight the importance of students having at least basic language skills or full fluency in multiple languages to better assist guests from diverse linguistic backgrounds. The basic skills would include verbal, non-verbal,

interpersonal, customer service, and cross-cultural communication that speaks to the relevance of the English language content in hospitality and tourism communication courses, specifically in the TVET context. Integrating these communication skills into the English communication courses for hospitality and tourism can enrich students' skill sets and can prepare them for the complexities of guest interactions, feedback management, multilingual communication, conflict resolution, and digital communication. These competencies are vital for providing exceptional service and for maintaining a positive reputation in the industry. Having looked at the specific communication skills, views on Multilingualism, diversity, translanguaging, and intercultural communication are presented below.

#### **2.4.5. Multilingualism, diversity, translanguaging, and intercultural communication**

The mastery of multilingualism, diversity, translanguaging, and intercultural communication stands as a component for the enduring success of entities within the dynamic and culturally diverse areas of hospitality and tourism. Smith et al., (2019) highlight that multilingualism stands as a foundational pillar in the hospitality and tourism industry and it significantly enhances communication efficacy and elevates the quality of customer service. This implies that incorporating specialised language content and communication skills into the communication courses offered at TVET colleges could further enhance the industry's ability to harness multilingual skills. Diversity serves as another important determinant contributing to the success of the hospitality and tourism sector (Gursoy et al., 2017). To accommodate diversity and integrate cultures in hospitality and tourism, TVET colleges could improve their communication courses by incorporating modules that explore the cultural dimensions of communication. Understanding how communication styles vary across cultures is essential for fostering an inclusive and tolerant environment. Such communication courses can equip students with the cultural insights necessary to navigate diverse work environments successfully.

Within the hospitality and tourism industry, intercultural communication takes centre stage. It demands a distinct negotiation of cultural variance in constant interactions with individuals from diverse backgrounds (Kim, Pan, and Park, 2018). Adding to the aforesaid, Jack et al. (2020) also note that the emergence of critical tourism studies relating to Indigenous peoples offers scholars several important opportunities to contribute to a decolonising agenda in the study and practice of tourism. TVET colleges should integrate advanced intercultural communication modules into their curriculum. These modules can highlight the complexities of intercultural interactions, emphasising the importance of cultural sensitivity and adaptability. Practical exercises, such as simulated cross-cultural communication scenarios, could develop students' abilities to navigate cultural disparities. This strategic move, encompassing more than linguistic proficiency, empowers service providers to navigate cultural disparities, prevent misunderstandings, and cultivate an environment wherein guests feel fully esteemed and respected (Martin and Nakayama, 2017).

The concept of translanguaging, where individuals use multiple languages in communication, has gained prominence, enhanced translingual communication tendencies, and enabled more culturally sensitive interactions within the industry (Caruso, 2028). TVET colleges could stay at the forefront of industry trends by incorporating the concept of translanguaging into their communication courses. This innovative approach recognises the fluid use of multiple languages and encourages students to develop the skills needed for seamless language switching. Ndlangamandla and Chaka (2020) assert that translanguaging affirms and validates the flexible, hybridised, and cross-boundary linguistic repertoires of speakers of diverse languages and recognises the complex, fluid, and permeable nature of languages. This assertion matches the expected role of a qualified workforce in hospitality and tourism as they would have to interact with a diversified community within the hospitality and tourism industry. When translingual, intercultural communication and diversity are considered in hospitality and tourism, customer satisfaction can be amplified.

#### **2.4.6 Multilingualism and intercultural teaching and assessment strategies**

Language education pedagogy is shifting towards realities that require a response to student diversity (Li et al., 2016). Based on the aforesaid, multilingualism and intercultural teaching and assessment are the vehicles through which the promotion of diversity can be achieved. Similarly, the current era regarding internationalisation that includes travelling for tourism or for educational purposes requires that tourists visiting institutions of higher learning and local people communicate constantly. Setiawan (2023). During intercultural communication, travellers from diverse cultural backgrounds negotiate their cultural identity, the rules of interpretation, perceptions, and potential outcomes. This implies that students doing the N6 Communication N5 Tourism Communication courses at TVET colleges need to be taught to use different languages so that they adapt and manage to communicate with the tourists. Intercultural and multilingual communication turn to be the cornerstone to which students from abroad, the tourists and local people can resort when they want to communicate.

In relation to promoting and encouraging learning to communicate effectively in multilingual settings, Setiawan (2023) states that on-campus intercultural activities are gaining popularity and becoming the norm for many universities. In support of what students benefit, Tsang et al. (2024) indicate that examining intercultural interaction both in domestic and global learning contexts lead to developing interests to learn L2 and or multiple languages. These views on the importance of teaching, learning and assessing language multilingually is important for N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses.

Effective multilingual pedagogy also requires teaching strategies that recognise learners' linguistic repertoires as valuable resources. Li et al. (2016) emphasise that language education should move beyond monolingual norms and adopt inclusive practices that reflect authentic communicative realities. Strategies such as collaborative learning, role-plays, simulations, and culturally relevant tasks allow students to draw on multiple languages while developing intercultural awareness. In tourism and communication programmes, these approaches prepare students to interact confidently with diverse audiences and to respond appropriately to varied cultural expectations. Assessment practices must align with multilingual and intercultural teaching goals. Mbirimi-Hungwe (2023) argues that translanguaging enables students to utilise their full linguistic resources to demonstrate understanding and meaning-making, rather than being constrained by a single language of instruction. Based on this, the presence of multilingualism and intercultural teaching and assessment strategies in the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses was explored.

## **2.5 English for Specific Purpose (ESP) and Communication Courses**

Having established the global evolution of TVET and its South African manifestation above, the following section examines how language pedagogy, specifically ESP, intersects with vocational education internationally, providing the conceptual foundation for evaluating South African TVET communication courses. Mohamed and Alani (2022, p. 28) argue that “[t]he term special or “specific” in ESP means “the exact objective” for learning English language. Learners study the English that is related to their major or field which is aligned to their work or education. This way, they can immediately utilise what they have learned in the ESP classrooms in their work and studies. Basturkmen (2003) maintains that the characteristics of ESP courses include aspects such as meeting the specific needs of the learner, content themes, and topics that relate to disciplines, occupations, and activities that must be centred on the language content used in those disciplines. The matter is that the English language content in the communication course such as grammar, lexis, register, skills, discourse, and genres of activities in any discipline must be customised and actualised through the usage of the ESP principles and talk to the context.

Caver (1983) highlights that ESP courses should have authentic material, purpose-related orientations, and self-direction. Relating this to the NATED communication courses, the teaching materials for TVET college students should be contextualised to address the communicative and language skills for work environments. Teaching and assessment guidelines, and prescribed textbooks should be developed considering the targeted language content and communication skills in the learning areas of the specialisation of the students. ESP lecturers should conduct purposive orientation, guiding students to master language content and communication skills that are applicable to specific contexts in which they would be working. The need for materials to address the students' needs cannot be overemphasised. TVET

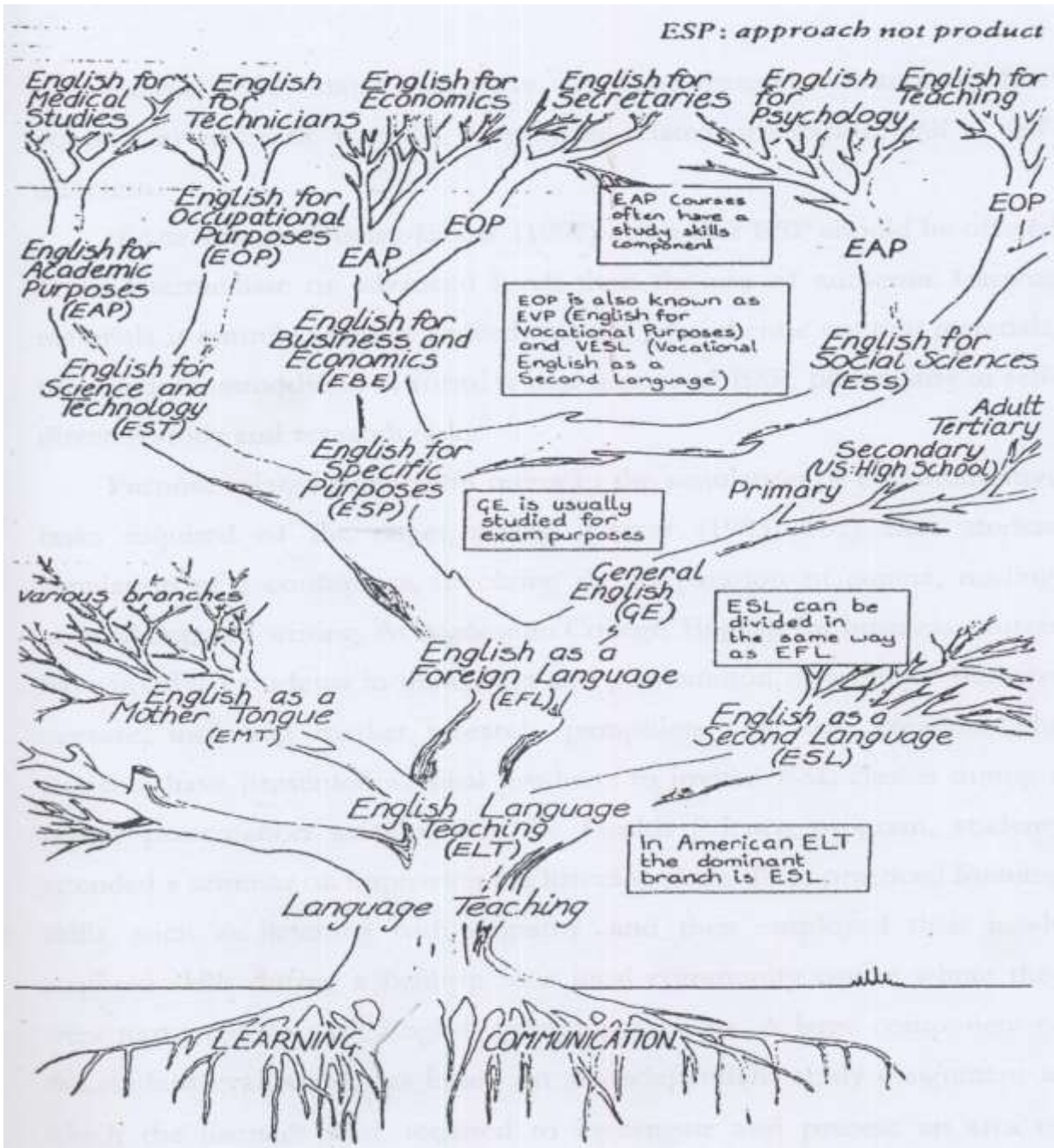
colleges' focus should be on preparing students for the workplace by equipping them with the requisite skills. In support of the aforesaid, the White Paper (DHET, 2013b), calls for the improvement of the quality of programmes, upgrading of lecturers' qualifications, and improving partnerships with employers.

Aligning course materials with industry expectations fosters a more effective transition from academic training to workplace communication. For instance, Basturkmen (2010) emphasises that ESP courses should reflect the discourse patterns, terminology, and communicative norms of the targeted profession. In the hospitality and tourism sector, this includes the ability to navigate multilingual environments, manage guest relations, and communicate with diverse stakeholders effectively. Table 2.1 presents the examples of the topics students may prefer to study for specific purpose.

**Table 2.1:** English Communication topics that students may like to study for specific purpose (Adapted from National Open University of Nigeria (2011)).

1. Advertising	Interviewing
2. English for mass media	Setting goals
4. Telephone English	Making suggestions
5. Meeting	Summarising

By aligning ESP-based communication courses with specific vocational disciplines, TVET colleges can ensure that English language learning directly supports workplace performance, enhances employability, and equips graduates with the communicative competence required in their respective industries. This targeted approach strengthens the relevance of language content and reinforces the broader mandate of TVET institutions to produce work-ready and entrepreneurial graduates. Considering these classifications, it becomes evident that ESP is not merely a fixed category within English Language Teaching (ELT), but a flexible and evolving discipline that responds to the needs of learners in different contexts. To demonstrate this, Figure 2.1 illustrates the different branches of ESP.



**Figure 2.1:** Different types of English for Specific Purposes (Sourced from Tahir, 2009, pp. 123-145).

### 2.5.1 Distinctions: English for general purposes (EGP) and English for specific purposes (ESP)

EGP and ESP are two distinct approaches to teaching and assessing the English language. Dudley-Evans and St. John, (1998) posit that EGP is designed for everyday, non-specialised contexts. It aims to develop general language skills like reading, writing, speaking, and listening to enable individuals to communicate effectively across various situations. In contrast to that, Hutchinson and Waters, (1987) highlight that ESP tailors English language education to meet the specific linguistic needs of professional or academic domains, such as business, healthcare, or engineering. ESP focuses on teaching the specialised vocabulary,

jargon, and communication skills relevant to these specific contexts. To exemplify their argument Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) state that ESP courses in aviation would deal with aviation terminology and communication specific to the aviation industry.

Tailoring EGP to meet specific purposes is necessary for several reasons. It ensures the relevance of language education by providing learners with vocabulary and language skills directly applicable to their profession or academic field (Basturkmen, 2010). ESP materials promote precision and accuracy in language use, reducing the risk of miscommunication in specialised contexts (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998). ESP must be used in developing teaching methodologies and assessing strategies of communication courses so that students' needs be accommodated. The communication courses and teaching material for hospitality and tourism were examined to find out if they are indeed designed following the ESP principles. About this view, Orr (2002) argues that the ESP that is primarily taught or researched, consists of spoken and written discourse in academic and workplace settings, which are unfamiliar to most native and non-native speakers

Widdowson (1983) argues that ESP is not only divided into a wider boundary of English teaching, but it is also parcelled up into sub-divisions within itself. It is common, for example, to distinguish English for occupational purposes (EOP) from English for academic purposes (EAP). He argues that in EOP, we might have English for airline pilots, waiters, secretaries, telephone receptionists, and so on. To clarify this point further, he asserts that within EAP there could be English for different areas of academic study like English for physics, engineering, architecture, and economics.

Considering the categories of ESP, the kind of English used in South African TVET colleges' NATED communication courses was investigated exploratorily to find out if they serve the purpose that the students registered those courses need. In the next sub-section focuses on the importance of using ESP as a pedagogical approach.

### **2.5.2 ESP as a pedagogical approach for TVET communication courses**

ESP, as advocated by Anthony (2007), stresses the importance of ESP lecturers comprehensively understanding the target subject, course objectives, and individual student needs. Engaging in subject matter research is proposed to gain insight into the *what*, *how*, and *why* of language usage. The study asserts that ESP lecturers must possess relevant English language content and communication skills relevant to hospitality and tourism. Research by Smith and Johnson (2018) emphasises the significance of ESP in designing communication courses, precisely targeting industry-specific language skills and terminology.

The application of ESP principles results in improved language content, communication skills, and job performance, as evidenced by Kydyrbaeva (2023) when arguing that developing these skills is crucial for academic success, professional growth, and cultural exchange. Due to the rising need to adjust and customise the subject matter to context, Gvelesiani (2023, p. 27) highlights “educators started looking for new techniques of teaching English. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) became one of the most welcome methodologies, while an intercultural dialogue and multilingualism started being considered as a fundamental principle of language education policies in Europe and elsewhere in the world”. He recommends that ESP lecturers understand the language items required in students’ intended fields, considering individual strengths and weaknesses. Dudley-Evans (1998), cited in Anthony (2007), suggests a team-teaching approach for ESP lecturers and enhancing subject matter through collaboration with field specialists. This collaborative effort allows for sharing content knowledge, teaching methods, and course design principles.

Moreover, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) highlight that ESP methodologies depend on students’ learning processes and promoting the usage of latent and conscious knowledge. Strevens (1998) emphasises varied teaching methods in ESP, cautioning against rigid adherence to general English methods. In addition, the findings of the study conducted by Kakerissa and Lengkanawati (2022) highlight the challenges learners face and their reasons for learning English. The study suggests that an appropriate textbook tailored to their specific needs should be developed as a learning resource in their English classes, rather than relying on generic language content that may not support their communicative needs in the workplace after graduation. ESP’s application to English communication courses for hospitality and tourism proves highly beneficial. Tailoring courses to industry needs, collaborating with specialists, and adopting effective teaching methods contribute to proficient language skills and improved outcomes. Continuous research, collaboration, and pedagogic needs analysis are essential for ESP lecturers to meet the evolving student demands successfully. Below is a-section on the benefits of using ESP in the communication courses.

## **2.6 The Benefits of Using ESP in the Communication Courses**

ESP is a crucial component in communication courses. It extends beyond language proficiency to serve as a strategic tool for developing cultural competence among students. Mohamed and Alani (2022) argue that ESP is the common teaching method that instructors tend to use to be able to meet the special and exact demands and needs of the students according to their major or profession. According to Nunan (2013), this cultural asset is essential for effective interaction with diverse cultures, particularly in industries where such interactions are commonplace. In the hospitality and tourism sectors, ESP courses play a transformative role in elevating customer service quality. Inceoglu and Fadiloğlu (2016) note that these courses not only create positive guest experiences but also act as safeguards against cultural misunderstandings and conflicts.

Kim and Lee (2018) reveal that ESP courses significantly enhance communication skills, leading to higher customer satisfaction, increased repeat business, and an overall positive industry reputation.

The impact of ESP on career prospects within these sectors is undeniable. Yoo and Park's (2019) study indicates that employees with ESP training exhibit higher job satisfaction levels and are more likely to ascend to management positions. Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2010) stress that language proficiency is critical in the recruitment process for multilingual positions. Hutchinson and Waters (1992) assert that ESP provides a competitive edge in the job market.

ESP is not merely a language proficiency course but a transformative force in communication courses for specific fields. It equips students with cultural competence, enhances customer service quality, and significantly boosts career prospects. The adaptability of ESP to real-world scenarios ensures graduates are well-prepared for the multifaceted challenges of the dynamic industry they are entering, making its strategic integration into communication courses essential for individual success and industry excellence. Having looked at the benefits of using ESP in communication courses, below is section on integrating technology into the hospitality and tourism communication courses.

## **2.7 Integrating Technology into the Hospitality and Tourism Communication Courses**

Huang et al. (2024) state that instructional technologies can facilitate the acquisition and transfer of fundamental knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required by future hospitality and tourism professionals. They provide examples of such technologies, including but not limited to classroom response systems, simulations, virtual reality, interactive games, and mobile learning technologies. The developing hospitality and tourism industry, driven by technological advancements, can help integrate various forms of leaning technology into the two communication courses at the two TVET colleges mentioned earlier. Buhalis and Law (2008) emphasise adapting communication courses to new technologies like property management systems and customer relationship management software. Sigala (2017) adds that proficiency in these technologies enables efficient guest management and streamlined communication channels.

In addition, the integration of technology into communication courses can increase the operational demands. Advancements in virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) allow lecturers to create immersive simulations and role-playing scenarios, enhancing real-life communication skills (Hoadley and Van Haneghan, 2022). Smith and Li (2022) emphasise the role of technology, from online booking systems to digital marketing, in the hospitality and tourism industry. In the Fourth Industrial Revolution era, a hospitality business's reputation is influenced by its online presence, necessitating digital and social media communication in communication courses (Xiang et al., 2015). The study advocates for incorporating

instructional technology into English communication courses so as to teach students to engage with customers through language content and communication skills that are integrated with technology.

Digitalising the English communication courses can provide access to diverse learning resources beyond traditional methods. Online platforms and language learning apps offer interactive exercises, vocabulary builders, and language immersion opportunities (Li, 2021). Technology enables students to engage in authentic language practice through simulations, video conferencing tools, and connections with native speakers (Stevenson, 2018). Technologising such courses can promote collaborative learning and interactions, group discussions, and cross-cultural exchanges (Uzunboylu and Özcinar, 2018). Online platforms and mobile apps offer flexibility, allowing students to learn at their own pace and convenience. Multimodal learning experiences through audio, video, and interactive elements can enhance cultural awareness and understanding. Technology enables access to authentic audio-visual resources, and this helps foster creativity and self-expression (Razack, et al., 2025). Innovative language assessment methods such as multimedia projects and automated assessments, ensure a comprehensive evaluation of students' language proficiency (Chen and Liao, 2018; Liu and Shi, 2019).

The integration of technology into English communication courses is imperative for preparing students for the developing demands of the hospitality and tourism industries. This approach enhances digital communication skills, cultural awareness, and provides innovative assessment methods. TVET college lecturers could play a crucial role in improving communication competence through integrating language content and communication skills with technology. Professional development programmes can also equip lecturers with digital literacy skills and pedagogical strategies to ensure a high-quality language instruction in a technologically enhanced learning environment (Sun and Lin, 2020). Equipping lecturers with the necessary skills of integrating language content and communication skills with technology could foster a literate workforce. The use of digital tools such as virtual simulations, language learning apps, and online collaboration platforms can provide students with immersive and interactive learning experiences. Below is a section dealing with work integrated learning in an English communication course.

## **2.8 Work Integrated Learning in an English Communication Course**

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) combines both theoretical knowledge and practical skills to prepare a workforce that will be ready to enter the job market. The SA Board for People Practices (SABPP) (2014, p. 2) states that workplace learning ought to be an essential component of all vocational training system. In South Africa, the WIL dates back to the earliest days of enforced Black labour in the Cape as a slave society (Shell 1989; Legassick and Ross 2012; Wedekind 2018). The integration of English communication courses for hospitality and tourism into WIL can provide students with the opportunity to apply their

language skills in a practical setting and gain valuable work experience. According to Education International (2020), WIL is an educational approach that integrates academic instruction with the practical work experience in real-world settings. Helleve et al. (2019) assert that embedding language learning within work placements fosters an authentic learning environment, facilitating the development of communication skills and enhancing students' employability in the hospitality and tourism sectors. The pedagogical approach in public TVET colleges has evolved from relying primarily on lecturers' workplace experience to adopting a vocational pedagogy that integrates both formal conceptual knowledge and practical application (Du Plooy and Du Preez, 2022; Gamble, 2013; Papier, 2011).

Gamble (2021) argues that the structural framework of contemporary South African TVET curricula continues to reflect the enduring influence of the 1922 and 1948 policy moments, which were shaped by the segregation era and the early years of apartheid. Given this context, students enrolled in the communication courses within the hospitality and tourism fields should be afforded opportunities to engage with industry professionals. Such exposure would enable them to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings, thereby strengthening their communication skills and enhancing their professional readiness. Iro Konstantinou and Miller (2020) suggest that instructors can collaborate with industry partners to identify suitable work placements for students. In relation to this, Bytyqi (2021) argues that learning is inherently a social activity, occurring within the context of culture, community, and past experiences. Consequently, WIL serves as a valuable opportunity for hospitality and tourism students to enhance their communication skills in authentic workplace settings, while engaging with the communication course. Education International (2020) further emphasises that WIL ensures that work placement experiences align with course learning outcomes and remain relevant to industry needs.

Konstantinou and Miller (2020), again, highlight the importance of evaluating the outcomes of work placements to ensure the effective integration of the English communication course for hospitality and tourism students within WIL. To assess the effectiveness and benefits of this integration, various evaluation methods — such as surveys and focus groups — can be employed to collect feedback from students, industry partners, and supervisors. This process allows for the identification of strengths and areas for improvement, thereby informing future refinements to the WIL framework. To reflect on communication in hospitality and tourism, the following section presents views on hospitality and tourism talk.

## **2.9 Hospitality and Tourism Talk**

Wigati and Khabib (2021) assert that communication skills and understanding of performance are the core elements of the hospitality industry and therefore, future hotel and tourism industries need educational establishments that design hospitality and language courses. Dzia-Uddin et al. (2024) add that industry

input has indicated that TVET graduates often lack soft skills, such as teamwork, adaptability, leadership, critical thinking, and communication skills. This implies that tourists and hospitality personnel should be touristic when they communicate. Code-switching, mixing languages, and accommodating the tourist should take centre stage during interactions with tourists. The complex dynamics of language use in intercultural communication between tourists and locals indicates that language choice, accommodation strategies, and communicative adjustments significantly shape tourist–host interactions in tourism settings (Sharma and Gao, 2022). This view situates interpersonal communication within broader sociolinguistic and intercultural processes in tourism discourse. It critically examines how language is negotiated, adapted, and co-constructed during cross-cultural encounters in tourism contexts (Sharma and Gao, 2022).

Within the confines of tourism, it is typically the foreigner, representing the tourist, who assumes a higher status, contrary to the prevalent sociolinguistic literature, such as in the case of migrant workers. This reversal intricately shapes the linguistic landscape, challenging conventional paradigms and introducing the concept of *tourism talk* (TT). In the context of a communication course, the incorporation of the tourist talk stands to enrich the academic discourse. This integration catalyses a deeper understanding among students regarding the adaptability of language in intercultural communication within the hospitality and tourism domain. Olowoyo et al (2020) have also asserts that many employers have expressed concerns about the quality of communication skills demonstrated by newly qualified TVET college graduates because these skills are indeed crucially significant, particularly in industries like hospitality. Thus, this study argues that the public and private sectors involved on tourism business need to employ TVET graduates, who are competent in communicating business activities related to the industry-specific language content. Views on how to approach developing effective assessment tasks for TVET college students are presented below.

## **2.10 Assessment Approaches Suitable for Students in TVET Colleges**

The assessment of English communication skills within the domain of hospitality and tourism emerges as a fundamental area for students navigating careers in this specialised industry (Bhatia, 2015). Zahedpisheh et al. (2017) highlight the imperative nature of effective English communication, positing it as crucial for ensuring guest satisfaction. Thus, assessment tools necessitate a departure from generic inquiries to the ones that are industry-specific (Gao et al., 2017). The guiding principles should meticulously gauge advancements in language proficiencies, spanning listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with an explicit emphasis on parameters germane to the industry (Bhatia, 2015). Listening skills, integral for deciphering customer needs, demand multifaceted evaluation methodologies, encompassing activities such as role-playing and audio recordings (Karami et al., 2021).

Additionally, the evaluation of speaking proficiencies must leverage industry-specific frameworks, including presentations and debates, to ascertain coherent articulation and careful language application within the different aspects of hospitality and tourism (Karami et al., 2021). Siddiqui (2020) advocates for the integration of authentic assessment tasks and real-world scenarios that reflect the simulations of processes like a hotel check-in. A calculated approach to assessment require tasks that are not only reliable and valid, but also immune to biases. This necessitates the adoption of standardised procedures, relevant assessor training, and the utilisation of diverse evidentiary sources (Li and Lin, 2022). The regular convening of planning meetings among assessors is deemed requisite to engender uniformity in the evaluation of students' communication competencies.

The proposed assessment guidelines furnish a holistic framework that deploys different methods, technology integration, and a constructive learning milieu. This collective strategy is envisioned to equip students with the requisite communication skills indispensable for their prospective engagements within the hospitality and tourism industry (Siddiqui, 2020). This scholarly discourse, elucidating the complexities of the English communication course assessment in the specialised field of hospitality and tourism, serves as a foundational guide for the forthcoming exploration and analysis of the English language content embedded in the English Communication course tailored for students. Therefore, the following section highlights the role of communication theories.

## **2.11 Communication Theories**

In this study, communication theories are used as lenses to view and understand how meanings in syntax are affected when applied in different contexts, and also how they are used to position language content. According to Saldaña and Omasta (2018), a theory distils research into a statement about social life that holds transferable applications to other settings, context, populations, and possibly periods. Through the consideration and application of the adopted theories, communication skills are transferred and adapted to the setting of the tourism and hospitality industry. The views raised by theorists about communication theories are used to customise the language content to address communication required in specific situations.

Fiske (1990) states that there are two primary schools of thought in communication studies: the semiotics school and the process school. Fiske states that the semiotics school focuses on three key areas of study: syntax, which examines the relationship between symbols; semantics, which explores the relationship between symbols and their referents; and pragmatics, which analyses the relationship between people and symbols. In contrast, the process school views communication as a straightforward transmission of messages and meanings between a sender and a receiver.

This study is categorised in the context or school of semiotics focused on exploring how language could be used in context. Van Ruler (2022) asserts that because communication is an integral part of the field and is essential to enhance and direct its application to address specific contexts in the fields by using relevant language content and concepts, we should consider it as the pillar on which the field rests. Griffin (2022) highlights that communication theory is a field of study that seeks to understand the complex process of human communication, and it encompasses various frameworks, models, and concepts that aim to explain how information is transmitted, received, and interpreted between individuals or groups. West and Turner (2018) add that theories also examine the role of context and social and cultural factors in communication.

Littlejohn and Foss (2011) state that theories address various aspects of communication, such as interpersonal communication which in the context of this study may relate to interpersonal communication between guests and tourist guides, mass communication, organisational communication, and intercultural communication. Theories help direct subjects' content from diverse perspectives and emphasise different aspects of the communication process. To illuminate the value of theories in communication Griffin (2022) and West and Turner (2018) highlight that theories like the transactional model emphasise the interactive and simultaneous nature of communication, where both sender and receiver play active roles and meaning is co-created to suit a specific context.

When communication theories are effectively incorporated into an English communication course, they can significantly impact the design and delivery of the curriculum and place or direct communication within that organisation's context, ultimately enhancing students' language proficiency and communication abilities in any context. Below is an outline of the description, explanation, and exploration of the communication theories, followed by a detailed exploration of each of them within the context of the communication course in the field of tourism and hospitality at the TVET college level.

### **2.11.1 An outline of communication theories**

Communication theories offer insights into the intricacies of human interaction across diverse contexts. In constructing the different theories for communication courses, the study draws upon an array of theories to illuminate the intricate dynamics across various levels and contexts. At the foundational level, interpersonal communication theories lay the groundwork, probing the internal dialogues and cognitive processes within individuals. In this study, these interpersonal communication theories were applied to highlight how students could effectively interact with tourists or with any clients within different organisations. Transitioning to the interpersonal aspect, the study explores the complexities of relationships through theories such as social identity theories. This lens allows the participants to understand how individuals construct and express their identities within social contexts, shaping the dynamics of communication in personal interactions.

Shifting to rhetorical and persuasion theories, the study explored how language is used to influence attitudes and behaviours. Using the persuasion theory, the study highlights how customers can be persuaded and in which direction or stance can be defended for the purpose of swaying the organisation or individuals to move towards a particular direction. Cognitive dissonance theory also adds another layer, helping us understand the persuasive elements inherent in communication and how individuals navigate conflicting beliefs. Customer experience theory enhances our understanding of how communication impacts the healthcare sector, emphasising the importance of patient experiences. Below is the summary of the chapter

## **2.12 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the literature on language content, skills, and pedagogical approaches to communication courses in vocational education. It traced the development of TVET colleges globally and in South Africa. The historical evolution of English communication courses was examined. It also reviewed intercultural communication, field-specific phraseology, and the role of specialised lexis in effective professional communication. Essential communication skills such as verbal, non-verbal, interpersonal, customer service, and cross-cultural communication were discussed. The literature on ESP, distinguishing it from English for General Purposes, was reviewed to indicate its relevance in aligning language content instruction with occupational needs. Integration of technology, Work-Integrated Learning (WIL), and specialised discourse in hospitality and tourism were also examined, as were assessment approaches and communication theories suitable for TVET contexts.

## CHAPTER 3

### Research Methodology: Exploratory Research Orientation

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the exploratory research methodology used to conduct the study. It addresses elements such as the research approach, research paradigm, and exploratory research design. It also discusses the positionality and identity of the researcher, research questions, research sites, population, participants, and data collection methods. This is followed by data analysis. In addition, it discusses research trustworthiness, which covers credibility, transferability, confirmability, and ethical considerations.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

The study employed a qualitative exploratory research approach. Aspers and Corte (2019) define qualitative research as an iterative process that achieves improved understanding within the scientific community by making new, significant distinctions that arise from closely studying the phenomenon. The lecturers and students involved in the NATED N6 Communication course and in the NATED N5 Tourism Communication course were interviewed. I also reviewed and analysed the English language content sections of the two courses to gain insight into the state of the language content in relation to its relevance to the context of hospitality and tourism. A qualitative research approach was utilised to provide an in-depth understanding of the English language content applied to these courses. The approach was particularly useful in exploring vocational language content and linguistic features.

#### 3.2 Research Paradigm

The research paradigm of this study is interpretivism. It was used to interpret English language content relevance variables and linguistic features in the language content sections of the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses to determine how they are related to the communication requirements in the field of hospitality and tourism. Chaka et al. (2020) state that research based on interpretivism often yields extensive, contextual, yet substantially unregulated and unpredictable data. The research paradigm was also intended to examine the English language content's relevance to the aforesaid courses. Du Plooy-Celliers et al. (2023) emphasise that interpretivism relies on the belief that truth is shaped by individuals' interpretations, therefore its research methodology is context-sensitive and avoids generalisations. This study employed an interpretive approach to understand the experiences of lecturers and students, acknowledging that multiple socially constructed realities exist (Pervin and Mokhtar, 2022). An

interpretivist approach enabled the study to highlight the complexities of the English language content and communication skills in the two TVET college courses.

### **3.3 Exploratory Research Design**

A research design refers to the overall strategy that the researcher uses to integrate the different components of the study coherently and logically and ensure that they effectively address the research problem. Exploratory research studies are used to explore new areas or investigate areas that have not been extensively studied (Leavy, 2017; Nkhobo and Chaka, 2021). Singh (2021) states that an exploratory research design seeks to learn as much as possible about the relationship between two variables, the independent and dependent variables. This study was exploratory in nature, and in this case, the independent variable under study is the English language content of the hospitality and tourism communication courses, and the focus is on its relevance and impact.

The features being explored include the specific curriculum, material, linguistic features, and communication skills embedded in these courses. The dependent variable is the relevance of the language content to align and address the needs of students, the expectations of the hospitality and tourism industry, and its effectiveness in preparing the students involved for workplace communication. As mentioned, the independent variables included the two fields of study, hospitality and tourism, and the English language content developed according to ESP principles.

### **3.4 Positionality and Identity as a Researcher**

For me as an academic, a researcher, and an advocate for applying ESP in teaching and learning TVET N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication language, positionality and identity were crucial considerations because they helped me understand the potential biases and assumptions that could have shaped my research process and outcomes. At the time of conducting this study, I held a position as a lecturer, and for eight years, lectured an Academic Language and Literacy in English course that is aimed at equipping students with essential academic writing and reading skills. This Academic Language and Literacy in English course addressed specific language content including writing, speaking, and reading skills required in academic contexts. This aligns closely with the focus of my research as it also aimed to explore the relevance of the English language content in the NATED N6 and N5 hospitality and tourism communication courses offered at the two TVET colleges to gauge whether they were tailored to meet the specific communicative needs of students enrolled in the NATED programmes. Additionally, I am a member of the university's steering committee mandated to support TVET college lecturers in their teaching and learning endeavours.

My university entered into a contract agreement with the Department of Higher Education and Training to support TVET colleges and help bridge the gaps regarding developing subject content and teaching methodologies. As a team member of the steering committee tasked to fulfil this agreement, I found that this position dovetails with my study of TVET colleges regarding the state of the English language content in communication courses. To situate my positionality within a scholarly vantage point, I draw on Ndlangamandla (2024), as he clarifies that locus of enunciation means being conscious of and explicit about the geographical, historical, bodily, and ideological contexts from which one is speaking. I am conscious of communication in context in geographical settings such as hospitality and tourism. To further explore my locus of enunciation, I am a lecturer in an English Studies Department at a university in South Africa.

The philosophical underpinnings of my research are informed by a critical, exploratory-oriented approach that recognises the importance of language as both a tool for communication and a means of accessing and participating in knowledge development. This aligns with the concept of locus of enunciation, which emphasises the importance of considering the perspectives and experiences of the learners as central to shaping the content and delivery of educational programmes (Porto and Byram, 2022). For me as English teacher, this perspective highlights the need to acknowledge the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students and the ways in which their lived experiences impact their engagement with language and learning.

### **3.5 Research Questions**

The main research question for this study was: In what ways is the English language content of the communication courses of students who study NATED programmes at TVET colleges relevant to both hospitality and tourism communication skills requirements? The five sub-research questions of the the study were as follows:

- To what extent are the English language content and communication skills embodied in the NATED communication courses relevant to the hospitality and tourism fields of study?
- To what extent do the English language content and communication skills taught in these courses reflect the elements of ESP?
- Do the NATED N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses' assessment questions require students to demonstrate context-specific English language application?
- What are the perceptions of students regarding the relevance of the English language content to their career path?
- What are the perceptions of lecturers regarding the relevance of the English language content of these communication courses to hospitality and tourism?

### **3.6 Research Sites**

As mentioned earlier, this study took place at two TVET colleges: the Tshwane TVET College and the Vhembe TVET College, in the Gauteng and Limpopo provinces, respectively. In the Tshwane TVET College, two campuses were selected as primary sites for data collection. These campuses were chosen due to their accessibility, proximity to the researcher, and the willingness of college management to support the study. In this regard, Tshwane is the second most populous and the second most multilingual and multicultural metropolitan area in Gauteng after the Johannesburg metropolitan city (Chaka, 2024). In contrast, the Vhembe district has largely two languages, Tshivenda and Xitsonga, as part of it. These two languages are also the two dominant languages spoken by the Vhembe TVET college students.

To access these two research sites, I negotiated with the management of the respective TVET colleges. Agreements were eventually formalised that allowed the study to proceed. This collaboration between me and the colleges revealed the importance of partnership and cooperation in the research process.

### **3.7 Population of the Study**

The research population for this study consisted of lecturers teaching NATED N6 Communication course and the NATED N5 Tourism Communication course, and of the students enrolled in these courses. The two targeted campuses at the Tshwane TVET College had 150 lecturers. This number included all the lecturers for N communication courses. The total number of students in the two campuses was 12,000. At the Vhembe TVET College, the approximate total number of lecturers was 163, while the approximate total number of the students was 8,000. The total population for both colleges was 20,313. Participants for this study were drawn from this population.

A South African map showing the nine South African provinces, including Gauteng and Limpopo, in which the two TVET colleges are located is displayed in Figure 3.1. Gauteng is the smallest province in terms of its geographical size, while Limpopo is almost four-times its size.



Figure 3.1: A map of displaying the nine South African provinces, including Gauteng Limpopo (Sourced from: <https://ontheworldmap.com/south-africa/administrative-divisions-map-of-south-africa.html>)

**3.7.1 Sampling of participants**

The study employed purposive sampling to select participants. Lecturers and students involved in the N6 Communication course and the N5 Tourism Communication course were consulted and requested to volunteer to participate in the study. Du Plooy-Celliers et al. (2021) highlight that purposive sampling involves the researcher intentionally selecting elements for their sample based on specific characteristics. In this study, I looked at the research question and identified the necessary characteristics, selecting participants who met those criteria while excluding others.

The total number of lecturers who participated in the interview sessions from the Tshwane TVET College is as follows: six lecturers teaching the N6 Communication course and five lecturers teaching the N5 Tourism Communication (n = 11). They all volunteered to participants in the study. On the side of the students, six came from the N6 Communication course and six from the N5 Tourism Communication course (n = 12). At the Vhembe TVET College, four lecturers and 11 students participated (n = 15). In all, 38 participants took part in this study. Table 3.1 illustrates a breakdown of the participants per TVET college and per course.

**Table 3.1:** A breakdown of the participants per TVET college and per course.

TVET Colleges	N6 Lecturers	N5 Lecturers	N6 Students	N5 Students	Total
Tshwane	6	5	6	6	23

Vhembe	2	2	6	5	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	8	7	12	11	<b>38</b>

To initiate interactions with the participants and implement purposive sampling, I requested the heads of departments to introduce me to lecturers and students involved in the NATED N6 Communication and NATED N5 Tourism Communication courses. Purposive sampling helped to pinpoint and incorporate key participants (see the details of the demographics of lecturers and students in appendices A-H).

### **3.8 Data Collection Methods**

This study employed a document review and analysis and six semi-structured interviews as its data collection methods. Data collection continued until saturation was achieved where follow up questions were used until participants could no longer provide further responses. This aligns with Guest et al.'s (2006) point that saturation typically occurs within 12 interviews for homogeneous populations.

#### **3.8.1 Document review and analysis**

First, I visited the heads of departments of the two TVET colleges and requested a list of the titles of the prescribed textbooks for the NATED Communication courses. The heads of department involved course lecturers and asked them to assist me. Eventually, I was given the list, and I purchased the NATED N6 Communication and NATED N5 Tourism Communication textbooks from a local bookstore. Sections dealing with the English language content were identified and reviewed. The contextual meanings of the contents and their relevance to the context of hospitality and tourism were established. The data sets, the data from the NATED N6 Communication courses and the NATED N5 Tourism Communication courses, were analysed and organized into themes. The study explored the following themes in each language content section of the two courses (also textbooks in this case):

- The presence of the field-specific language content features related to hospitality and tourism.
- The alignment of the aims and objectives with English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to suit hospitality and tourism.
- The integration of the English language content into a technological context.
- The presence of the hospitality and tourism talk.
- Assessing the hospitality and tourism field-specific knowledge and vocational English language content proficiency.

The analysis began by reflecting on these aspects. Extracts of lessons and assessment activities on language usage were extracted and used to demonstrate the kind of language content present in the language sections of the two communication courses (see the excerpts in the appendices). The selection of these aspects was deliberate. They were chosen to exemplify and support each identified theme. Specific content, activities, or instructional strategies outlined in the two courses were highlighted to provide readers with tangible instances that illuminated the identified themes and the type of English language content used in these courses. The sampled segments of the English language content and assessment activities were described and explained in terms of their relevance to the context of hospitality and tourism, using the ESP principles as a measurement.

Importantly, I made and reviewed notes, reflecting on the matches and mismatches of the field-specific language used. I also purchased the soft copies of the prescribed textbooks and extracted the language content sections. I copied and pasted the extracted segments of the language content and assessment activities in the findings chapter of this study. The themes and questions that informed document review and analysis are shown in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2:** Themes and questions for document review and analysis.

Language content relevance: Presence of field-specific grammatical language.	Do the communication courses contain language content that addresses the specific context of hospitality and tourism? What kind of linguistic features are employed to create a positive and personalized guest experience?
Alignment of aims and objectives with English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to suit tourism and hospitality.	In what ways are aims and objectives of the courses aligned to hospitality and tourism context?
Integration of language content in technological context.	How is language content integrated with technology?
Tourism and hospitality talk: Presence of language content that encourages intercultural communication in context	Are the courses encouraging intercultural communication? How do they meet this criterion?
Presence of questions to assess tourism and hospitality and field-specific knowledge and language content.	How are questions for assessing students framed?  Are the instructions for questions encouraging students to apply language content contextualised to hospitality and tourism?

### 3.8.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interview as an approach for eliciting data from participants was used. The focus was on interviewing lecturers and students involved in the NATED N6 Communication courses and NATED N5 Tourism Communication courses. Du-Plooy et al. (2021) notes that in-depth interviews are a qualitative data collection method that allows researchers to pose questions to participants to learn about their views,

opinions, and beliefs regarding a specific phenomenon. Before starting the interview sessions, I informed participants that the sessions would be audio-recorded, and pseudonyms would be used instead of their real names. The interview sessions followed a pattern of posing a question, allowing the respondent time to answer, and making follow-up questions when necessary. These were one-on-one interview sessions. Each session was audio-recorded and then transcribed.

In conducting semi-structured interviews, I followed a structured interview protocol to ensure consistency, ethical integrity, and alignment with my study objectives. I began each interview with an introduction script in which I introduced myself, stated my institutional affiliation, and explained the purpose of the study. The examples of the questions posed to lecturers are reflected in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3:** Examples of the semi-structured interview questions posed to lecturers.

<b>Theme 1</b>	<b>Alignment of course objectives</b>
<b>Question</b>	Do you think that the aims and the primary objectives of the Communication course are aligned with the vocational language content required from students pursuing careers in business and management courses such as Hospitality and Tourism? Justify your answer.
<b>Theme 2:</b>	<b>Vocational relevance of language content</b>
<b>Question</b>	How vocational is the language nature of the language content? How effective is it applied to help you teach language content effectively?
<b>Theme 3</b>	<b>Technology and language content</b>
<b>Question</b>	How is the language content used with technology? Does the technology help you to apply language content effectively?
<b>Theme 4</b>	<b>Intercultural communication and tourism talk</b>
<b>Question</b>	Are there examples from both the syllabus and the subject guidelines that help you teach intercultural communication and encourage Tourism Talk? Provide examples from the course to justify your answer.
<b>Theme 5</b>	<b>Contextualized assessment practices</b>
<b>Question</b>	Are Hospitality and Tourism assessment questions formulated in such a way that they require students to demonstrate abilities to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills”?

For the examples of the questions posed to students, see Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4:** Examples of the questions posed to students.

1	Do the learning objectives of the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication-related to hospitality and tourism.
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2	What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the hospitality and tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).
3	Does the course's vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts. (Cite examples from the syllabus to justify your response).
4	Can you share examples of how you have applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?
5	What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?
6	How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?
7	Would you agree that the language content you learned from the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course addresses your writing and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively? Justify your answer.

### 3.9 Data Analysis

Qualitative content analysis (QCA) was used to analyse data. In the view of Hsieh and Shannon (2005, p. 553) QCA is, “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying *themes* or *patterns*”. According to Braun and Clarke (2012), thematic analysis (TA) is a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (*themes*) within qualitative data. Further, they argue that it is flexible in terms of research question, sample size and constitution, data collection methods, and approaches to meaning generation. The study chose TA because it is flexible to be applied to a range of data forms. Data were analysed manually following themes. First, the extracts of language content from the courses were identified and read to determine their relevance to the context of hospitality and tourism. Reading, reviewing and writing helped to identify, analyse, and report patterns (themes) within the data.

The language content sections of the NATED N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses were read multiple times. The context, vocabulary, and phrases used in the language content were identified and categorised based on their frequency and relevance to hospitality and tourism. In all, the study analysed ten data sets garnered from the two data collection methods mentioned earlier. The ten data sets were as follows: the first two data sets were the English language content of the two textbooks, N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication, used at the two TVET colleges; the second two data sets were about the interviews with two groups of lecturers at the Tshwane TVET College; the third two data sets related the interviews with two groups of lecturers at the Vhembe TVET College; and the fourth data sets pertained to the interviews with four groups of students, two groups from each TVET college.

### 3.9.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis involves searching for themes in the data related to the phenomenon under investigation. It includes identifying themes by carefully extracting them from the data, categorising them, and subjecting them to analysis (Chaka et al. (2020). In this study, thematic analysis was used to identify and categorise language content into themes. Through a deductive approach, grammatical structures, vocabulary, and sentence patterns in the language content were identified and classified. Deductive thematic analysis was applied as the primary approach, focusing on ESP principles and needs analysis in the context of *English* language content and communication skills required at TVET colleges. This dual approach ensured the analysis was both data-driven.

The data coding process involved the following four steps. The steps included developing a manual coding framework, the identification of initial themes, the identification of final themes, and establishing theoretical constructs. Themes were created iteratively and revised constantly. The frequency of grammatical structures, phraseology, sentence patterns, vocabulary, examples, and assessment activities related to the customisation of language were used to evaluate the relevance of the English language content to hospitality and tourism. Figure 3.1 below is adapted from Chaka et al. (2020). It has been adapted and applied to outline the systematic process to analyse the language content in the NATED N6 Communication and NATED N5 Tourism Communication courses. It is structured through four key steps that incorporate coding, theme development, and theoretical analysis.

#### **Step 1: Developing a Manual Coding Framework**

- (a) Coding of data (e.g. Language content in text relevant to context and instructions that encourage use of phrases that contain tone, register and linguistic units that are hospitality and tourism based. Samples of language content e.g. grammatical structures. Similarly, coding of data (e.g. instruction on assessment activities that encourage students to provide responses with contextualised language content.
- (b) Calculating the reliability of codes (e.g. the researcher determines the quantity and format of the grammatical structures, sentence structures, vocabulary, and framing of assessment tasks in the language sections of the NATED N6 Communication course and the N5 Tourism Communication courses and rate the coded the data. The coding consistency and agreement was aligned to Cohen (1960).
- (c) Dissecting (textual) data into segments using the manual coding framework. To calculate the scores or responses raised by participant about themes, and the frequency of the irrelevant language content segments, the following thematic scoring framework was used. To scores responses raised by participant about themes, the negative responses were counted against the positive responses. In the analysed documents, the negative sentences were underlined and counted against the positive sentences.

### **Step 2: Identification of Initial Themes**

- (a) Extract/abstracting basic themes from coded data segments (e.g. compare language content with the principles of ESP).
- (b) Refining themes as needed (e.g. language contents' instructions, sentence structures, vocational vocabulary usage and format of assessment activities as well as how questions should be framed,

### **Step 3: Identification of Final Themes**

- (a) Building final themes from initial themes (e.g. grammatical language structures, the use of vocational vocabulary and how assessment questions have been framed in the language section of the examination question papers).

### **Step 4: Establishing Theoretical Constructs**

- (a) Building theoretical constructs from final categories (e.g. language content such as grammatical structures, vocabulary use and assessment questions that are ESP driven.
- (b) Linking theoretical constructs to the study's theoretical framework.

**Figure 3.1:** A manual coding framework for thematic analysis (Adapted from Chaka et al., 2020, p. 502).

### **3.10 Research Trustworthiness: Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability**

Morrow (2005), states that qualitative research arises from several disciplines, paradigms, and that epistemological criteria for trustworthiness are closely associated with the paradigmatic framework of the discipline in which an investigation is conducted. According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), quality criteria for all qualitative research are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To establish the trustworthiness of this study, strategies were employed across credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To ensure credibility, in-depth interviews were conducted with the lecturers who teach the two NATED courses and with the students enrolled in them. The course material was reviewed prior to conducting interviews and afterwards in order to keep focus. The voices of the participants were recorded and used as points for inferences. The notes from the transcribed recordings were also used to determine the direction of the kind of the responses given by the respondents. To enhance transferability, I detailed the descriptions of the two course curricula, and their educational settings. Student demographics were provided. I did this hoping that it could enable future researchers to assess the applicability of findings to similar vocational programmes. I maintained dependability through a constant collection of data and transparent documentation of the analysis process. To sustain and maintain confirmability and reduce personal biases, I reflected on the findings from the two NATED courses and corroborated them with feedback from the voices of the participants from the recordings. Through these measures, the study provided a trustworthy analysis of the English language content relevance in the hospitality and tourism context. Below is a section on ethical considerations.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Parsell et al. (2014) emphasise that educational research is mostly ethically engaged because humans are always involved in the process. This study involves humans as participants, implying that I conducted it within the parameters of internationally recognized ethical guidelines that emphasise the principle of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (Guest et al., 2013). To conduct this study, I applied for ethical clearance from the University of South Africa (UNISA). The application included an application letter and a proposal for the study. After three months, permission labelled, NHREC Registration: Rec-240816-052, was granted and issued to me. I then further applied for permission to conduct the study at the two TVET colleges mentioned earlier. I observed the principle of virtue with a focus on tendency, justice, generosity, and honesty. I accommodated ethics parameters by considering informed consent and allowing the participants to voluntarily contribute to the study. To avoid harm to participants, I did not use their personal details. Instead, I used pseudonyms.

### **3.12 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter provided an overview of the qualitative exploratory research methodology applied in the study. It covered the research approach, paradigm, research design, and exploratory research. It addressed my positionality and identity, described the research sites, population, participants, and outlined data collection methods, specifically semi-structured interviews, and document reviews. The chapter also discussed data analysis techniques which included qualitative content and thematic analysis, and emphasised research trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, and confirmability. The following chapter presents the findings from the analysed language content sections of the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings from the English language content sections of the NATED N6 Communication and NATED N5 Tourism Communication courses. It also presents the findings from the interviews conducted with lecturers and students. One section contains the findings from the course texts, while the other section presents the findings from the interview sessions. In addition, it simultaneously discusses the findings.

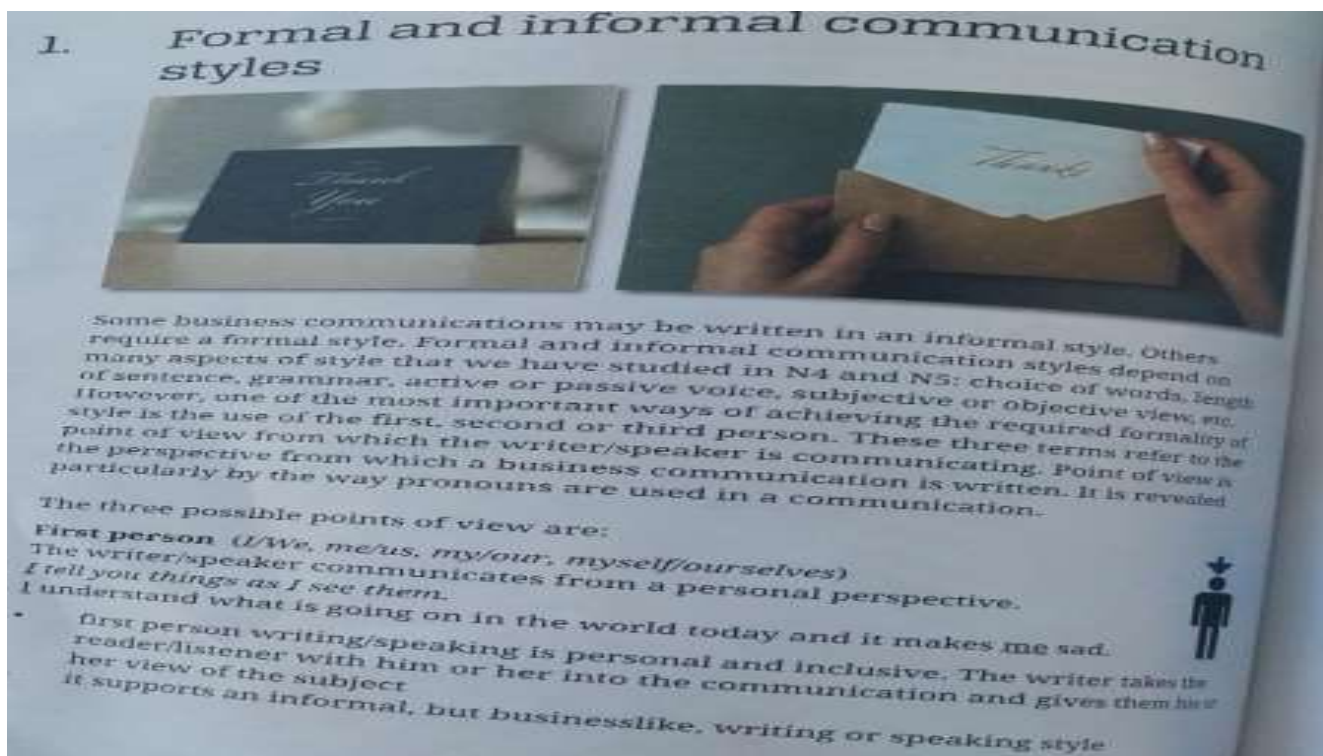
#### **4.1 Findings from the Segments of the English Language Content Sections of the NATED N6 Communication Course**

The NATED N6 Communication course is intended to equip TVET college students with the essential language skills required of them to succeed in business and management settings. The English language content segments presented below as findings are drawn from pages 170 to 194, module 6, titled *Language Usage* (Steenkamp and Wade, 2022). The N6 Communication syllabus covers a wide range of language content based on communication-related topics. The content range includes formal and informal communication styles, subjective and objective language usage, active and passive voice, and direct and indirect speech.

##### **(a) Presence of field-specific English grammatical content in context of hospitality and tourism**

This English language content in this sub-section is extracted from page 170 (Steenkamp and Wade, 2022). The content introduces students to the differences in word usage for different communication settings. The lesson uses generic example types of pronouns in isolation from syntax. The examples used include the first-person pronouns such as *I, we, me, us, yourself, myself, and ourselves*. These examples are not contextualised for any business and management activity where communication often involves interacting with clients. The process of resolving guest concerns, and handling workplace interactions takes place in culturally diverse environments and that is where the language content is applied in context. The outcome of the study conducted by Alhomidan (2023) reveals that effective ESP integration requires a genre-based approach that addresses authentic workplace communication needs, while supporting technical content acquisition. In this regard, the N6 Communication course's lack of field specific grammar content can be resolved by using ESP principles when its content is aligned to suit the hospitality and tourism context.

The explanation of the differences between formal and informal communication is not placed in the context of business and management programme to teach students to construct sentences within their intended workplace context. For example, the use of the first-person pronouns does not adequately reflect the context or the discipline, and therefore it is generic and less reflective of the corporate language content and vocabulary. To infer and reference how the instructions in the language segments provided guidance on how an English language content lesson for business purposes should be composed, see Figure 4.1 below from the NATED N5 Communication course exemplifying the use of formal and informal communication styles and the use of pronouns. The findings indicate that the examples provided are largely generic and not contextualised within business-related scenarios. It was found that the explanation of the pronoun usage does not demonstrate the application to workplace texts such as reports, memoranda, or formal correspondence. The findings reflect a gap between the language instruction and the communicative demands of the business and management discipline.



**Figure 4.1:** An explanation of the purpose of an English language lesson (Steenkamp and Wade 2022, p. 170).

The lesson on active and passive voice in section 3.2, page 177 (Steenkamp and Wade 2022), is exemplified by sentences such as, *We received your order two weeks ago* (active voice). This sentence is generic and not tailored to address any of the different types of business and management activities. For example, in this field, the use of active and passive voice is often critical in customer interactions, such as when providing updates on a reservation. The following examples are given to help students understand how sentences in active voice are changed into passive voice:

**Active voice:** *We have confirmed your booking for January 5th.*

**Passive voice:** *Your booking for January 5th has been confirmed.*

The above-cited examples do not incorporate the specific linguistic features that reflect the vocabulary or phrasing typical of this industry. This generic approach limits students' ability to construct sentences that align with the specialized communication demands of hospitality and tourism. To use direct and indirect speech in context, the following examples could be used instead of the generic ones. For example:

**Direct speech:** *The guest said, 'I need my room cleaned by noon.'*

**Indirect speech:** *The guest requested that their room be cleaned by noon.*

### **(b) Alignment of aims and objectives with ESP to suit hospitality and tourism**

The aims and objectives of the NATED Communication module on the language content application provide a broad focus on foundational communication skills and professional interaction within general business environments. The general aim is stated as: “You must be able to use the minimum of words to communicate effectively” (Steenkamp and Wade, 2022, p. 169). They outline key competencies that students are expected to achieve, such as constructing grammatically sound sentences, using terminology and language for general purposes.

The items numbered 1 to 4.4 below serve as the types of aims that must be achieved when students learn the English language content in the N6 Communication course designed for TVET college students in the NATED for business and management courses such as hospitality and tourism. Upon completing the module, students should be able to communicate effectively, as well as read and edit written material and documents (Steenkamp and Wade, 2022, p. 169). This general aim is inconsistent with Alhomidan's (2023) study that revealed that the effective ESP integration in courses for communication in specific contexts requires a genre-based approach that addresses authentic workplace communication needs. See the examples below taken from Steenkamp and Wade (2022, p. 169).

In this module, we discuss the following:

1. Formal and informal communication styles
2. Subjective and objective language usage
3. Direct and indirect speech; active and passive voice
- 3.1 Direct and indirect speech

3.2 Active and passive voice

4. Proofreading and editing of written work

4.1 Editing

4.2 Style

4.2 Punctuation

4.3 Language (grammar)

4.4 Content

### **(c) Integration of the English language content in a technological context**

The integration of technology into communication courses addresses the operational demands. As said earlier, advancements in virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) allow lecturers to create immersive simulations and role-playing scenarios, enhancing real-life communication skills (Hoadley and Van Haneghan, 2022). Huang et al. (2024) state that instructional technologies can facilitate the acquisition and transfer of fundamental knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required by future hospitality and tourism professionals. The N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses have the sections of the English language content that are not integrated with modern technology. Students are presented with lesson about how to use a fax and a telephone. The next sub-section presents the findings on the theme of exploring the presence of the language content in intercultural communication to empower students with abilities for hospitality and tourism talk.

### **(d) Hospitality and tourism talk: Presence of the English language content that encourages intercultural communication in context**

Modern education has been called to provide solutions to the problems of peoples' free communication by overcoming language barriers and cultural differences. It is related to employing such teaching methods (especially when learning foreign languages) that will enable the learners not only to acquire certain skills and knowledge, but also to apply them freely in a diverse social and cultural context (Dimitrova and Chakarova, 2015).

To promote intercultural communication at the workplace, the N6 Communication course highlights that intercultural differences should be avoided at all levels. The intercultural differences listed include ethnic, gender, age, language, religious and social class. It simply cautions that people should not allow human stereotypes and prejudices to interfere (Steenkamp and Wade, 2022). No further details are provided on what specific strategies should be used to prevent intercultural differences and promote intercultural communication in context.

### **(e) Assessing business and management content (hospitality and tourism) field-specific knowledge and vocational language content proficiency.**

Competencies and abilities in written and spoken communication within a specified context must be considered and evaluated since they become significant priority and influence how twenty-first century learners studying hospitality and tourism management perform in the organisation or the setting in which they will be employed (Bagon et al., 2023). The findings on how students are assessed to demonstrate the ability to apply the English language content in the N6 Communication course are presented below through the activities sampled from the textbook. Students are taught to use technologies such as WhatsApp, Twitter (now X), blogs, electronic bulletin boards, wikis and Facebook. Here is one example activity.

#### **Activity: Notice for electronic bulletin board**

Compile a short notice for the college electronic bulletin board to congratulate Martha Mathe and Dina Dlalda, two N6 students from CJC, on being chosen to represent the college at the Inter-College Secretarial Competition. Wish them well. Layout = 1 mark, Language = 3 marks, Content = 6 marks (Steenkamp and Wade, 2021:231). The next section presents findings from the language module sections of the N5 Tourism Communication NATED course (Steenkamp and Wade (2022:169).

### **4.2 Findings from the Segments of the English Language Content Sections of the NATED N5 Tourism Communication Course**

The findings from the segments of the English language content of the N5 Tourism Communication course were extracted from module 3 of Steenkamp (2015, p. 67) titled *Presentation Communication*. The objectives are as follows:

- Learn general oral communication skills.
- Know factors influencing effective oral communication skills.
- Learn and apply meta-language.
- Demonstrate the practical application of theoretical knowledge in everyday and professional tourism contexts.
- Apply verbosity, use linking words, use metaphors, tenses, active and passive voice as well as direct and indirect speech.

### **(a) Presence of field-specific English grammatical content in context of hospitality and tourism**

Regarding the presence of grammatical content, the module contains specific aspects of the English language content that aid communication in professional and informal settings. Firstly, it addresses colloquial language. It defines colloquial as informal words or phrases that are unsuitable for formal communication (Steenkamp and Wade (2015)). To illustrate this, examples such as replacing *easy as pie* with *simple*, *shut up with keep quiet*, and *buddy* with *friend/colleague* are provided. These examples are meant to help students understand how to shift from casual expressions to more professional vocabulary. Secondly, it explains the difference between active and passive voice. This is done to help students construct grammatically accurate sentences. For instance, it exemplifies how active voice sentences and passive voice sentences are formed. An active sentence, *You will find a brochure*, which directly identifies the subject performing the action, and a passive voice sentence, *A brochure will be found by you*, which emphasises the object receiving the action, are provided as example sentences. This distinction allows students to choose between direct and indirect communication styles as appropriate.

On page 72, lessons and hints on how to articulate words are given. Below is a presentation of the kind of the language content and hints on how it should be articulated as provided by Steenkamp (2015, p. 70):

We say the flow of breath is ‘voiced’ if the vocal cords are vibrating and the resonating chambers are in use; or ‘unvoiced’ if they are not. To articulate consonants, we stop the flow of breath altogether to make an explosive sound, e.g. {p} and {d}; or squeeze it through to make a scrapping sound, e.g. {v} and {s}. For vowels, e.g. {a}, {e} ... or we use our tongue and lips to change the shape of the mouth to make the different sounds (Steenkamp (2015, p. 70).

The course argues that organs of speech must be supple and quick-moving to articulate sounds clearly and crisply, so that we can hear a distinct difference between sounds. In sub-section 2.2, segments of the language content that affect oral communication are presented. For example, accent, stress, and pronunciation are said to be the linguistic elements that affect oral communication.

Accent is explained to be a distinctive way of pronouncing a language, especially one associated with a particular country/region, area, or social class. Sometimes a person can judge or classify another person based on their accent. Some South African accents that are easily recognised are the Afrikaans accent, the Black South African accents, the Indian accent, and the standard South African English accent (cf. Lanham, 1996). For instance, concerning the Indian accent, the general sing-song rhythm and up-inflections at the end of thoughts: *I took my daughter for treatment!* (cf. Mesthrie, 1988/2018). With respect to the Afrikaans

accent, the characteristic *flat* vowels *f*- substitution, rough *r*, and *th*-fronting [ʃ] instead of *th* [θ] are a case in point: *Souf Effrica* instead of South Africa (Steenkamp (2015, p. 73).

In the Black South African accent, non-standard stress on parts of the word, e.g., *seventies* instead of *seventies*; *committee* instead of *committee*; *debate* instead of *debate*. For example, for the word *seventies*, the stress is on the first syllable, *sev*- (Steenkamp (2015:73, own italics and bold type; also see Mesthrie, 2006).

To explain and introduce the students to how words are stressed, here is an example and the explanation: “We stress the part of a word by making the pitch higher on that syllable or making it sound longer” Steenkamp (2015, p. 73. The text highlights that putting the stress on the *right* part of the word is an important element in English pronunciation. Further, it notes that:

If we wish to be clearly understood when speaking in a business context, we should strive for the stress patterns of South African Standard English. It suggests that a rough guide is to put the stress on the first syllable, e.g., *crocodile* and not *crocodile*. In the case of the word *crocodile*, the stress is in the syllable, *croc*-. As we have seen in the Black [South] African [English] accent examples above, the problem arises when there are exceptions to the other rule! (p. 73, own italics and bold type).

The text states that stress can affect meaning, especially between nouns and verbs, e.g., I conduct a meeting at work well; but when I have had too much to drink at a party, my conduct is not what it should be.

Adding to the above explanation of how words are pronounced and the given examples, the sections continue to give examples on of how certain words are mispronounced. The following explanations and examples of how this happens are offered below:

- Not pronouncing final consonants clearly, e.g., *I am confuse(d). I recommen(d) this. First come, first serve(d).*
- Not pronouncing all the syllables, e.g., *Februry* and not *February* and *terrists* instead of *terrorists*.
- Adding extra sounds, especially vowels, e.g., *I watched a fil(u)m, she is a mischiev(i)ous little girl, and cre(h)ate a sentence with this word* (Steenkamp, 2015, p. 73).

It highlights that when speakers do not understand the spelling system in English, it leads to do the wrong thing by pronouncing the silent letters in a word, e.g., *government X, almond X, sword X, and honour X*

(Steenkamp, 2015, p. 73, own italics and bold type). It argues that all these speech pronunciation problems can lead to misunderstanding, irritation, and conflict in the workplace.

The text emphasises the importance of linking words to improve the flow and coherence of written communication. A detailed table categorises these words based on their purpose is provided. For example, words like *also* and *in addition* are used to add further points, while *however* and *but* are employed to show contrast. Similarly, phrases such as *if* and *unless* express conditions, while *in conclusion* and *to summarise* introduce the final paragraph of a text (see Nkhobo and Chaka, 2026). These tools ensure that ideas are logically connected and clearly presented. The module also highlights the need for appropriate wording, particularly in tourism communication, where politeness and professionalism are critical. It encourages students to use expressions like “Please” and “Thank you,” as well as polite requests such as “Could you ...?” and “Would you mind ...?”. It also suggests using the passive voice to make statements more indirect and polite, such as “Smoking is not allowed” instead of “You are not allowed to smoke.” (Steenkamp, 2015, p. 73)

The segments present the importance of register and style in written communication. They distinguish between formal, informal, and casual styles, providing examples for each. They explain that a formal style features full sentences, no contractions, and third-person pronouns, while an informal style uses shorter sentences, occasional contractions, and personal pronouns to create a friendlier tone. In contrast, a casual style includes incomplete sentences, colloquialisms, and slang, catering to highly informal situations. These distinctions guide students in selecting the appropriate tone for various communication contexts. The segments also deal with aspects of meta-language (Steenkamp, 2015) as exemplified below.

Steenkamp (2015, p. 74) point out that “[m]eta-language is a big word for figurative language. It is used to convey different meaning from their literal obvious meanings.” The following examples are given to demonstrate the use of meta-language. To indicate how figure of speech is used, an example of irony is given:

Irony - the real meaning of the word(s) is the opposite of what is said. For example: *The biggest player in the rugby team is nicknamed ‘tiny.’* Simile - a direct comparison. Example: *The secretary is as quiet as a mouse.* Metaphor - a hidden comparison. Example: *The secretary is a little mouse.* Personification - objects or abstract ideas are given human qualities and abilities. Example: *Opportunity is knocking at the door.* Euphemism - the use of vague or indirect words to convey unpleasant realities. Example: *Physically challenged* instead of *disabled* or *passed away* instead of *died* (p. 74).

Verbosity is cautioned against, which involves using overly complex words that can hinder clarity. To address this, a table is provided with simpler alternative words to the given verbosity of vocabulary word, such as replacing “terminate” with “end,” “participate” with “take part,” and “numerous” with “many.” This focus on plain language helps students communicate more effectively and avoid unnecessary complexity in their writing (Steenkamp, 2015, p. 74).

### **(b) Alignment of aims and objectives with English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to suit hospitality and tourism**

The objectives of teaching the English language content is to encourage students to have employability skills such as written and spoken communication skills in specific context using vocational language and vocabulary that address communication needs (Nugraha et al., 2020). Regarding the connection of the aims and objectives, the English language content guides students to identify and provide examples of how perception influences cross-cultural communication. It further notifies students about the effect of language differences on communication. It emphasizes the importance of connotation and denotation. Students are encouraged to apply the concepts such as direct and indirect speech, passive and active voice and tenses as covered in the module to both everyday situations and those specific to tourism-related job scenarios. This ensures the practical application of the knowledge gained throughout the module (see Steenkamp, 2015).

### **(c) Integration of the English language content with technology**

Regarding the integration of technology and the English language content in the hospitality and tourism content, module 5, sub-section 6.6 (Steenkamp, 2015, pp. 155-158) introduces technology in communication within the context of hospitality and tourism. This sub-section familiarises students with using main media mass communication devices such as radio, internet, and emails. It suggests that concise and effective communication language content in mass media functions to: inform the public about what is happening, to persuade people, and to entertain and to promote culture etc. It also presents advantages and disadvantage of using mass media communication. The emphasis is on guiding students in structuring their messages appropriately to ensure clarity and professionalism. Specific instructions to enhance students’ ability to communicate effectively using these technologies are offered. The instructions include:

- Writing the name and title of the receiver to ensure the message is directed appropriately.
- Including the name and title of the sender to establish the source of the communication clearly.
- Filling in the date with the day and the month to maintain accuracy and relevance in correspondence.
- Adding the sender’s telephone number to facilitate easy follow-up or clarification.

- Structuring the message or information in point format, which aids in clarity, conciseness, and ease of understanding (Steenkamp, 2015).

**(d) Hospitality and tourism talk: Presence of the English language content that encourages intercultural communication in context.**

Vocabulary knowledge is the key element in developing all the four language skills as it underlies comprehension and provides fluency and eloquence in speech and writing. This is especially relevant in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), occupational or academic, as one of the key differentiators from the so-called general English (Pokupec, Njerš and Lozančić Benić (2017). The N5 communication section on language and communication skills makes less reflection on encouraging students to write and speak effectively and efficiently in an intercultural context. Unlike in module 4, which presents subject matter on cultural and cross-cultural communication, the N5 Tourism Communication course does not provide examples to indicate how different cultures' view, associate themselves and attach meaning to the world differently. Nor does it provide examples of the application of language content in the context of hospitality and tourism to exemplify intercultural communication in action.

**(e) Assessing hospitality and tourism field-specific knowledge and vocational language**

There are a range of tests assessing vocabulary knowledge and the focus is on different areas of knowledge such as size, breadth, and depth of the purposes of assessing specialised vocabulary inferencing skills and knowledge. Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) can be used to measure both receptive and productive knowledge of vocabulary items. (VKS) is a self-report assessment that combines students' self-reported knowledge of a word in combination with a constructed response demonstrating knowledge of each target word (Pokupec et al., 2017). The assessment activity below is excerpted from page 82 of the N5 Tourism Communication course textbook (Steenkamp, 2015, p. 82). It is presented to show how some of the questions are framed to assess students in the segments of the English language content module 3 that focuses on *Presentation Communication*:

**Activity 5: Speech writing**

**Work in pairs.**

Here is a speech of someone accepting an award. You will notice that a few words have been left out. Read the speech a few times and then fill in the correct words (from the list provided) next to

the number. Rewrite the whole speech and read it aloud to your partner. If it does not sound right, you need to rearrange the words!

**Speech:**

'Good (1 \_\_\_\_\_) ladies and gentlemen. It is wonderful to be here, but I am at a (2 \_\_\_\_\_) for words right now. I have always (3 \_\_\_\_\_) winning the Travel Consultant of the Year award and now my (4 \_\_\_\_\_) has come true! The (5 \_\_\_\_\_) is so high and the (6 \_\_\_\_\_) so fierce, that I still cannot (7 \_\_\_\_\_) that I'm really the (8 \_\_\_\_\_). I want to thank my (9 \_\_\_\_\_), Ms Alice Scott, and my team leader, Kelly Bongani, for all their (10 \_\_\_\_\_), support and good advice. I would not have been able to achieve my (11 \_\_\_\_\_) sales and the goodwill of so many clients had it not been for their (12 \_\_\_\_\_) to and (13 \_\_\_\_\_) in me. Receiving this award is such an unexpected (14 \_\_\_\_\_) and it means the world to me. It is truly the (15 \_\_\_\_\_) of my career. Thank you, Travel Africa, thank you very much.'

**Words:** winner, loyalty, competition, standard, honour, believe, record, highlight, belief, manager, encouragement, aspired to, loss, dream, afternoon.

### **4.3 Key Findings of the High Frequency of the Generic Language Content across N6 Communication Course and the N5 Tourism Communication Course**

The sentences not adding value to the extent that the vocational language is expected, were underlined and counted in the language content of both the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses. The findings in both courses indicate a high frequency of decontextualised and of generic sentences in both cases.

The objectives of the English language content in both courses are not aligned to encourage the use of industry specific terminologies and phraseology. Technology is weakly integrated with the language content that is specific and relevant to the tourism and hospitality context. There is a clear lack of applied intercultural strategies in both courses. In general, the findings point to the English language content of the two courses to be lacking in meeting the language needs of hospitality and tourism.

The following section presents the findings of the interview sessions conducted at both TVET colleges.

#### 4.4 Findings from and Discussion of Lecturers' Interviews

These findings are drawn from the interview transcripts shown in appendices A to H appearing in the appendix sections in a tabular form. Each table contains themes, questions raised by me labelled as Baloyi Reckson (BR)<sub>2</sub> and the responses to the questions by the lecturers from the Tshwane TVET College are labelled Tshwane's lecturers (pseudonyms). The responses from their students are labelled Tshwane's students (pseudonyms). The Vhembe TVET College's lecturers are pseudonymised as Vhembe's lecturers and students as Vhembe's students.

##### 4.4.1 Tshwane TVET College's N6 Communication course lecturers' interviews

The names used in this section are pseudonyms. During the sessions for interviewing lecturers for the N6 Communication course, six lecturers, Ms Mukhodo, Mr Segomoto, Merlyn, Emelracius, Gilion and Mr Morisane, participated. The goal was to gain insight into how they perceived the English language content section of the course (see Appendix A).

###### (a) Alignment of the course objectives with the development of the context-relevant English language content

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), ESP curricula should be driven by learners' communicative needs within specific professional contexts. Regarding the theme of alignment of the objectives, Ms Mukhodo stated that she experienced how unaligned the objectives are and suggested that the N6 Communication course should include the objectives that are clear on how language should be taught. In her own words, she said "*I think it does not align because I specifically teach Communication on a NATED level, and we do use (?1:00) or rather, words that are used in the workplace....we use every day words..not for workplace*". Segomoto added that the objectives are not really aligned. Instead, they are too generic, and they are not different from those in other courses designed for use to teach English. Mr Morisane's view was that the objectives must be aligned to include those which can encourage the lecturers to prepare lessons that could equip students with effective communication skills and such objectives should cover tips on how teachers could teach language content for context. "*In my view, there are certain areas in which the objectives must be aligned*" said Morisane. He highlighted these gaps in the current objectives. Merlyn indicated that "*I think the purpose or the objectives need attention somehow....we should rework on them... We need to revise and put them in tourim format*". In the same vein, Emelracius said, "*I suggest that we meet as lecturers to review them.... they are not aligned to language requirement*". When I made a

follow up question, Merlyn said that, *“They are not up to the specific requirement ...they do not encourage us to teach using words ,...I mean vocabulary that is applied in the field....we use any words”*. Meanwhile, Gilion argued that *“They are generalised and almost lacking words or vocabulary that suit the context”*.

### **(b) Presence of the relevant vocational language content in the N6 Communication course**

Research in ESP highlights that the absence of industry-specific terminology limits students’ ability to function effectively in professional environments (Basturkmen, 2010). On the theme of vocational relevance of the language content to the vocational context, Ms Mukhodo mentioned that she would prefer that the objectives be tailor-made, and that the process should include establishing the specific communicative needs of the students followed by a decision to customise the objectives be considered. Mr Segomoto also mentioned that the objectives do not sound to be promoting vocational language usage and communication skills that relate to business and management context. In addition to that, Mr Morisane highlighted that for him, the vocational language content relevance to the vocational context is at a minimum level. *“Let me say that it lacks in-depth and direct examples for its applicability to industry-specific language demands”*, said Morisane. Merlyn mentioned that, *“The language content is like any language .... like daily use of language.....nothing makes it different form language that we teach for general English”*. I then turned the question to Emelracius, who said, *“Oh...No...no....the language is the same as any ....it is similar to what we taught them in the other module of English, the example sentences and the activities are not talking about tourism or business language ...I mean using language in the context of communicating in business ...”* Gilion indicated that *“The language is generic and has nothing to say about using words or vocabulary in the context of communicating in business ...I mean using sentences and vocabulary that is for tourism”*.

### **(c) Integration of technology with the English language content**

Apps have made tourism enjoyable and accessible and artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality, augmented reality, robotics and chatbots have become popular, benefiting tourists, organisations and industries, and thus enhancing smart tourism with a digital future (Sugasri and Selvam, 2018). Regarding the theme of using technology with the English language content, Ms Mukhodo mentioned that the technology used was too old and not relevant to the current era. She highlighted that the terminology, phrases, and clauses applied to very old technology, like fax, is also not about specific activities that take place in business and management such as tourism. *“We teach students how to use fax but the language content used in the examples is not tailored to suit business and management context”*, said Segomoto. The phrases, clauses and verbs are generic and not used in a way that sounded touristic. Mr Morisane mentioned that technology plays an increasingly integral role in the application of language content within the communication course.

He indicated that the syllabus lacks digital platforms such as learning management systems (LMS), online collaboration tools, and language processing software that could provide students with interactive and dynamic ways to engage with communication principles. He emphasized that such technologies are not available, and they should be incorporated into the syllabus. When I asked Gilion to share his experience, he said, “No...language and tech are taught separately ... vocabulary and sentences are not applied integrated”.

Emelracius said that “*No ... There is poor ... very poor use of technology with language content....what stand out , but its use is not demonstrated in context of applying language and vocabulary in tourism or business management activities....is a telephone.....We teach students to take any kind of instruction through listening and responding via a telephone*”. Gilion indicated that “*For me, technology is taught separate from language content in our syllabus....technology is not visible or used with language*”. And, Merlyn shared that “*No....there is no integration ....technology is applied and taught in Isolation with English vocabulary for tourism*”.

#### **(d) Presence and use of intercultural communication to encourage multilingual communication**

Byram (1997) argues that language education must extend beyond linguistic competence to include intercultural awareness and the ability to communicate across cultures. Concerning the theme of the intercultural communication, three participants’ responses were similar. Ms Mukhodo mentioned that the syllabus does not contain strategies on how to teach intercultural communications or multilingualism to prepare the students to be competent communicators in the fields. For his part, Mr Morisane mentioned that he would prefer that the section on intercultural communication be revised and the strategies on teaching intercultural communication be included. “*No ... not at all .the syllabus just inform us to inform students that they may encounter tourists from other tribes or nationalities and they must learn to talk in other languages ... but as for the syllabus, it does not have lesson on how to teach intercultural communication*”, said Merlyn . Gilion indicated that “*No ... the syllabus does not have a section that is determined or dedicated to teach multilingualism or translanguaging ... not at all*”. To this end, Emelracius said, “*No ... we do not have a chapter or considerable section that addresses application of intercultural communication in any context*”. And, Gilion said, “*From my experience and even what I know is in the textbook, there is no lessons on how to teach intercultural communication*”.

#### **(e) Assessment of the English language content in the course**

To respond to how the English language content questions are set, Ms Mukhodo mentioned that lecturers are guided by the assessment guidelines, and in the guidelines, there were no principles that state a need to

set questions that seek to demonstrate the application of the diction relevant to the work-related context. According to Mr Morisane, the question papers set are often generic, and the activities are not formulated to require students to demonstrate their ability to apply industry-specific English language. Merlyn said “*We set assessment activities based on the assessment guideline ... the guideline does not instruct lecturers to use questions that are grounded on tourism communication context*”. And, Gilion pointed out that, “*The assessment activities in the textbook are generic....the instructions of the questions used in the examples are silent about telling us to use questions that are contextualised to any context ...*” Similarly, Emelracius indicated that, “*The example questions in the textbook are not based on specific language or language that is distinguishable from the language we use daily*”.

#### **4.4.2 Tshwane TVET College’s N5 Tourism Communication lecturers’ interviews**

The participants Mrs Mhlanga, Mrs Mahori, Mrs Chauke, Arnold, and Mrs Palani were asked questions with a focus on the N5 Tourism Communication course’s English language content and communication skills (see Appendix B).

##### **(a) Alignment of the course objectives with the development of the context-relevant English language content**

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) argue that clearly articulated objectives guide lecturers in designing instructions that develop workplace-appropriate language skills. When objectives remain generic, they fail to support the development of discipline-specific communication competence, resulting in misalignment between the instructional intent and vocational application (Biggs and Tang, 2011). As a response to the question raised to find out if the objectives of the course are aligned with the content in the language section, Mrs Mhlanga outlined that the objectives are generic, and they cover only fundamental communication principles without offering specialised language instruction tailored to a particular field. He mentioned that the syllabus is structured around generic lesson plans rather than competency-based learning that aligns with industry requirements. Mrs Mahori emphasised that English instructions in the course remain like what students experience in high school. According to him, the textbooks contain general vocabulary and sentence structures meaning that students are not exposed to industry-specific jargon necessary for professional communication in tourism and hospitality. Mrs Chauke mentioned that the course objectives should be narrowed to encourage both lecturers and students to focus on language content that is directly relevant to the tourism sector. He suggested that refining the objectives could help ensure that language instructions support real-world communication skills in the field. The participant primarily mentioned that the current objectives do not fully emphasise the use of the relevant English language content in vocational

contexts, which then limits students' preparedness for real-world communication. "*They are not at all aligned with the context of tourism language usage ...*" said Arnold.

### **(b) Presence of the relevant vocational language content in the N5 Communication course**

For hospitality and tourism education, communication is highly transactional and context-bound, requiring exposure to sector-specific genres and registers (Blue and Harun, 2003). The participants in the interview raised a concern about the lack of vocationally relevant language content in the N5 Communication course. They mentioned that the language is not narrowed to suit a specific context. *The N5 Communication prescribed textbooks focused on general vocabulary and sentence structures,*" said Mrs Mhlanga. Mrs Chauke supported this claim and explained that the language content focuses on foundational skills such as grammar and vocabulary. The N5 Communication textbook does not provide direction for the application of language content to tourism and hospitality communication. She highlighted that the hospitality and tourism communication tends to be transactional and context-driven meanwhile the syllabus does not adequately incorporate industry-specific terminology. Arnold replied by saying that. "*No ... the language content is generic...far different from how we here in spoken in hotels and tourist destinations areas ... it is applied in general*".

### **(c) Integration of technology with the English language content**

Participants expressed concerns about the minimal integration of technology in the course and the use of outdated communication tools. Mrs Mhlanga mentioned that technological integration is minimal. She expressed that beyond encouraging learning of basic communication skills in a generic sense, the course does not incorporate modern digital communication tools relevant to the industry. She also cited the inclusion of an outdated technology like the usage of fax in the textbooks. Mrs Mahori said that her concern is that the primary focus remains on basic digital skills such as email communication. She advised that the textbook should use modern advanced digital communication skills that are relevant in tourism and hospitality. "*The language content is not well integrated with technology, and where it is included, it tends to be generic and outdated,*" said Mrs Chauke. There was more emphasis on the need for incorporation of modern technology into the syllabus. In relation to the responses given above, Chapelle (2003) emphasises that digital tools enable interactive and authentic language use aligned with workplace practices. To this end, Arnold said, "*No ... the examples used are not integrated with technology....the language content and technology are taught in Isolation*".

#### **(d) Presence and use of intercultural communication to encourage multilingual communication**

Studies show that limited attention to multilingualism and intercultural strategies in vocational curricula leaves students underprepared for culturally diverse workplaces (Kramsch, 1998). The study found that the syllabus provides limited support for intercultural and multilingual communication, which is a crucial skill in the tourism and hospitality industries. Mrs Mahori stated that intercultural communication is not meaningfully incorporated into the syllabus. The textbook includes only a handful of foreign words and cautioned that they were not even applied in a meaningful way that helps students engage in real-world multilingual interactions.

Mrs Mhlanga mentioned that the textbook includes some foreign words, but that they are presented out of context, limiting students' ability to understand how these words function in authentic communication situations. She argued that more emphasis should be placed on practical multilingual communication skills that students can use in their professional careers. Mrs Palani pointed out that the NATED N5 Tourism course textbook does not contain adequate subject matter on teaching intercultural communication. She also highlighted that the subject guidelines for both teaching and assessments do not include clear instructions on how multilingualism should be practiced or taught. "There are no examples of lessons that are based in teaching intercultural communication ... we do not teach such ...", Arnold confirmed.

#### **(e) Assessment of the English language content in the course**

Brown (2004) notes that generic, theory-based assessments do not adequately capture learners' communicative competence. Participants raised concerns that assessments do not adequately evaluate students' ability to use vocationally relevant language content. Mrs Mhlanga stated that assessments are designed broadly in English and do not focus on applying language content within a specific context. Students are free to use any language approach when they answer questions as the focus is on providing the correct answer rather than demonstrating contextually relevant communication skills. She mentioned that assessment questions are largely open-ended which further weakens the emphasis on vocational language application. Mrs Mahori shared similar concerns, stating that assessments are structured in a way that allows students to answer freely, without requiring them to demonstrate proficiency in industry-specific language use. Like Mrs Mhlanga, she pointed out saying, "*No, not adequately. The assessments are designed using English broadly. We do not narrow it to suit a single context. Students can use their words any how... We focus on the answer...not necessarily the context of the language ... Questions are largely open-ended*".

Mrs Chauke mentioned that assessments often focus more on general communication theories than on the direct application of hospitality-specific language content. Mrs Palani emphasised that assessment questions, both in formative and summative evaluations, do not require students to be selective about the kind of language content they use. Arnold indicated that, “The assessment activities used in the textbook are not contextualised ... they are used in general context ... we also follow those examples ....”

#### **4.4.3 Key findings from the interviews of lecturers from Tshwane TVET College**

The findings indicated that the English language content is misaligned. It lacks vocational vocabulary and phraseology that is contextualised to tourism and hospitality. The language is not integrated with technology, and the language sections do not cater for teaching multilingualism and translanguaging to enhance intercultural communication. The assessment questions lack instructions that encourage students to produce texts that are contextualised.

#### **4.4.4 Vhembe TVET College’s N6 Communication course lecturers’ interviews**

##### **(a) Alignment of the course objectives with the development of the context-relevant English language content**

Participants were asked to respond to the question: Do you think that the primary objectives of the N6 Communication course are aligned with the vocational language content and communication skills required in the fields of business and management fields such as tourism and hospitality? In response, Mr Maquele said that the syllabus’ aims and objectives are not aligned or tailored for a specific context. According to her, the language segments are generic, and they are not at all in context of business and management; they do not relate to any specific field and are generalised. Ms Nkhesani mentioned that she does not believe that the objectives are aligned to encourage the lecturers to develop lessons that equip students with communication skills and the language content relevant to business and management context. According to her, the subject guidelines on teaching and assessment are not instructive on how to include strategies on the contextualising of lessons. “*They encourage us to approach teaching in general approaches rather than specifics to the field under study,*” she said. The responses given herein are contradictory to what Mohamed and Alani (2022) argue as they state that ESP is the common teaching method that instructors tend to use to be able to meet the special and exact demands and needs of the students according to their major or profession. This is so because the participants indicated that the objectives of the N6 Communication course are not aligned to address communication needs.

## **(b) Presence of the relevant vocational language content in the N5 Communication course**

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) highlight that ESP methodologies depend on students' learning processes, promoting the usage of latent and conscious knowledge. In response to the question, how vocational is the language nature of the content and how effective is it applied to help you teach language content effectively?, Mr Maquele said that the language content is not tailored to a business language content. According to him, the sentence structures such as those related to the active and passive voice, and to other aspects of grammar are not used in context. They are generic. *"You may not feel that there is language for communication in business and management field when you read or listen to someone reading the text"*, he said. Ms Nkhesani said that, as a suggestion, *"students should learn how to engage professionally. I refer to communicating and applying language relevant to business and management context"*, she said. According to her, the course does not have detailed content to teach the application of language content for use in these skills.

## **(c) Integration of technology with the English language content**

An area critical to the TVET education delivery process is using technology to impart knowledge to students (Gbadegbe et al., 2023). Concerning the use of or integrating technology with language content, Mr Maquele said that lecturers do not apply much technology, and the section that has technology has outdated gadgets, such as a fax. *"The fax usage in the textbook is outdated ... we have better and more advanced technologies that could be used to enhance teaching of language content. Maybe the textbooks should be revised,"* he said. Ms Nkhesani said that the integration of language content with technology in the Communication course is inadequate. Language is not effectively integrated with technology. She also said that lecturers are still teaching students how to construct language in a fax and how to send it. According to her, the use of fax is no longer relevant in an era with more advanced technologically.

## **(d) Presence and use of intercultural communication to encourage multilingual communication**

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) can be regarded as a key part of success in an international business environment and Working in an international environment requires considering cultural diversity, such as how to work with people of different beliefs, languages, and backgrounds (Liu et al., 2022). When the two participants were asked to express their views on the presence of intercultural communication activities in the prescribed textbook and how they apply strategies for teaching, Mr Maquele said that the section on intercultural communication is not detailed. There are no strategies in the N6 Communication course on how to apply intercultural communication, and that the syllabus has no detailed approaches on how to practice that and encourage learners to do so. Ms Nkhesani indicated that, according to her,

intercultural communication goes beyond learning a few phrases. She said that it involves understanding cultural norms, guest expectations, and appropriate professional language when interacting with international visitors. She maintained that the syllabus does not fully include structured activities that simulate the application of language content relevant to context.

#### **(e) Assessment of the English language content in the course**

Assessment tools necessitate a departure from generic inquiries, necessitating an industry-specific focus (Gao et al., 2017). Participants were asked to respond to the question: Are hospitality and tourism assessment questions formulated in such a way that they require students to demonstrate abilities or skills to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills? In response, Mr Maquele mentioned that the questions in the assessment activities are generic and are not contextualised. *“We are guided by the assessment guidelines, and we adhere to that. “The assessment guidelines do not say anything regarding the tailoring of questions to suit or address a certain context”*, he said. According to him, the lecturers assess grammar and application communication skills in general. *“We are duty bound to follow what the syllabus requires,”* he continued. According to Ms Nkhesani, both summative and formative assessment purposes are not consistently formulated in a way that requires students to demonstrate their ability to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills.

#### **4.4.5 Vhembe TVET College’s N5 Tourism Communication lecturers’ interviews**

##### **(a) Alignment of the course objectives with the development of the context-relevant English language content**

The main question here was: Do you think that the primary objectives of the N6 Communication course are aligned with the vocational language content and communication skills required in the fields of business and management fields such as tourism and hospitality? Mjaji said that there is a gap between the language content and the objectives’ purpose, as you state that they are meant to encourage the lecturers to develop lessons that are in context of the fields under study. *“The subject guidelines on teaching and learning of language usage do not appropriately state that we must align our lessons to the context, and the examples of lessons on language content teaching are not contextualised”*, she said. According to her, when you read the text on language content, you cannot feel and experience the diction of tourism and hospitality. This echoes Basturkmen’s (2010) point when he argues that generic course objectives and language content fail to prepare students for real-world professional communication.

Blessings said that he thinks the objectives are partially aligned. *“I say so because many businesses use English to communicate with their clients and I think it is important to acknowledge the inclusion of the section of how students can learn to use English,”* he said. He also mentioned what he considered the shortcomings regarding the generic use of phrases or sentences. *“I think the objectives should also direct the lectures to contextualise the language content of their lesson to the discipline that they teach,”* he proceeded.

### **(b) Presence of the relevant vocational language content in the N5 Communication course**

Vocational education requires a focus on practical and industrial concerns while simultaneously developing general intellectual skills (Gamble 2003), and the skills and knowledge gained must be transferable to a variety of situations different from that in which the learning itself took place (Gamble 2003). In response to the question, how vocational is the language nature of the content? How effective is it applied to help you teach language content effectively?, Mjaji stated that the syllabus has language content that is structured in a similar way to the language content in another prescribed textbook. *“The sentences on grammar are generic and the assessment activities are not, at most, contextualised ... the register used, and the tone applied do not match the articulations one could expect in tourism fields”*, she said. Blessings mentioned that the language content is partially vocational. *“There are terms or concepts such as destinations, tourists, etiquette etc. ... the concern is that some of them are not appropriately used in sentences to showcase the meaning,”* he said. He suggested that students be given such concepts and be instructed to apply them in sentences of their own.

### **(c) Integration of technology with the English language content**

Stockwell (2012) notes that technology-enhanced learning can support vocational communication development when strategically integrated, a potential that appears insufficiently exploited in the courses under review. Responding to the use of or integrating technology into the English language content, Mjaji said that the language content is not well used with technology and that the language content used on some technology, such as the use of fax to teach students how to write messages via fax it is not based in appropriate language or syntax that create diction for tourism. *“The language used and the outdated technology it is applied on it are not carefully selected and applied to suit the business and management context,”* she mentioned. Blessings said that there is a big gap between what is happening in our communities and what is happening in the class environment, and again what is happening in the work environment. At a TVET college level, students just learn how to communicate in English, and learn to write reports and emails in general rather than focusing on what they will do after graduation. These responses which confirm that technology is not well integrated with the language content of the N5 Tourism

Communication courses restrict learners' engagement and adaptation to work in the Fourth Industrial Revolution which require them to be well vested with knowledge about information technology (Biggs and Tang, 2011).

#### **(d) Presence and use of intercultural communication to encourage multilingual communication**

Alongside technical expertise, the ability to communicate effectively across cultures is increasingly recognized as an essential skill in global work environments ([iyonshima, 2024](#)). In answering the question, are there examples from both the syllabus and the subject guidelines that help you to teach intercultural communication skills and encourage tourism talk?, Mjaji stated that she does not think that the objectives are relevant enough. *“There are no strategies on how to teach intercultural communication or multilingualism,”* she said. Blessings mentioned that the module on intercultural communication has less content on language usage. *“The focus is on meta-language ... I remember, the section is on unit 3 page 74 of the prescribed textbook ... the examples used do not relate to application of language content in the context of intercultural communication,”* he said.

#### **(e) Assessment of the English language content in the course**

When answering the question, are hospitality and tourism assessment questions formulated in such a way that they require students to demonstrate abilities or skills to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills?, Mjaji said that at most, their questions for assessing language content are not set in consideration of the communication context of business and management or in relation to the communication skills and language content usage in the content of fields such as tourism and hospitality. Blessings mentioned that the assessment guidelines direct them on what to set for assessment. Even if they want to teach language content relevant to a specific field or try to adapt their approach to address to communication required in the workplace, the teaching and assessment guidelines do not allow for that. *“You must teach what is expected by the syllabus and that is all due to a need to adhere to the expectations of the guidelines, the questions we set are not always context-driven”*, said Blessings.

#### **4.4.6 Key findings from the interviews of lecturers from Vhembe TVET College**

As clearly indicated by the frequency of the responses by the participants, both the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism communication courses a lot of the English language content that is not contextualised. None of the participants indicated that the language content is narrowed to address communication in specified context of tourism. That is contrary to the suggestion made by Chappelle (2003) in stating that language

content and assessments tasks should move beyond theoretical knowledge to evaluate learners' ability to apply language meaningfully within occupational contexts.

#### 4.5 Findings from Students' Interviews

The following findings from the students are presented consecutively, starting with the N6 Communication students from both TVET colleges.

##### 4.5.1 Tshwane TVET College's N6 Communication course students' interviews

The participants Michael, Ellen, Rahel, Nabeul, Isaiah, and Eddy were asked questions related to the N6 Communication course's English language content and communication skills. Below are their responses to these questions.

**(a) Do the learning objectives of the hospitality and tourism communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication related to hospitality and tourism.**

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) similarly maintain that ESP courses require clearly articulated objectives and discipline-specific discourse. When responding to the question asked to find out if the objectives of the N6 Communication course help students to effectively use language content that is more relevant to the context of business and management fields like tourism and hospitality, many said that the question could best be answered by the lecturers who prepare lessons. *"To respond to those questions is difficult, we are told that we are learning language content that is required in the business and management."* *"... Since I am not aware of how they communicate there in the business, I think it is because of the good objectives"*, said Michael. *"No ... I do not think and feel that they are ... encouraging the use of language content relevant to context,"* Ellen answered. Rahel said that she thinks the vocational state of the language is known by lecturers. *"I do not think all students know that ... maybe others know...I do not know,"* she said. These responses contradict Hutchinson and Waters (1987) as they argue that vocational language courses should be designed around learners' target workplace needs rather than generic language forms. Nabeul said that he thinks the responses for such a question is known by the lecturer because he is the one who teaches them. *"I am not sure about that ... I just believe the lessons we are taught are ok"*, said Isaiah. Eddy's response was similar to Isaiah's. He said that they are not sure of the state of the effect of the objectives and that only the lecturer could provide the answer.

**(b) What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the hospitality and tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).**

Brown (2004) and Basturkmen (2010) further stress that effective communicative competence develops through meaningful interaction and discipline-specific language practice. On the question raised to find out about the extent of the relevance of the specific language skills that they learn, many of them mentioned reading, listening, writing skills, as well as speaking skills. However, some indicated that they would like to learn more about speaking skills and practice how to communicate in business and management context like in tourism and hospitality.

The first respondent, Michael, mentioned that they learn basic skills. *“We learn reading and writing and how to pronounce certain words ... but the words are not about tourism and hospitality at most. They are just words and sentences ... like what we use to speak daily”*, he said. *“We learn about reading and writing ... I need to be part of those who learn more about how to speak; learn to answer questions from tourists and guests at hospitality facilities ...”*, said Ellen. Rachel stated that the question could best be responded to by the lecturers for N6 Communication. *“I just come here and learn ... if what I learn is good or not good ... I do not know sir”*, she replied. Similarly, Nabeul said that they learn about reading, writing, and speaking and sometimes they engage in discussions based on the topics provided by the lecturers. *“We just learn about reading and writing sir ... I wish I can speak very well ... maybe they will teach us how to respond to interview questions for a job in a business field, I think I can practice speaking very well”*. Eddy’s response was similar. Both participants said that they learn about reading, and writing ... there is not much about speaking.

**(c) Does the course’s vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts.**

Blue and Harun (2003) highlight that hospitality and tourism communication is highly interactional and service-oriented, requiring specialised language use. In responding to the question on whether the course’s vocational language addresses the communication needs required in business activities like what takes place in tourism and hospitality, many respondents said that they were not confident of that and they think that the lectures may assist with the responses, since they are the ones preparing and teaching the language content. *“I do not think so ... but the lecturer can answer this question better ... I just come to class and learn whatever they teach us”*, said Michael. Ellen also said that the response for the question can be from the lecturer. *“I think the vocational state of the language is known by the lecturer ... I do not think all*

*students know that ... maybe others know*”, said Rahel. Nabeul, Isaiah, Eddy also said that the question can be responded to by the lecturers.

**(d) Can you share examples of how you have applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?**

When asked to share examples of how they have applied the language skills they learned, the participants said that they applied such skills only in the class when learning and when sharing with their classmates. Michael said that he learnt about reading, writing, and speaking. He mentioned that the speaking part is so limited, and he would like or prefer to learn and practice talking with the people who are doing what he would like to do in future. *“I wish to get a temporary job at the hotel during school holidays so that I learn how to interact with the employees,”* he said. Ellen also said that she responds to questions and speak to her classmates, but what they usually speak about has nothing to relate to as relevant language or irrelevant language content. *“Oh ... I think I do that in the class when we discuss about some topics”*, said Rahel. Nabeul’s response was that as students, they do communicate to each other as well as when the lecturers are teaching. Isaiah, Eddy’s responses were similar. Both said that they only apply the language skills effectively while learning in class.

**(e) What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?**

In response to the question on whether they experience challenges or not when learning and applying English communication skills, the majority of the students said they do not experience challenges. Michael, Ellen, Rahel, Nabeul, Isaiah, Eddy said they are not facing any challenge. In fact, none of the participants expressed that they experience challenges.

**(f) How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?**

In response to this question, participants said that grammar and definitions of language concepts are often not contextualised. *“We write assignments and classwork. The questions on language usage are about filling the correct auxiliary verbs in the gaps provided in the exercise, choosing between true and false answers and simple sentence construction,”* said Michael. Similarly, Ellen indicated that they write tests, classwork, and assignment, but all these are not about language content relevant to tourism or vocational language for tourism or business language. *“We write classwork, tests and assignments ...”*, said Rahel. In relation to these responses, Chapelle (2003) contends that language assessment should evaluate meaningful language use in specific contexts and in case of this study, it should be centred around hospitality and

tourism. Nabeul also said that they were assessed through assignments, tests, and classwork. Isaiah expressed the same response, stating that they are assessed through tests, classwork and assignments. Eddy said that it is through classwork and assignments or homework. Further, he said: “*We write tests, classwork, and assignments, but all these do not relate to tourism and hospitality context. It is just about English language. It is about general language*”.

**(g) Would you agree that the language content you learned from the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course addresses your writing and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively? Justify your answer.**

In relation to challenges experienced by TVET college students to communicate effectively in different contexts, Davis (2010) and Reave (2004) assert that the most significant challenge for education in the 21st century is that professionals are unprepared to communicate technical information efficiently through writing and speaking in the professional context. Luo, Alias and DeWitt (2020) add although the English instructors teach the four basic English language skills in schools, TVET graduates still perform poorly on technical communication in economic globalization because of the separation of the industry and curriculum. In response to the above-mentioned question, Michael said no, the language content does not address their communication needs because it is very similar to what they learned prior registering at the TVET college. In short, all respondents, Ellen, Rahel, Nabeul, Isaiah, and Eddy, gave similar responses, stating that the language content does not equip them with relevant communication skills and language content because they see less difference compared to what they learnt in previous classes where they leaned construction of sentences in different tenses but in generic tone and generic register.

#### **4.5.2 Tshwane TVET College’s N5 Tourism Communication course students’ interviews**

The participants Derick, Joyce, Sarah, Daniel, Silence and Humphry responded to the question below.

**(a) Do the learning objectives of the hospitality and tourism communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication-related to hospitality and tourism.**

Robinson (1991) asserts that English for vocational purposes should be needs-driven, with course content derived from systematic analysis of learners’ professional environments, which helps explain students’ dissatisfaction with the limited relevance of the hospitality and tourism communication courses. In response

to the question raised to find out the perceptions of the students on the influence of the objectives to their learning of language content, the participants said that they do not know about the purpose of using objectives. Derick said that he does not know what is meant by the objective of the course and therefore he is not sure if they are helpful or not. Joyce also mentioned that she does not know if the objectives are of help or not. *“I am not so sure about objectives and how they are used in language or when we communicate ... I am not so sure”*, said Sarah. Silence pointed out that *“The objective .... Mmmm ... I see them ... they are like the grade 12 objectives ... no differences”*.

To respond to the very same question, Daniel said that he simply comes to class, and the lessons are presented by the lecturers. He is not sure of the role that is played by the objectives. Humphry suggested that I find out the answer from the lecturers. To keep students aware of the objectives of what they learn, Zulu and Mutereko (2020) state that proper student induction and placement play a crucial role in informing students about the *ins and outs* of college and therefore, the well-informed and correctly placed student is unlikely to drop out of the college. This implies that students should be inducted so that they know what they are to learn and why they learn a particular course.

**(b) What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the hospitality and tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).**

Hyland (2006) argues that discipline-specific genres and communicative practices are central to effective ESP instruction, suggesting that the lack of contextualised tourism and hospitality discourse may have hindered students' engagement. In response to the question raised to find out the kind of language skills they learn, the five participants gave similar responses. Derick said that they learn about paragraph writing, how to use emails, and how to speak and observe values. Joyce mentioned that they learn to communicate in English, learn to read and to write. *“We learn communication skills ... verbal and nonverbal ... we learn to read and to write,”* Sarah answered. Daniel and Humphry gave a similar response, both mentioning that they learn communication skills, reading and writing with a focus on verbal and nonverbal communication. Silence said, *“We learn to speak and to read ... just only that ... sir”*.

**(c) Does the course's vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts.**

Long (2005) highlights the importance of task-based language teaching in vocational contexts, noting that learners develop communicative competence most effectively when instruction mirrors real workplace

tasks—an issue raised by participants who perceived assessments as overly theoretical. The question to establish the perceptions of the students on the course’s language content to address their communication skills was raised. Almost all the five participants said that they cannot say that the language content they learn prepares them to be effective communicators in the field of tourism and hospitality. Derick said that he does not know what is meant by vocational language content because all they learn is English. “*The lecturer asks questions, and I answer, sometimes we are given topics as a class to discuss or debate ... but the topics are mostly not about tourism and hospitality*”, said Joyce. Sarah said that she is not sure if she knows what vocational language content means. “*Vocational language? “I am not so sure about that ...I think we still have to learn about that language ... I know communication English ... what is in the course is communication”*”, she said. Daniel also said that he does not know if the language content is vocational and if it helps them to be effective in communication. Humphry replied that he too, does not know if the language content is vocational and if it addresses the communication skills required in the field of business and management like tourism and hospitality.

**(d) Can you share examples of how you have applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?**

When asked to share examples of how they applied language skills to find out the extent to which they interact with different people in different contexts, participants said that they only apply the skills in class. Joyce said that she learns to communicate in class when the lecturer is *teaching*. *She explained that when the lecturer is lecturing, he asks questions, and she attempts to respond. “We have discussions and debates, and it is during such activities when I apply the communication skills”*, she said. Sarah said, “*We learn to speak and write when the lecturer asks questions and when we have debates in class.*” “*We always do that in class; we communicate and debate ... but the lessons and conversations are not about vocational language,*” said Daniel. Humphry replied in the same way, stating that the only chance he gets to apply English language skills is when he is learning formally in class. Silence replied that “*We talk in English...and only in class ... outside classroom ... we talk our home languages*”.

**(e) What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?**

To respond to the question raised to establish what challenges they experienced when applying the communication skills, many of them said they did not experience any challenges. Joyce, Derick, Sarah, Daniel, and Humphry gave similar responses, stating that they experienced no challenges. Like what others said, Silence said he experiences no challenges.

**(f) How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?**

Fulcher (2010) advocates for performance-based evaluation that reflects authentic language use, while constructive alignment between learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment is emphasised by Biggs (2003). In answering the foregoing question, most of them said that they are assessed through assignments, classwork, and tests. Derick said that assessment is done through writing tests, classwork, and assignments. *“The lecturers set tests, and we write ... some assessment activities are in the prescribed textbook, so we use them to evaluate ourselves.”* *“The lecturer sets tests or classwork,”* said Joyce. Similarly, Sarah said that they are assessed through written tasks. *“We write tests, do homework, and short and long assignments”* she said. Daniele and Humphrey repeated what Sarah said. Surprisingly, none of the participants mentioned whether the questions were difficult or not and none explained the kind of questions often used in assessment activities. Silence said, *“They ask any types of questions ... The questions are the same as those we were asked in grade 12 ... nothing about tourism is asked...that requires us to use tourism language”*.

**(g) Would you agree that the language content you learned from the hospitality and tourism communication course addresses your writing and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively? Justify your answer**

The above question was raised to find out if students agreed that the language content they learned addresses their communication skills and equips them to effectively communicate. *“I am not so sure ... I think I should know what happens in the workplace ... I should experience how they communicate, and we have not visited a single tourist destination. I would like to interact with tourists to gain first-hand experience,”* explained Derick. Joyce said that she would not respond but said yes with strong confidence, while Sarah indicated that she doubts that the language skills are relevant to positioning the students to be effective communicators using skills tailored for the business and management context such as tourism and hospitality. Daniel and Humpry gave responses similar to Sarah’s. Silence said *“No, I would not say yes ... no”*.

#### **4.5.3 Key findings from the interviews of students from Tshwane TVET College**

The findings from Tshwane TVET college students reveal that the level of the irrelevant language content in both the N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication courses is high. However, the N5 Tourism Communication course has more instances of the irrelevant language content than the N6 Communication course. Despite this difference, both courses need attention in terms of realigning them and concerning

integrating technology with the English language content. The same applies to their assessment tasks and to their intercultural communication.

#### **4.5.4 Vhembe TVET College's N6 Communication course students' interviews**

The participants were asked the questions indicated below.

**(a) Do the learning objectives of the hospitality and tourism communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication related to hospitality and tourism.**

The purpose of the instruction is communicated to students most effectively when instructional activities are aligned with the associated course-level learning objectives (Orr et al., 2022). In response to the question, Jeanette said that she does not know about objectives and their role. She said that the objectives were not introduced to them. Reginald also said that he does not know about the objectives. *"We have not yet learned about the objectives."* *"I do not ... mm. I can say I am not sure about that ... the objectives are on the first page of the section of the N Communication book. They have not yet been introduced to us. I do not know if they are specific or not"*, said Mildret. *"The objectives are on the first page of the sections of language usage module, but to be honest, I do not know what they are all about ... maybe we will learn about them ... currently, we learn the language usage"*, Hector responded. Similarly, Morris replied stating that he is not sure about what is meant by objectives.

**(b) What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the hospitality and tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).**

Walker and Walker (2016) emphasise that service encounters demand specialised interpersonal and pragmatic skills, reinforcing students' feelings of unpreparedness for professional communication. Answering the question asked to find out the kind of language skills found in the syllabus and the extent of their relevance to context, Jeanette mentioned that they learn about reading, writing, and speaking, and that the texts are about tenses, mostly grammar. *"We learn how to pronounce certain words, but I cannot say that the sentences are in business and management"*, she said. Reginald also indicated that students learn about reading and writing but the resources used are not based in a business and management context. Likewise, Erad, Mildret, Hector, and Morris gave similar responses, stating that they learn how to read and

to write. When asked if the reading materials they use to learn to read and to practice communicating are in context, their responses were no.

**(c) Does the course’s vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts.**

Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning is situated within communities of practice, and when instruction is disconnected from professional contexts, learners struggle to internalise workplace norms. Responding to the question asked to find out their views on the state of the vocational language content and the communication skills’ relevance to the context, Jeanette referred me to the lecturers for the N Communication courses, advising that I consult them to find the relevant answer. *“I know N5 Communication and the kind of language content ... I mean the adjectives, tenses, and passive and active voices ...etc. I do not know the vocational language content,”* said Reginald. Erad said that the answer to the question on relevancy of the language content to vocation should be provided by the lecturers because they are the ones who prepare the lessons. Mildret, Hector, and Morris gave similar answers.

**(d) Can you share examples of how you have applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?**

When asked to share their experiences on when and how they practice application of the language skills in context, Jeanette said, *“I do that only in class when we are learning, and the lecturers happen to ask questions ... and, when we discuss about a given topic”*. Reginald said that they learn how to read, write, and speak. Follow up questions were asked: How are the materials you use composed? Is the language content and vocational vocabulary used in the context of the field? *“No, it is just English for general purposes,”* replied Reginald. Erad too, said that he learns to apply the language skills in the classroom. *“Sometimes the lecturer asks questions, and I answer. We discuss with my classmates about what we are taught ... that is when I can say I get an opportunity to talk or practice the language skills”*, he said. *“We practice that; let me say, I practice that in class and only in the classroom when the lecturers are teaching,”* responded Mildret. *“After College hours we leave, and I begin using my home language,”* said Hector. Morris gave the same answer as Hector, indicating that the only place he practices applying language skills is at the TVET college and that happens only during college hours.

**(e) What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?**

Concerning this question, Jeanette said that she experienced no challenges. In fact, all six participants mentioned that they experience no challenges.

**(f) How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?**

Students' learning needs influence the selection of lesson content and teaching methodology; namely, the communication activities which the students would use in their work and the knowledge and abilities which they need when carrying out the communicative activities (Lertchalermtipakoon et al., 2021). When asked to indicate their views on how they are assessed or how the language content and communication skills are assessed, Jeanette said, *"We write tests, assignments, and classwork."* When a follow up question was asked: How is the context of the questions? Is the language content contextualised or not, she replied, *"It is not contextualised...you mean that it is talking about business and communication, right?"*.

Reginald mentioned that they are assessed through writing tests, assignments, and classwork. "How are the questions formulated? Are they contextualised to require you to respond using the language content that is for the field of your study? I mean jargon and sentences that have diction through tone and register for your field? I asked. *"No ... The questions are general,"* he answered. Similarly, Erad said that they are assessed through writing tests, assignments, and classwork. Mildret, Hector, and Morris mentioned that they are assessed through being given tests, classwork, and assignments and that the questions are not context driven.

**(g) Would you agree that the language content you learned from the hospitality and tourism communication course addresses your writing, and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively. Justify your answer.**

When responding to the question asked to find out if they could agree that what they learned regarding language content and its relevance to the context would help them address their communication needs, Jeanette, Reginald, Erad, Mildret, Hector, and Morris gave similar responses. They said that they would not agree.

#### **4.5.5 Vhembe TVET College's N5 Tourism Communication course students' interviews**

The participants were asked questions about the N5 Tourism Communication course's language content and communication skills. Below are the thematic questions used and the responses provided.

**(a) Do the learning objectives of the hospitality and tourism communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication related to hospitality and tourism.**

Responding to this question, Melva said that although she is aware of the presence of the objectives in the N Communication courses, she is not in the know as to why they have been put there. She advises that I consult the lecturers to obtain relevant responses. Milicet also said that she knows that we have objectives in the textbooks, but she does not know the reasons for their inclusion. James, like Melva, referred me to the lecturers to find the answers to the questions, stating that they are the ones who can provide the answers because they teach the module. Bejah said that he could not answer because he does not know anything about objectives. Nomoya stated that she also does not know the role of the objectives.

**(b) What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the hospitality and tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).**

In this regard, Melva indicated that they learn to read, to speak and to write. When asked about the state of the language content in the material that they use to read in terms of the level of the contextualisation of the content, she replied that the sentences in the language content as well as the vocabulary are not necessarily about a single field of study. *“The sentences are of a generic nature; generic in the sense that you cannot associate the text with any field of study. I think it is about communication for all purposes,”* she said. James and Bejah gave similar responses.

James indicated that the content of the reading material is generic while Bejah mentioned that the sentences and the vocabulary, phrases, and clauses are in a generic state. Milicet and Nomoya pointed out that they classify the language content and the communication skills to be generic. *“No, the words and sentences are generic,”* said Milicet. *“I would say no, the sentences and the vocabulary, phrases and clauses are in generic state”*, replied Nomoya.

**(c) Does the course’s vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts.**

McDonough et al. (2013) contend that communicative language development requires sustained interaction and meaningful practice. In response to the above question, Milicet said that the vocational level of the

language content can be known by the lecturers for the N Communication courses. Why ... do you say so? she was asked. *“Remember, it is the lecturers who prepare the lessons and then come to class and teach us. We just learn whatever is taught to us by them”*, she said. James said that I should consult the lecturers to find the relevant answer. *“I do not know, sir, the state of the language content in terms of the level of the relevance to tourism or a field of work may be known by the lecturers. I do not know what to say about that sir,”* replied Bejah. Nomoya said that all she knows is that there are grammar sentences and vocabulary that are in the textbook. How relevant they are may be responded to by the lecturers. Milicet was sceptic. She did not give an answer to the question.

**(d) Can you share examples of how you have applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?**

Participants’ responses to this question are captured here. Melva mentioned that she only does that at the TVET College. Milicet said that she also applies the language skills only during the lessons or when they discuss with her classmates in the classroom. *“I practice speaking when we are learning in the classroom. At times I do so when I am given a topic to present and discuss with classmates. All these happen in the classroom - that is all,”* replied James. Further, he mentioned that the topics used to encourage them to communicate are not in the context of tourism and hospitality. *“We ... let me say I, do that in the classroom when the lecturers are teaching. When they ask questions, I try to answer. They sometimes give us topic to discuss; I make sure that I contribute,”* said Bejah. Nomoya mentioned that she does that when she is in class and when she is around the TVET college campus. *“Let me say we always practice when the lecturers are lecturing in the class. They ask questions and then I sometimes try to answer,”* she replied.

**(e) What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?**

Regarding the responses given to answer the question: What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period? Melva, Milicet, James, Bejah, and Nomoya said that they experience no challenges. It was interesting to note that regardless of them having been asked the question at different times, their responses were similar.

**(f) How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?**

To find out the perceptions of the participants of the effectiveness of the questions that are set to assess students’ level of proficiency, Melva mentioned that students are assessed through tests and assignments.

A follow up question was asked: Are the questions of the assessment activities instructive in terms of expecting you to apply language content relevant to the context of your career field? “No. They are not,” she answered. Milicet mentioned that the questions are not always in a specific context, “... and we also answer according to the frame of the question.” James too, mentioned that the questions set are generic. “The questions set are generic ... we respond in the same way ... the state of the touristic of our responses is conditioned by the level of the instructions”, said Bejah. Nomoya stated that the questions are straight forward.” They require us to use English, it is not necessary to answer using a certain type of language or to use something other than the English language”.

**(g) Would you agree that the language content you learned from the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course addresses your writing and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively? Justify your answer.**

As a response to the question asked to find out if the language content learned addresses the kind of writing and communications skills required in the business and management fields such as tourism and hospitality, the participants gave similar answers. Melva, Milicet, James, Bejah, and Nomoya said that they do not agree that the language content and the communication they learned prepare them to be better communicators in the field of business and management such as tourism and hospitality.

#### **4.5.6 Key findings from the interviews of students from Vhembe TVET College**

There is high presence of sentence structures and vocabulary that is irrelevant to the specific context of hospitality and tourism such as the use of the subject-verb agreement in sentences that do not talk about tourism or any business related activity. There is also a weak integration of technology with language content where only a fax and electronic bulletin are used with generic sentence structures. Equally, there is a weak application of the vocational language content. In addition, the questions asked do not require students to apply language in context, suggesting that there is a need to call for the review of the English language content of both the N6 Communication N5 Tourism Communication courses.

#### **4.6 Chapter Conclusion**

Chapter four presented the findings from six data sets. The first two data sets relate to the English language content of the two textbooks, N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Communication, used at the two TVET colleges; the second two data sets concern the interviews with two groups of lecturers, one group at each

TVET college; and the third two data sets pertain to the interviews with two groups of students, one group at each TVET college.

## CHAPTER 5

### A Proposed Brief Sample Course Design Framework for Integrating the English Language Content into a Tourism and Hospitality Syllabus

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter proposes a brief sample course design framework for integrating the English language content into a tourism and hospitality syllabus. The course design addresses the thematic question: How can a lecturer create the language content informed by English for Specific Purposes at a TVET college?

#### 5.1 Language Content Course Design's Objectives and Specific Outcomes

**Objective A:** To use ESP principles to guide and teach students grammatical structures in context and apply them within Tourism and Hospitality fields.

##### Specific Outcomes

- Students will be able to identify and rectify common grammatical errors in field-specific communication and then construct touristic language content.
- They will use tense, voice, and sentence structure when creating hospitality-related content such as guest welcome letters and service descriptions.
- They will construct grammatically correct oral and written responses in contextually relevant hospitality and tourism scenarios.
- They will be able to present clear, coherent, and cohesive oral presentations or announcements in tourism.

**Objective B:** To develop students' confidence in handling real-world communication scenarios in hospitality and tourism.

##### Specific Outcomes

To role play activities of front desk, service provider, the role of a tour guide, and restaurant service activities.

**Objective C:** To help students develop vocational vocabulary specific to hospitality and tourism.

##### Specific Outcomes

Encourage effective use of common terminology related to accommodation, travel, food and beverage, and tourism services.

**Objective D:** To introduce students to cultural activities and caution them to be cautious about diverse culture cross-cultural communication in a global tourism context.

### Specific Outcomes

Create awareness to students to adapt to cultural norms, values, and communication styles of international guests.

## 5.2 Essential Language Elements Shaping Tourism Communication

The different language elements and their role in tourism context re explained in the Table 5.1 below. The first column presents the language element, the second column describes its function, and the third column shows how it connects to other language components. In the last column, you will find examples of how to apply these elements in real-life tourism contexts. Students are encouraged to practice these language elements and apply them in context. Doing so would help them gain the relevant written and communication skills needed to confidently apply to the tourism field of work.

**Table 5.1:** Different language elements and their role in a tourism context.

Linguistic element	Role in Touristic Content	Link to other language elements	Example of usage in context
Articles	Help specify or generalize objects, places, and events in tourism communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Linked to articulation, as clear pronunciation of articles ensures proper understanding.</li> <li>- Influences concord by requiring correct agreement with nouns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The breath-taking view of Table Mountain leaves everyone speechless.</li> <li>- <b>A</b> traveller should always carry a map when exploring new cities.</li> <li>- <b>An</b> elephant is very dangerous when is provoked.</li> </ul>
Concord	Ensures subject-verb agreement, which is critical for grammatical accuracy and professional communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interacts with voice, as subject-verb agreement is required in both active and passive sentences.</li> <li>- Relates to articles by ensuring nouns and verbs are</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The <u>tourists</u> <u>enjoy</u> the cultural performance.</li> <li>- Each <u>tourist</u> <u>receives</u> a complimentary welcome drink.</li> <li>- The <u>tourists</u> <u>enjoy</u> the live cultural performance.</li> </ul>

		consistent in number and meaning.	
Voice (Active & Passive)	Determines whether the subject performs the action (active voice) or receives it (passive voice).	- Influences concord by requiring correct subject-verb agreement in both voices. - Helps articulate sentences for varying emphasis, depending on the context t	<b>(Active):</b> Our guides organise daily tours. <b>(Passive):</b> Daily tours are organised (by our guides).
<b>Direct Speech</b>	To convey information accurately, whether quoting someone directly or reporting their words indirectly	Use direct speech for impactful, emotional appeal and indirect speech for professional, informative content	<b>Direct:</b> This was the most unforgettable vacation of my life,” said a recent visitor. <b>Direct:</b> The safari was amazing, one traveller exclaimed. <b>Indirect:</b> A traveller mentioned that the safari was amazing.
<b>Indirect Speech</b>	Used in reports or summaries of client feedback or tour highlights		The tour guide mentioned that the hike would take about two hours.
<b>Phrases</b>	Add detail, context, and professionalism to communication.  <b>(a) Noun phrases:</b> for emphasizing attractions  <b>Example</b>  The historic castle on the hill.  <b>Adjective phrases:</b> for creating appeal: Known for its breath-taking sunsets and pristine beaches.  <b>Verb phrases:</b> for calls to action: Explore the	Phrases should highlight features and benefits of destinations, tours, or services. Use sensory details to create imagery that resonates with tourists.	- Discover breath-taking views at Robben Island.

	wonders of the ancient city.		
<b>Clauses</b>	<p><b>Independent Clauses:</b> Can stand alone and deliver key information.</p> <p><b>Example</b> The safari starts at 6 a.m., and breakfast will be provided on-site.</p> <p><b>Dependent Clauses:</b> Add context or conditions to the main idea.</p> <p><b>Example</b> If you book early, you will receive a discount.</p>	Provide additional context or elaboration in communication.	Clauses should be used to enhance customer understanding, such as explaining conditions for offers, describing experiences, or providing safety information.
<b>Jargon</b>	Convey professionalism and industry-specific knowledge while maintaining accessibility.	Use jargon to highlight professionalism and credibility while ensuring tourists understand the services and attractions being described.	Examples of tourism jargon:  All-inclusive packages, eco-tourism, itinerary, excursion, hospitality services and heritage sites.

The table above illustrates how components of language elements are combined to form contextualised phrases, clauses, and sentences within a tourism context. First, a language element is identified and named. Next, it is placed in the context of tourism, and its function is explained within that framework. Finally, an example sentence is provided to demonstrate the construction of a meaningful sentence that effectively communicates in a tourism-related context and fosters tourism talk. Students are encouraged to follow the given examples to build or construct their own sentences. In the sentences *Our guides organise daily tours* (active) and *Daily tours are organised (by our guides)* (passive), the use of the nouns, *guides* and *tours* relates the sentence to tourism. Further, the example provided of an adjective phrase, *The Pacific Ocean in Cape Town is known for its breath-taking sunsets and pristine beaches*, is used to create an appeal and persuade listeners and readers to visit the Pacific Ocean to see the beaches and observe how the sun sets.

### 5.3 Pre-Subject Content Presentation Activity: Warm-up Questions

The following sentences have gaps or blank spaces. Complete them by filling in the appropriate article in the blank space. (The sentences in table 6.2 below are written on the chalkboard.) Note the differences of the meanings between the sentences in the two columns.

In communication courses designed to be used to teach English for general purposes, the articles are introduced as part of foundational grammar and they (articles) are used generally than for specific expression that serves little impactful communication. The articles applied in English for general use are loosely used even in daily conversations by any one and anyhow. There is no strictness in their usage when compared to their usage in conventional or academic speaking and writing. The following sentences demonstrate their use in daily conversations and not in a narrowed context for specific purpose, *I want to buy a pen at the shop* and *I will be visiting my aunt during the holidays*. These sentences do not specify any context. Table 5.2 instances of sentences for general purposes and of sentences for specific purposes.

**Table 5.2:** Instances of sentences for general purposes and of sentences for specific purposes.

<b>Column A: Specific Purpose Sentences</b>	<b>Column B: General Purpose Sentences</b>
(a) Can you recommend ___ <b>hotel</b> near the <b>beach</b> ?	(a) Can you recommend ... book?
(b) We are planning to visit ___ <b>historical site</b> tomorrow.	(b) We are planning to visit ... who lives in France
(c) Have you ever seen ___ <b>Eiffel Tower</b> at night?	(c) Have you seen ... Mr Hlungwani?
(d) I would like to book ___ <b>room with a sea view</b> .	(e) I would like to book ... room.
(e) The tourists were looking for ___ <b>guide</b> to explain the <b>local attractions</b> .	(f) She is calling for ... guide to orientate her about the university surroundings.

In Table 5.2 above, students are asked to indicate the differences between the sentences in column A and Column B in terms of the meanings of the given sentences, the extent to which each sentence clarifies the message and the level of specification and the context to which the syntax is placed (a specific or a general context). They are given opportunities to explain the differences and justify their explanations. They speak in turn but in between their responses, the lecturer intercepts and clarifies where necessary. For example, the lecturer could clarify what the sentence *room with sea view* means, the use of words such as *local attraction* and *historical sites* and *guides* implies, and why they could be clarified as touristic nouns, phrases and clauses. Below is a second presentation of the same subject matter on the use of the above articles. A clarification on the difference of the meanings that they make when used in communication for specific purposes and when they are used in communication for general purposes is reflected.

#### 5.4 During Subject Content Presentation: Articles in Contextualised Syntax

The sentences provided in column A in Table 5.2 above, reflect language content related to or commonly used in tourism contexts. The sentences are tied to specific components of the tourism industry such as accommodation, sightseeing, and/or culinary experiences. Below are examples of sentences that exemplify the use and function of articles in syntax, indicating their relevance to tourism context and their seamlessness to communicate within the tourism context rather than in general context:

*Can you recommend a hotel near the beach?*

This sentence illustrates a typical inquiry by travellers who seek accommodation in a desirable location. It fits into the tourism context because tourists frequently look for hotels, especially those near attractive spots like beaches. The use of the indefinite article (a) indicates a non-specific, general hotel, suggesting that the traveller is open to various options. The syntax of this sentence is aligned with a tourism context due to the interconnectedness of the words that compose the sentence. This is unlike in the case of the sentence, *Can you recommend a room?* This sentence lacks clarity and context. It is generic. It lacks details in terms of specifying the features required. When details are mentioned, clues for linguistic features that describe the context of the field under study are revealed. Let us read the section below:



*We will be arranging to visit a historical site the following day*

A historical site is popular for experiencing culture. We get an opportunity to view heritage sites and landmarks. For us to experience all that, we have to go for sightseeing in destinations with cultural tourism. The indefinite article (a) denotes that the site to be visited is not known and has not been seen. The tourists who are planning to visit the site have not yet identified it. Have a look at the sentence: *Have you ever visited the Mampungubwe historical site?*

The Mampungubwe historical site is one of the famous historical sites in the Limpopo province. It is visited by tourists from all over the world. It is a tourist destination of high standard. The article, *the*, in the sentence denotes that the tourist speaking about the site, Mampungubwe, knows the site and the article, *the*, is applied to indicate the specific site, Mampungubwe. Unlike in the case of, *We will visit a historical site the following day*, the use of the article, *a*, implies that they or the speaker is not sure or does not know the historical site he/ she is speaking about.

In Table 5.3 below, are activities that assess your skills of constructing sentences that are sensitive to the tourism context.

**Table 5.3:** Tourism communication activities

	<b>Activity 1:</b>
<p>Construct sentences that have articles <i>a</i>, <i>an</i>, and <i>the</i>.</p>	
<p><b>Instruction:</b> Use the following nouns to construct sentences that have articles <i>a</i>, <i>an</i>, and <i>the</i>. Your sentences must be in tourism context.</p>	
<p><b>Nouns:</b> restaurant, museum, tour guide, itinerary, landmark, beach, travel agency, cruise, passport, visa, attraction, resort, cabin, backpack, tourist, destination, flight, adventure, excursion, map, brochure, booking.</p>	
	<b>Activity 2:</b>
<p>Use touristic nouns in sentences and explain their functions.</p>	
<p><b>Instruction:</b> Now that you have constructed sentences of your own to demonstrate the use of articles in tourism context and use touristic nouns, explain the role of the article you used in each sentence and explain how the nouns provide tourism context.</p>	

### 5.5 Paragraphs Writing Using Articles in a Tourism Context

Writing paragraphs in which the articles are used with the vocabulary and phraseology related to the tourism context can be considered in paragraph writing. It is typically advisable to note how important it is to apply vocational nouns, touristic phrases or clauses and tie the articles together accurately so that the paragraph reflects the register and tone that sounds touristic. Doing so may help students create clear, engaging, and professional descriptive paragraphs. However, when articles are used in isolation from the nouns, phrases, clauses, adjectives, and any language feature that pertains to a tourism context, they cease to have meaningful impact in terms of specifying and clarifying the context of the study.

### **5.5.1 Example paragraph in a tourism context**

*Robben Island is located off the coast of Cape Town. It is 'a' must-visit destination. 'The' Island is known for historical significance. It is the site where Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners were held during apartheid. Visitors like to explore 'the' prison buildings and learn about the island's history through guided tours.*

Looking at the above paragraph, the articles, *a*, *an* and *the*, are used. They are applied in combination with tourism related nouns, adjective phrases and adverbial clauses. They function to create and enhance a tourism context in the paragraph. They also serve to develop a tourism register. The use of *a* suggests that the island is significant. It makes it a highly recommended place to visit. This choice of language content develops or create a promotional tone suitable for tourism discourse.

The definite article, *the*, is used multiple times throughout the paragraph to provide specificity and focus. For instance, in the sentence, the Island is known for its historical significance. Together, these linguistic features create a tourism context.

### **5.6 Relevance, Validity and Reliability of the Proposed Sample English Language Framework**

To gain insight into the relevance, validity, and reliability of the English language content for NATED N5 Tourism Communication and N6 Communication students, I requested the TVET college managers of both colleges to organise a meeting where I met with the participants and collaboratively discussed the kind of English language content that could be effective and could suit the context of hospitality and tourism in the NATED Communication courses. The participants were asked to contribute to their ideas or make their suggestions.

### **5.7 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter has proposed a brief sample course design framework for integrating the English language content into a tourism and hospitality syllabus. The course design is intended to address the way in which a lecturer can create the language content informed by English for Specific Purposes at a TVET college.

## CHAPTER 6

### Summary of Findings, Recommendations, Limitations, Future Research, and Conclusion

#### 6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings, the recommendations, the limitations, future research, and the conclusion of the study.

#### 6.1 Key Findings: N6 Communication and N5 Tourism Courses' English Language Content

Both communication courses have generic fundamental grammatical structures such as pronoun usage, active and passive voice, and direct and indirect speech. This limits its effectiveness in preparing students for real-world professional communication. The syllabus does not emphasise the use of industry-specific linguistic features. This hinders students' ability to construct and use the appropriate English language content relevant to hospitality and tourism contexts. Students are required to simulate a fax message, ensuring they understand the formal tone, brevity, and the structure required in written business communication. The language modules introduce tourism talk through using fundamental principles of intercultural communication, but lacks contextualised language content. Regarding the use of technology, the courses' language content sections fail to adequately integrate present-day technologies into these sections.

#### 6.2 Key Findings: Both TVET Colleges' Lecturers' Interviews

Lecturers from both TVET colleges concurred that the objectives of the two courses do not encourage them to develop lessons and assessment activities that can make students be effective communicators in the context of hospitality and tourism. They cited a misalignment of the course objectives as one of the major reasons. In language learning and communication, understanding lexis about its surrounding context is paramount for effective comprehension and application (Brown, 2000). Concerning the presence of vocational language content, the lecturers were of the view that the English language content is not vocational, and that its vocabulary and phraseology are out of synch with hospitality and tourism. With reference to technology integration, they felt that there was too much emphasis on old technologies such as fax, which has been overtaken by modern-day technologies that students use. They also indicated that the syllabus lacks digital platforms like learning management systems (LMS) and online collaboration tools. Moreover, the lecturers argued that the two communication courses lack intercultural communication, which is a critical aspect of multilingualism.

### **6.3 Key Findings: Both TVET Colleges' Students' Interviews**

Students enrolled for the two communication courses at the two TVET colleges pointed out that they were aware what the specific communication needs of the two course are that are directly related to hospitality and tourism. As a result, they were equally not aware of the purpose of the courses as they just learnt whatever lecturers taught them. Hutchinson and Waters (2023) maintain that ESP as a teaching approach is used to customise courses to meet the specific needs of learners in a particular field. In another related instance, they argue that a well-structured ESP course must consider both target needs - what learners need to do with the language - and learning needs - how learners can effectively acquire those skills. This includes assessing students' proficiency levels, understanding workplace communication demands, and tailoring course content to bridge any gaps (Hutchinson and Waters (1987).

Additionally, students indicated that they would like to learn more about speaking skills and practise how to apply language content and communication skills in the field such as in tourism and hospitality. ESP-designed communication courses incorporate real-world scenarios and role-playing exercises. Another aspect highlighted by students is that the language content and the communication skills are not vocational, and that the language content is not contextualised to the tourism and hospitality domain.

### **6.4 Recommendations**

Based on the foregoing conclusions, this study's recommendations are outlined below. The two TVET colleges' communication courses need to structure their English language content following the ESP approach so that they incorporate real-world scenarios and role-playing exercises related to the tourism and hospitality industry. They also have to endeavour to make their English language content be highly vocational and appropriately touristic in its orientation. This includes the vocabulary, phraseology, jargon, and sentence structure of their English language content.

Most importantly, these two communication courses should consider exposing their target students to multilingual and translanguaging strategies. This exposure should not only focus on South African languages, but also on global *multilingualisms* as the tourism and hospitality industry wherever it operates almost always caters for tourists coming from diverse parts of the world, who also speak different global languages. In trying to do all of this, all the different TVET college stakeholders in South Africa (e.g., government structures, policy makers, TVET college administrators and managers, TVET experts, TVET college students, and parents) should be consulted at the different TVET college spheres at which they operate.

## **6.5 Limitations**

The first limitation of this study is its number of participants. Its participants were only 38. A larger pool of participants would have been an ideal option. But this number of participants was informed by the nature of the study itself: it was an exploratory qualitative study. The second limitation relates to the data collection methods. The study employed only two types of data collection methods: document review and analysis and interviews. The other data collection methods such as questionnaires could have been beneficial. Again, however, these two data collection methods were used as they were ideal and convenient for me as the researcher.

## **6.6 Future Research**

Although the identified gaps found when analysing the collected data helped me to glean findings from this study to develop recommendations through which they could be filled, further research is needed to find out how the findings could be used to address challenges on other related communication courses than the ones investigated in this study. Future research may also be directed towards exploring the English language content in other courses that are meant to equip students with context-based language skills, and the findings of such research be compared with the findings of this study. The procedures used to conduct this study may be used as a guide to conduct future research within TVET colleges.

## **6.7 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter presented a summary of the key findings, the recommendations, the limitations, future research, and the conclusion of the study. In all, the study has observed that the two NATED communication courses currently lack the English language content tailored to the hospitality and tourism sector and that they also do not have a vocationally-driven jargon and phraseology.

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## 8. APPENDICES

The following transcripts contain findings from the interviews held with lecturers and students who participated in the interview session in both Tshwane and Vhembe TVET Colleges. The names used are not the actual or real names of the participants. Pseudonyms have been used in place of their names for ethical reasons.

**Appendices (I): Transcripts of interviews conducted with lecturers and students from Tshwane TVET College.**

**Appendices (II): Transcripts of interviews conducted with lecturers and students from Vhembe TVET College.**

**Appendices (I): Transcripts of interviews conducted with lecturers and students from Tshwane TVET College.**

**Appendix A Transcripts of interviews conducted with Tshwane TVET College lecturers for the NATED N6 Communication course. Below are the participants' profiles**

Ms Mukhodo	Black	Male	N5 Communication	15	Advance Diploma in English Parti
Mr Segomoto	Black	Female	N5 Communication	13	BA Honours in English
Mr Mr Morisane	Black	Male	N5 Communication	2	BED in Education
Merlyn	Black	Female	N5 Communication	5	BED in Education
Emelracius	Black	Female	N5 Communication	4	BED in Education
Gilion	Black	Male	N5 Communication	6	BA Honours in Education

Transcript from the interview sessions with verbatim responses from the participants

### **Theme 1: Alignment of Course Objectives**

<b>Question:</b> RB	<b>Do you think that the aims and the primary objectives of the communication course are aligned with the vocational language content required from students pursuing careers in business and management courses such as hospitality and tourism? Justify your answer.</b>
<b>Response:</b>	

Ms Mukhodo	<u>I think it does not align because I specifically teach Communication on a NATED level, and we do use (?1:00) or rather, words that are used in the workplace...we use every day words..not for workplace√. An example could be, a chapter focusing on meetings; we teach students how to conduct themselves during a meeting and what to say in a meeting, that you don't just say, may I please speak, or stop, or pause. But instead, point of order, you raise your hand.</u>
Merlyn	<u>"I think the purpose or the objectives need attention somehow...we should rework on them√... We need to revise and put them in tourism format"√</u>
MrSegomoto	Ja, it's not really aligned to fit purpose for hospitality and tourism related vocational course. The objectives are for general purposes of applying communication or communicating. <u>It's generic√, so everyone who studies any...it fits for everyone who studies any programme in the TVET, including other programmes that you did not mention.</u> So, it's not necessarily streamlined for tourism and hospitality.
Emelracius	<u>"I suggest that we meet as lecturers to review them...they are not aligned to language requirement"</u>
Merlyn	<u>"They are not up to the specific requirement ...they do not encourage us to teach using words ,...I mean vocabulary that is applied in the field...we use any words" √</u>
Mr Morisane	In my view, <u>there are certain areas in which the objectives must be aligned and that include developing aims and objectives that equip students with effective communication competencies.</u> The objectives should cover language content for the context. In the current objectives, there are notable gaps that should be addressed.
Gilion	<u>"They are generalised and almost lacking words or vocabulary that suit the context" √</u>
	<u>FINDING/S</u> <b>All 6 participants said that the objectives are not aligned. They are generic</b>

## Theme 2: Vocational Relevance of Language Content

<b>Question:</b> <b>RB</b>	<b>How vocational is the language nature of the language content? How effective is it applied to help you teach language content effectively?</b>
<b>Response:</b>	
Ms Mukhodo	Okay...the language in the vocation is... <u>I would say it's at a minimum rate, because it is not so much often practised.√</u> An example, I would say that I teach Communication, I teach them in class how to speak in the sense of vocation, to speak practical words that are being used in the office. But only in my subject do I teach that, because I'm saying, communication is part of language, and you have to speak in this fashion. But then when they go to another class, which is also vocation...remember they're doing different kinds of modules...another module when they get there, they don't use the vocation language

	to communicate with their lecturers or to learn. They just learn the content that they have to learn in the classroom. So I would say the language is at a minimum because had we had a syllabus that says, when you enter the school premises, it's like as if you are entering the office in which you are going to work at, the students would now speak the language that they are going to speak in the workplace.
Merlyn	“ <u>The language content is similar to any language</u> √ .... like daily use of <u>language</u> .....nothing makes it different form language that we teach for general English”
Emelracius	“ <u>Oh...No...no...the language is the same as any</u> √....it is similar to what we taught them in the other module of English, the example sentences and the activities are not talking about tourism or business language ...I mean using language in the context of communicating in business ...”
Mr Segomoto	It's not vocational. Rather <u>it's basic and generic.</u> √
Mr Morisane	The vocational nature of the language content within the Communication course is present to some extent. <u>Let me say that it lacks in-depth and direct examples for its applicability to industry-specific language demands. The course does not always align seamlessly with the specialized discourse patterns required in fields like hospitality and tourism.</u>
Gilion	<u>The language is generic</u> √ and has nothing to say about using words or vocabulary in the context of communicating in business ...I mean using sentences and vocabulary that is for tourism.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> <b>Five (5) participants conform that language content is irrelevant to tourism communicative context while (1) ONE of them said it is partially relevant</b>

### Theme 3: Technology and Language Content

<b>Question: RB</b>	<b>How is the language content used with technology? Does the technology help you to apply language content effectively?</b>
<b>Response:</b>	
Ms Mukhodo	<u>Oh...t eh technology used is old and irrelevant for this era.</u>
Merlyn	<u>Technology is not effectively integrated with English</u> ...√..there is the bulletin board used has no language syntax and vocabulary that talk to tourism
Mr Segomoto	In a way, to a certain extent it does have technology that is used with English content.√ For example, we teach students how to use fax but the language content used in the examples is not tailored to suit business and management context. Simple and generic sentences are used where ordinary people communicate with each other. The terminology, phrases and clauses applied do not align or talk to business and

	management. The communicative competences being taught are not transferrable to tourism and hospitality
Gilion	<u>No...language and tech are taught separately</u> ..... vocabulary and sentences are not applied integrated.
Emelracius	No.....The is poor ...vey poor use of technology with language content...√.what stand out , but its use is not demonstrated in context of applying language and vocabulary in tourism or business management activites....is a telephone.....We teach students to take any kind of instruction through listening and responding via a telephone.
Mr Morisane	Technology plays an increasingly integral role in the application of language content within the Communication course. Digital platforms such as learning management systems (LMS), online collaboration tools, and language processing software provide students with interactive and dynamic ways to engage with communication principles. These technologies are not available. √ They should be incorporated into the syllabus.... I suggest.
Gilion	“For me, technology is taught separate from language content in our syllabus√.... technology is not visible or used with language”
Merlyn	“ <u>No.... there is no integration</u> √.... technology is applied and taught in Isolation with English vocabulary for tourism”.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> <b>Five (5) participants said technology is not integrated with technology while one (1) said it is partially integrated</b>

#### Theme 4: Intercultural Communication and Tourism Talk

Question: RB	<b>Are there examples from both the syllabus and the subject guidelines that help you teach intercultural communication and encourage Tourism Talk? Provide examples from the course to justify your answer.</b>
Response:	Ja, there’s a policy by the Department that is mandatory for lecturers to be placed in the industry so that they can integrate this theory and practice when they come back to class. So, I’ve never been placed in the industry, so I don’t have any examples that helps me teach tourism √√and hospitality programmes specifically that speaks to the subject that I’m teaching.
Ms Mukhodo	.... I mean NATED Communication courses do not have detailed sections on how to use intercultural communication or apply certain strategies to interact with guest

	interculturally. √ If there were strategies on how best to implement multilingualism in class, then you as a lecturer would now bring forth practical examples to students.
Merlyn	“ <u>No...not at all....the syllabus just inform us to inform students that they may encounter tourists from other tribes or nationalities and they must learn to talk in other languages</u> √.....but as for the syllabus, it does not have lesson on how to teach intercultural communication”
Mr Segomoto	<u>There is no provision of strategies of teaching intercultural activities and communication strategies.</u> √
Gilion	“No...the syllabus does not have a section that is determined or dedicated to teach multilingualism or translanguaging....not at all”
Mr Morisane	Yes, the syllabus does include some aspects of intercultural communication. <u>My concern is that they are not always detailed enough to fully support the demands of Tourism Talk</u> √. For an example, topics such as cultural awareness and customer interaction strategies are present, but they remain quite theoretical without sufficient practical applications.
Emelracius	“ <u>No...We do not have a chapter or considerable section that addresses application of intercultural communication in any context</u> ”.√
Gilion	“ <u>From my experience and even what I know is in the textbook, there is no lessons on how to teach intercultural communication</u> ” √
	<u>FINDING/S</u> <b>All six (6) participants confirmed that the N6 Communication and the N5 Tourism communication have no integration of intercultural communication</b>

### Theme 5: Contextualized Assessment Practices

<b>Question:</b> RB	<b>Are Hospitality and Tourism assessment questions formulated in such a way that they require students to demonstrate abilities to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills?</b>
<b>Response:</b>	
Ms Mukhodo	<u>The questions’ focus on basic recall of information does not help students fully demonstrate their understanding.</u> √ ... Okay. Let’s talk about how we frame our questions for examinations, for assignments, for classwork. Given your experience of conducting or running examinations, and preparing question papers, would you say the examination question papers for Communication course are formulated in such a way that they require students to demonstrate abilities to apply contextual vocational language content?

Merlyn	“We set assessment activities based on the assessment guideline.... <u>the guideline does not instruct lecturers to use questions that are grounded on tourism communication context</u> √”.
Mr Segomoto	“ <u>The question papers are too generic</u> √; they are not formulated to require hospitality students and tourism students to demonstrate their abilities in the industry-specific English language”. ...So, they are not... <u>the question papers are not formulated to address that aspect...part. “The way the questions are set does not help students to address the vocational language needs of students pursuing careers in the business and management sectors like that of tourism and hospitality</u> √”.
Gilion	“ <u>The assessment activities in the textbook are generic....the instructions of the questions used in the examples are silent about telling us to use questions that are contextualised to any context....</u> ”√
Mr Morisane	“In some cases, assessment questions attempt to test vocational language application. My concern is that they are often too general to fully reflect industry-specific communication challenges. There are sections that assess professional writing and verbal communication. <u>It is concerning that these assessments do not always simulate application of language content relevant to real-life workplace interactions effectively</u> ”. √
Emelracius	“ <u>The example questions in the textbook are not based on specific language or language that is distinguishable from the language we use daily</u> ”.√
	<u>FINDING/S</u> <b>Five (5) participants said the assessment questions are not framed to encourage students to respond using specific language for tourism.... rather, they were to use general English language. One participant it is partially integrated</b>

## Appendix B

**Transcript of the interview session held with Tshwane TVET College lecturers for the NATED N5 Tourism Communication course.**

### Participants Profiles

Mhlanga	Black	Female	N5 Tourism Communication	5	PGCE
Mahori	Black	Female	N5 Tourism Communication	7	B-Tech in Tourism
Chauke	Black	Female	N5 Tourism Communication	4	Diploma In tourism

Palani	Black	Female	N5 Tourism Communication	6	BTECH +PGCE
Arnold	Black	Male	N5 Communication	7	PGCE

Theme 1	<b>Alignment of Course Objectives</b>
RB	Good day. I am Baloyi. I am affiliated with the University of South Africa and currently conducting a study on the effectiveness of language content in business and management courses, particularly focusing on the Communication module. My research aims to determine whether the language instruction in these courses adequately prepares students for industry-specific communication. I previously shared an outline of my questions—may I proceed?
RB	<b>Do you believe that the core objectives of the Communication course are effectively aligned with the vocational language requirements of students pursuing careers in the hospitality industry?</b>
Mhlanga	The Communication course is designed as a general module for all business-related programs. <u>The objectives are generic for that matter</u> √. The content remains broad, covering only fundamental communication principles without offering specialized language instruction tailored to any particular field. The syllabus is structured around generic lesson plans rather than developing competencies that are directly relevant to the hospitality industry.
Mahori	<u>The Communication course is designed as a general module</u> for all business-related programs. The objectives are generic for that matter. <u>The content remains broad</u> √, covering only fundamental communication principles without offering specialized language instruction tailored to any particular field. The syllabus is structured around generic lesson plans rather than developing competencies that are directly relevant to the hospitality industry.
Chauke	<u>The objectives are broad</u> . They should be narrowed to directly encourage the lecturers and students to focus on language content relevant to the fields√ of the tourism sector.
Arnold	“No√...the objectives stipulated in the textbook <u>are not instructing us to use objectives in context of tourism or any business management communicative context</u> ”
Palani	The course objectives provide strong foundation in general language skills. That is ok.... the weak point is that they lack a clear focus on industry-specific communication. The tourism fields require practical skills and use of language content relevant to context to handle guest requests and direct tourists...etc... <u>the objectives do not fully emphasize the use of language content relevance to the context</u> √. I think the subject matter should be

	presented using language content that is more tailored to a context of tourism and hospitality.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> All 5 participants that the objectives are not aligned
Theme 2	<b>Vocational Relevance of Language Content</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>How vocational is the language nature of the language content? How effective is it applied to help you teach language content effectively?</b>
Responses	
Mhlanga	<u>Not in a practical sense</u> √. The English instruction remains similar to what students experience in high school. <u>The textbooks predominantly use general vocabulary and sentence structures, meaning students are not exposed to industry-specific jargon.</u> As a result, when they enter the workforce, they must acquire workplace communication skills independently, without prior structured training from this course.
Arnold	...No√...the language content is <u>generic</u> ...far different from how we here in spoken in hotels and tourist destinations areas...it is applied in general
Mahori	The textbooks predominantly use general vocabulary and sentence structures, meaning students are not exposed to industry-specific jargon. “The language use is considered in grading. <u>There is no deliberate effort to refine students’ proficiency in hospitality communication.</u> ” √
Chauke	<u>The language content of the Communication course is generally broad,</u> focusing on foundational skills like grammar and vocabulary. However, it lacks specific application to the hospitality industry, where communication is more transactional, and context driven. The absence of industry-specific language limits its vocational relevance√. More focus on hospitality terminology and real-world scenarios would enhance its vocational applicability.
Palani	<u>The language content is mostly general and less relevant</u> √. It does not is tailored to hospitality and tourism specific communication. To a considerable extent, it lacks real-world scenarios like guest interactions, complaint handling, and service communication. This limits its effectiveness in preparing students for industry demands.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> All 5 participants said that the language content is not aligned, and it is not relevant
Theme 3	Technology and Language Content
<b>RB</b>	<b>Then the next question is: How is the language content used with technology? Does the technology help you to apply language content effectively?</b>

Mhlanga	To be honest, its integration is minimal. We teach students how to type assignments and send emails, but beyond that, there is very little focus on digital communication skills. <u>The syllabus still includes outdated technology</u> √...for instance we still have sections on how to fax documents or how to use a telegram. I think these are irrelevant practices.
Mahori	“ <u>its integration is minimal.</u> √ We teach students how to type assignments and send emails, but beyond that, there is very little focus on digital communication skills.”
Chauke	Technology is primarily used to support language learning through digital presentations. <u>The language content is not that much integrated with technology</u> √. In cases where it is used, you find that the content use with it is generic, and the technology is outdated. There are modern technologies used with the language content. <u>The textbooks still contain Fax and telephone through which we teach our students how to communicate.</u> √ The use of technology in language learning is mostly limited to traditional platforms like PowerPoint, and word processors., I think the industry-based digital tools should be incorporated so that they be used to develop more practical use of language content that is relevant and communication skills that align with workplace expectations. √
Palani	<u>The language content is not mainly used with technology</u> √. What makes it more questionable is the availability or the use of Fax machine to show how it can be used in communication. This tool is ok but currently there are more modern technologies that could be used to teach language content or even to be used to align the language content to suit the tourism and hospitality context.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> <u>All 5 participants said that technology is not well integrated with the language content</u>
Theme 4	<b>Intercultural Communication and Tourism Talk</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Are there examples from both the syllabus and the subject guidelines that help you teach intercultural communication and encourage Tourism Talk? Provide examples from the course to justify your answer.</b>
Mhlanga	Not meaningfully. <u>The textbook includes a handful of foreign words.</u>
Mahori	“ <u>Not meaningfully</u> √. The textbook includes a handful of foreign words.”
Arnold	“ <u>There are no examples of lessons that are based in teaching intercultural communication.... .... we do not teach such.....</u> ”√
Chauke	The syllabus includes general communication principles but provides limited direct focus on intercultural communication specific to tourism. There are sections on verbal and non-verbal communication, but <u>they do not fully explore how cultural differences impact guest interactions in hospitality.</u> √

Palani	Our NATED N5 Tourism course textbook does not contain adequate subject matter on how to teach intercultural communication to students. The subject guidelines on both teaching and assessments do not contain clear guidelines on how multilingualism could be practice and how students could be taught. There are few words that are used, and they are not applied in syntax. <u>They are used in isolation from the real talk. How would then the students and the lecturers know how to apply such in real context.</u> ✓
Theme 5	<b>Contextualized Assessment Practices</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Are Hospitality and Tourism assessment questions formulated in such a way that they require students to demonstrate abilities to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills?</b>
Mhlanga	<u>No, not adequately.</u> The assessments are designed using English broadly. We do not narrow it to suit a single context ...Students can use their words any how...We focus on the answer...not necessary the context of the language .... <u>Questions are largely open-ended</u> ✓.
Mahori	<u>No, not adequately</u> ✓. The assessments are designed using English broadly. <u>We do not narrow it to suit a single context ...Students can use their words any how...</u> We focus on the answer...not necessarily the context of the language .... Questions are largely open-ended.
Arnold	<u>“The assessment activities used in the textbook are not contextualised</u> ✓...they are used in <u>general context ...we also follow those examples....”</u>
Chauke	<u>Assessments often prioritize general communication theories over the direct application of hospitality-specific language content</u> ✓. I think our students would benefit from more assessments that require them to draft emails and be required to use language content that is aligned to tourism and hospitality. I also think that must be more emphasis on practical tasks, such as writing scripts for front-desk conversations or responding to guest reviews, would enhance vocational language development.
Palani	At most, the questions in both formative and summative assessment do not require the examinees to be selective of the kind of language content. <u>The instructions of the questions are silent when it comes to requiring the answers to contain language content relevant to context</u> ✓. The focus during marking is not mainly on the extent of the relevance of the language content, it is on the correctness of the answer. Sometimes short questions are set...I mean one word answer questions.....in that sense how do you gauge the preciseness of the relevance of the language content to the context.....and the ability to use relevant language content?
	<u>FINDING/S</u>

**All 5 participants said that technology is not well integrated with intercultural language content in context**

## Appendix C

### Findings from the interview sessions held with Tshwane TVET college students who participated in the interview sessions.

Transcripts of interviews conducted with students from Tshwane TVET College for the NATED N6 Communication course.

#### Participants profiles

Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Course
Michael	Male	Black	N6 Communication
Ellen	Female	Black	N6 Communication
Rahel	Female	Black	N6 Communication
Nabeul	Male	Black	N6 Communication
Isaiah	Male	Black	N6 Communication
Eddy	Male	Black	N6 Communication

Transcript from the interview sessions with N6 Communication students From Tshwane TVET who participated.

<b>RB</b>	<b>Do the learning objectives of the hospitality and tourism communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication-related to hospitality and tourism.</b>
Michael	That is difficult. <u>We are told that what we are learning is a language requirement in the business and management...so since I am not aware of how they communicate there in the business</u> √, I think it is because of the good objectives.
Ellen	<u>No... I do not think and feel that they are .....</u> encouraging the use of language content relevant to context.
Rahel	Even this question sir... <u>I think the vocational state of the language is known by the lecturer...</u> I do not think all students know that....maybe others know...I do not know√.
Nabeul	I think that is known by the lecturers ... sir ... <u>I do not know</u> √.
Isaiah	<u>I am not sure about that...</u> I just believe the lesson we are taught are ok.
Eddy	That question can be answered by the lecturers for the N6 communication course..... <u>I do not know</u> √...I just learn and do what we are told in class...
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The 6 participants said that they are not sure if the objectives are relevant or not

<b>RB</b>	<b>What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the hospitality and tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).</b>
Michael	We learn basic skills. We learn reading and writing and how to pronounce certain words. <u>The words are not about tourism and hospitality at most. They are just words...like what we use daily</u> √.
Ellen	Reading and writing.... <u>I need to be part of those who learn more about how to speak , learn to answer questions from tourists and guests at hospitality facilities. ....</u>
Rahel	<u>No...sir</u> √...this question may be answered by the lecturers for N6 communications. I just come here and learn.... if what I learn id good or not good...I do not know sir....
Nabeul	It is reading ...writing .... mmmm....and speaking ... <u>about any topic...The lecturer chooses a topic and then we discuss....</u>
Isaiah	Just reading and writing...sir... <u>I wish I can speak very well</u> √...maybe they will teach us how to....
Eddy	I think we read, write and sometimes given topics to write about...
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The 6 participants said that the reading materials are not contextualised
<b>RB</b>	<b>Does the course’s vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts. (Cite examples from the syllabus to justify your response).</b>
Michael	<u>I do not think so.... but the lecturer can answer this question better</u> √. I just come to class and learn whatever they teach us.
Ellen	<u>That one ...sir...I think the lecturer knows the answer, Perhaps you may ask them....or the text book...you can check it</u> √.
Rahel	I think the vocational state of the language is known by the lecturer... <u>I do not think all students know that</u> √.... maybe others know√....
Nabeul	that question sir...it needs the lecturers ... <u>I just learn ...I will never know if it is ok or no</u> √t.
Isaiah	<u>I do not know if the language content is relevant or not</u> √.... the lecturer knows that....
Eddy	<u>I do not know anything about vocational language or content that comes with it.... maybe it is vocational or maybe it is not vocational</u> √. <u>FINDING/S</u> All the 6 participants mentioned that are not sure if the language content is relevant to address the communication needs in tourism sector

<b>RB</b>	<b>Can you share examples of how you've applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?</b>
Michael	I learnt about reading, writing, and speaking. The speaking part is so limited. I would like to learn and practice to talk with the people who are doing what I would like to do in future. <u>I wish to get a temporary job at the hotel during school holidays</u> √.
Ellen	I learn this <u>in the classroom.</u> √ I respond to questions and speak to my classmates .... but our language is not about relevant or irrelevant content ...we just speak about assignments or read the text and then discuss.
Rahel	Oh...I think I do that <u>in the class</u> √ when we discuss about some topics.
Nabeul	<u>We do communicate to each other as students...</u> or when the lecturer asks some questions and then I raise the hand and answer, that is when I apply the language or practice it.
Isaiah	I applied it in class.... when we learn .... <u>Only in the classroom.</u> √
Eddy	<u>It is in class</u> √ when the lecturer gives us topics for discussion in group and when he asks questions to learners individually.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The 6 participants indicated that they only practice to use English in the classroom
<b>RB</b>	<b>What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?</b>
Michael	Oh.... no√..no challenge
Ellen	No√ challenges...
Rahel	No√.... challenges to this point.....I think all is well.
Nabeul	No√ challenge...nothing wrong for now sit....I am ok ....
Isaiah	I did not√ experience challenges.
Eddy	No √challenges....so far
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The 6 participants mentioned that they had no challenges
<b>RB</b>	<b>How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?</b>
Michael	We write assignments and classwork. The questions on language usage are about filling the correct auxiliary verbs in the gaps√ provided in the exercise, choosing between true and false answers and simple sentence construction. I am just giving examples of how we are assessed and the kinds of questions.
Ellen	We write tests, classwork and assignments....but all these are not about language content relevant to tourism or vocational language for tourism or business language. They are about language usage in general.
Rahel	We write classwork, tests, and assignments.....

Nabeul	We are assessed through assignments, tests and classwork....
Isaiah	It is through tests...classwork and assignments
Eddy	It is through classwork and tests...
	<u>FINDING/S</u> All the 6 participants said that general questions are used
<b>RB</b>	<b>Would you agree that the language content you learned from the Hospitality and Tourism communication course addresses your writing and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively? Justify your answer.</b>
Michael	<u>No..</u> ✓
Ellen	<u>No. it is not.</u> ✓
Rahel	<u>I do not know...but from my site...I do not think so.....</u> ✓
Nabeul	<u>...I can say no</u> ✓
Isaiah	<u>No.</u> ✓
Eddy	<u>No.</u> ✓
<b>RB</b>	<b>Thank you for coming and participation...we are done</b>
Michael	Thank you
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The 6 participants mentioned that they would never agree

## Appendix D

### Transcript of the interview session held with Tshwane TVET College students for the NATED N5 Tourism Communication course.

#### Participants' profiles

Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Course
Derick	Male	Black	N5 Communication Tourism
Joyce	Female	Black	N5 Communication Tourism
Sarah	Female	Black	N5 Communication Tourism
Daniel	Male	Black	N5 Communication Tourism
Humphry	Male	Black	N5 Communication Tourism
Silence	Male	Black	N5 Communication

<b>RB</b>	<b>Do the learning objectives of the Hospitality and Tourism communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries</b>
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	<b>plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication-related to hospitality and tourism.</b>
Derick	We ....I mean all students come and just learn <u>I do not think we learn about that</u> ...the lecturer comes and teach , we take his lesson ..we do not know about the objectives.
Joyce	Oh...I do not know ...Objectives...no...I am not sure of that
Sarah	mmm...mm I do not know anything about the objectives.... <u>We learn English ...when the lecturer comes and lecture us...Objectives...oh no</u>
Daniel	<u>I think ...that all I know is that we learn communication skills</u> ..We write and speak ...I am not so sure about objectives and how they are used in language or when we communicate...I am not so sure.
Humphry	<u>No...I do not know ...Objectives...I am not sure</u> ...Maybe the lecturers can answer that question...I know of what we learn ...It is just English...
Silence	The objective....mmmm...I see them ....they are like the grade 12 objectives...no differences.
	<b><u>FINDING/S</u></b> 5 confirmed that they are not sure of the purpose of objectives and or if they are present in the N6 Communication course or not. Only one (1) participant indicated that the objectives in N6 Communication are like those of the grade 12 syllabus of English.
<b>RB</b>	<b>What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the Hospitality and Tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).</b>
Derick	We often learn about <u>writing</u> paragraphs, how to use emails, and how to <u>speak</u> and observe values.
Joyce	We learn to communicate in English, learn to <u>read</u> and also to <u>write</u> .
Sarah	We learn communication skills....verbal and nonverbal...we learn to <u>read and to write</u> .
Daniel	I think ...that all I know is that we learn communication skills .. <u>We write and speak</u> ...I am not so sure about objectives and how they are used in language or when we communicate...I am not so sure.
Humphry	We learn communication skills, <u>reading and writing</u> . I mean ...we learn both verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
Silence	We learn to speak and to read .....just only that.... sir.
	<b><u>FINDING/S</u></b> All the 6-participant indicated that the language skills they learn is reading and writing as well as speaking, but the materials used are like that of grade 12. They read text like those they read in grade 12 and grade 11.

<b>RB</b>	<b>Does the course's vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts. (Cite examples from the syllabus to justify your response).</b>
Derick	<u>I also do not know of vocational language sir...</u> We learn English...just English that you know.
Joyce	The lecturer asks questions, and I answer, sometimes we are given topics as a class and discuss or debate...but <u>the topics are at most not about tourism and hospitality.</u> ✓
Sarah	Vocational language? I am not so sure about that... <u>I think we have not learnt that yet...</u> I know <u>communication English...</u> what is in the course is <u>Communication</u> ✓.
Daniel	<u>I do not know of that sir...</u> not sure at all. I think our lecturers can answer that question ...about vocational language...I am not ✓...we may check the N5 tourism ...maybe. I just focus on what we are taught...we never learnt about vocational language content
Humphry	I am ...again.... Sir I am not sure ... <u>I do not know anything about vocational language content</u> ... <u>I am not sure.</u> ✓
Silence	I do not know what all that means.....maybe they are relevant.....we can check with the lecturers. ✓
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The 6 participants said they are not sure if the language content is relevant or not. They did not know what is meant by relevant language to content.
<b>RB</b>	<b>Can you share examples of how you've applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?</b>
Derick	We apply that <u>in class</u> ✓ <u>with my classmates.</u>
Joyce	We learn to communicate <u>in the classroom</u> ✓ when the lesson is on. The lecturer asks questions, and I sometimes answer. We have discussion and debate. It is during those times that I apply the communication skills.
Sarah	We learn to speak and write in <u>the class</u> ✓ ..more especially when we are discussing about a topic or when the lecturer asks questions to us individually....sometimes we have debate <u>in class.</u>
Daniel	we always do that <u>in class</u> ✓. We communicate and debate sometimes.... but it is not on vocational language ...it is on English...just English that you know sir.
Humphry	We communicate in class...that is when the lecturer is lecturing or when we have a discussion ...at times <u>I communicate with my classmates.</u> ✓
Silence	<u>We talk in English...</u> and <u>only in class</u> ✓.... outside classroom ...we talk our home languages
	<u>FINDINGS/S</u>

	<u>All the 6 participants indicated that they only get the opportunity to learn and learn English language and practice to speak it in the classroom, suggesting that they would like to be place in sectors where they can learn to speak tourism language (in hotels for examples).</u>
<b>RB</b>	<b>What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?</b>
Derick	I did not experience √challenges to this time...I am ok...
Joyce	I did not√ experience challenges .... nothing so far. √
Sarah	None√...for sure no sir...nothing difficult. √
Daniel	Nothing...no challenges. √...
Humphry	None...no challenges. √
Silence	No ...challenges. √
	<u>FINDING/S</u> All 6 participants said they experienced no challenges.
<b>RB</b>	<b>How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?</b>
Derick	It is done through writing tests√, classwork and assignments.....
Joyce	The lecturer set test, and we write. There are assessment activities in the prescribed textbook. We use them to evaluate ourselves.
Sarah	Through written tasks...we write tests, homework, short √and long assignments.
Daniel	We write tests and assignments .... there are assessment activities at the end of each or all lessons...
Humphry	Through tests and classwork...sometimes we write assignments. ...but the questions are not about vocational language or tourism and hospitality√...they are about general English.
Silence	They ask any types of questions.... The questions are the same as those we were asked in grade 12.... nothing about tourism is asked...that requires us to use tourism language. √
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The responses revealed that the participants are not sure if the questions set by their lecturers are relevant and or meant to help them develop skills for communicating in tourism sectors.
<b>RB</b>	<b>Would you agree that the language content you learned from the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course addresses your writing and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively? Justify your answer.</b>
Derick	I am not sure√...I think I should first know what happen there....we have not yet visited any of the tourists' destinations ...I would love to so I can know their language
Joyce	No√...I would not strongly say yes. I do not know...
Sarah	No...I doubt...maybe√...I am not sure of that

Daniel	Oh...I am not sure √... I do not know...
Humphry	I do not know√...I just learn ...I will see if it works when I get a job. Maybe it helps ...I will see at work.
Silence	No, I would not say yes.....no....√
	<u>FINDINGS/S</u> The 6 participants gave similar responses stating that they do not agree that the courses do not.... they see similarity with what they learnt in grade 12 and 11.

**Appendices (II): Transcripts of interviews conducted with lecturers and students from Vhembe TVET College.**

**VHEMBE TVET COLLEGE LECTURERS' TRANSCRIPTS**

**Appendix E**

Transcripts of interviews conducted with Vhembe TVET College lecturers for the NATED N6 Communication course.

Profile of the participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Course	Experience In teaching	Qualification
Maquele	Female	Black	N6 Communication	6	Teaching Diploma
Nkhesani	Male	Black	N6 Communication	3	PGCE

**Transcripts of the interview session held with the N6 Communication course lecturers from Vhembe TVET College**

<b>RB</b>	<b>I'm Baloyi. I'm conducting study-research on the topic: Exploring the relevance of the language content of your courses here which cover students for business and management. But focusing on the language content of the Communication course. So, I've got a few questions, I think they're just seven, as you have seen in the first copy that I distributed. Can I start?</b>
Theme 1	<b>Alignment of Course Objectives</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>The first question is: Do you think that the primary objectives of the Communication course are aligned with the vocational language content needs of students that pursue careers in hospitality?</b>

Maquele	The syllabus' aims and objectives are not aligned or tailored for a specific context√. The language segments are generic. they are not at all in context of business and management .... they relate not to any specific field√...they are generalised.
Nkhesani	No, for me, the aims and primary objectives of the Communication course are not fully aligned with the vocational language needs√. The subject guidelines on teaching and assessment are not instructive on how to include strategies on contextualising of lessons. √They encourage us to approach teaching in general approaches than specifics to field under study.
<b>RB</b>	<b>Thanks. Let us move to the next theme.</b>
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The two participants mentioned that the objectives are generic
Theme 2	<b>Vocational Relevance of Language Content</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b><u>How vocational is the language nature of the language content? How effective is it applied to help you teach language content effectively?</u></b>
Maquele	The language content is not tailored to a business language content. Sentences structures such as active and passive voices, and other aspects of grammar are not used in context in the N6. <u>They are generic</u> √. You may not feel that there is language for communication in business and management Fifiield when you read or listen to someone reading the text.
Nkhesani	“Students should learn how to engage in professionally. I refer to business and management context. The course does not have detailed content to teach application of language content for use in these skills”. <u>“The course does not have detailed content to teach application of language content for use in these skills”</u> .√
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The two participants indicated that the language content is not relevant to tourism communication context.
Theme 3	<b>Technology and Language Content</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Okay. Then the last question: How is the language content used with technology? Does the technology help you to apply language content effectively?</b>
Maquele	<u>We do not apply much of technology</u> √....The section that has technology has outdated gadgets....such as a fax. <u>The fax usage in the textbook is outdated</u> √.... we have better and advance technologies that could be used to enhance teaching of language content. Maybe the textbooks should be revised.

Nkhesani	The integration of language content with technology in the Communication course is inadequate. <u>Language is not effectively integrated with technology</u> √. We still teach students how to fill language content in a Fax and how to send it.
	<u>FINDIND/S</u> The two participants gave similar responses stating that the language content is not integrated well with technology
Theme 4	<b>Intercultural Communication and Tourism Talk</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Are there examples from both the syllabus and the subject guidelines that help you teach intercultural communication and encourage Tourism Talk? Provide examples from the course to justify your answer.</b>
Maquele	<u>No...I may not say yes</u> √....The section on intercultural communication is not detailed. There are strategies on how to apply intercultural communication. The syllabus has no detailed approaches on how to practice that and encourage learners to do so.
Nkhesani	<u>For me.....intercultural communication goes beyond learning a few phrases</u> √. It involves understanding cultural norms, guest expectations, and appropriate professional language when interacting with international visitors. The syllabus does not fully include structured activities that simulate application of language content relevant to context to that effect.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> There are no sections that demonstrate how to integrate of apply intercultural communication.
Theme 5	<b>Contextualized Assessment Practices</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Are Hospitality and Tourism assessment questions formulated in such a way that they require students to demonstrate abilities to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills?</b>
Maquele	The questions in the assessment activities not generic. They are not contextualised. We are guided by the assessment guidelines, and we adhere to that. <u>The assessment guidelines do not say anything regarding the tailoring of questions to suit or address a certain context. We assess grammar and communication in general.</u> √ We are duty bound to follow what the syllabus requires.
Nkhesani	<u>Both summative and formative purposes are not consistently formulated in a way that requires students to demonstrate their ability to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills.</u> √
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The assessment guidelines do not encourage the lecturers to set questions that require students to contextualise their responses.

## Appendix F

Transcript of the interview session held with Vhembe TVET College lecturers for the NATED N5 Tourism Communication course.

### Profiles of participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Course	Experience In teaching	Qualification
Mjaji	Female	Black	N5 Tourism Communication	6	BTECh
Hlungwani	Male	Black	N5 Tourism Communication	3	PGCE

Transcript from the interview session held with the N5 Tourism Communication course lecturers from Vhembe College who participated.

<b>RB</b>	I'm happy you came to participate in this study. I'm Baloyi from the University of South Africa and my purpose for my visit here is to conduct an interview basically to collect data regarding my study, which seeks to investigate how relevant is the language content of your module 6 in the communication course. If you take your communication courses from NATED N4, 5, to 6. There are sections or segmented information that takes or deals with language. And I'm checking on that section, I think module 6 of N4, N5, and unit 3 of your NATED 4 is about language. So, I will ask questions to check how relevant are the grammatical structures or vocational language...vocational language in the sense of looking at the vocabulary, the vocational of the vocabulary applied, and how does that translate into what is spoken or applied in the workplace? So, we may start...I will start asking questions, I've got questions from 1-7. Can we start?
Theme 1:	<b>Alignment of Course Objectives</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Do you think that the primary objectives of the communication courses are aligned with the vocational language content needs of students that pursue careers in your programmes for NATED? And as you give the response for this question, I request that you justify the answer that you'll give.</b>
Mjaji	There is a gap in between what the content of the language is and the objectives purpose as you state that they are meant to encourage the lecturers to develop lessons that are in context of the fields under study. <u>The subject guidelines on teaching and learning of language usage do not appropriately state that we have to align our lessons to the context.</u> √ <u>The examples of lesson on language content teaching are not contextualised</u> √. You cannot feel and experience the diction of tourism and hospitality. How can then a lecturer, who is duty bound to follow the examples used in the text to teach come up with a lesson that is contextualised

	to the suit the communication requirements of the language needed in the field under study? As a result, our lessons are also generic.
Hlungwani	<u>I think the objectives are partially aligned.</u> ✓ I say so because many businesses use English to communicate, they're with their clients. So, I think it is important to acknowledge the inclusion of the section of how students can learn to use English. On the other hand, <u>I consider the shortcomings regarding the generic use of the phrases or sentences</u> ✓. I think the objectives should also direct the lectures to contextualise the language content of their lesson to the discipline that they teach.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The two participants indicated that the objectives are not contextualised
Theme 2	<b>Vocational Relevance of Language Content</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>How vocational is the language nature of the language content? How effective is it applied to help you teach language content effectively?</b> Well, in a way, asking this question, I think in your response for question 1, you covered some of the responses, or part of your response covered number 2.
Mjaji	Yes, <u>I think the language content is not vocational enough.</u> ✓
Mjaji	Our syllabus has language content that is structured in a similar way that the language content in another prescribed textbook is structured. <u>The sentences on grammar are generic,</u> ✓ and the assessment activities are not, at most, <u>not contextualised</u> ✓. The register used and the tone applied do not match the articulations one could expect in tourism fields.
Hlungwani	The language content is also partially vocational. There are terms or concepts such as destinations, tourists, etiquette etc. <u>The concern is that some of them are not appropriately used in sentences to showcase the meaning. I would suggest that students be given such concepts and be instructed to apply them in sentences of their own</u> ✓. If this is done, the lecturer would be confident that the students understood the concepts, and they can apply them in context.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The two participants had similar views. They stated that the language content is irrelevant to tourism communication context.
Theme 3:	<b>Technology and Language Content</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Let's look at question 3: How is the language content used with technology? Does the technology help you to apply language content effectively?</b>
Mjaji	<u>No...it is not well used with technology.</u> ✓ The language content used in some technology like the use of fax to teach students how to write message and then fax it is not based in appropriate language or syntax that create diction for tourism. The language used and the

	<p>outdated technology it is applied on it are not carefully selected and applied to suit the business and management context.</p> <p><u>As I indicated earlier to say, there's a big gap between what is happening in our institutions or in our...in what's happening in the class environment, and again what is happening in the work environment</u>√. There's a big gap. Because here students, they just learn how to communicate in English, learn to write reports and emails in general than focusing on what they will do after graduation. Because remember, in the work industry there's language that is used. In any work industry, (?8:09) industry they don't use the same language, they are using different language.</p>
Hlungwani	Yes. We use different kinds of gadgets....We work online and it is a distance learning institution....
	<p><u>FINDING/S</u></p> <p>One participant indicated that technology is present, but it is partially integrated with language content and old technology is used such as telephone and fax. The other participant said technology is not intergrated. It has been used in isolation from the language content.</p>
Theme 4	<b>Intercultural Communication and Tourism Talk</b>
<b>RB</b>	<p><b>Okay. Thank you for the response.</b></p> <p><b>Questions 4: Are there examples from both the syllabus and the subject guidelines that help you teach intercultural communication and encourage Tourism Talk? Provide examples from the course to justify your answer.</b></p>
Mjaji	<u>I do not think so.</u> √ There are no strategies on how to teach intercultural communication or multilingualism.
Hlungwani	The module on intercultural communication has very less content on language usage. The focus is on meta-language. I remember, the section is on unit 3 page 74 of the prescribed textbook. <u>The examples used do not relate to application of language content in the context of intercultural communication.</u> √ The examples on the use of meta-language are about day-to-day application of language in any context.
	<p><u>FINDING/S</u></p> <p>The two participants expressed similar views. They mentioned that the there are no examples demonstrating how to apply intercultural or teach intercultural communication in the textbook.</p>
Theme 5	<b>Theme 5: Contextualized Assessment Practices</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b>Are Hospitality and Tourism assessment questions formulated in such a way that they require students to demonstrate abilities to apply contextual vocational language content and communication skills?</b>

Mjaji	At most, our questions are not set in context of business and management that relates to activities in tourism and hospitality. Our testes on language usage or let me say .... when it comes to setting assessment activities, both formative and summative assessment....people who are setting exams it's cut and paste because they take the questions in the textbook. <u>According to my experience, the subject guidelines and the assessment guidelines do not contain hints on how we can teach and asses vocational language content and set questions that are touristic and suit the contexts.</u> ✓
Hlungwani	The assessment guidelines direct us on what to set for assessment. Even if you want to teach language content relevant to a specific field or try to adapt your approach to address to communication required in the workplace, the teaching and assessment guidelines do not allow that. You must teach what is expected by the syllabus and that is all. Due to a need to adhere to the expectations of the guidelines, the questions we set are not always context driven. <u>We set open ended questions with no conditions to demand that the register and tone of the responses be touristic or should be of a particular discipline.</u> ✓
	<u>FINDING/S</u> The two-participant indicated that the assessment guidelines on do not require the lecturers to set questions that require students to demonstrate their application of language content in the tourism communication context.

## VHEMBE TVET COLLEGE STUDENTS' TRANSCRIPTS

### Appendix G

Transcripts of interviews conducted with Vhembe TVET College students for the NATED N6 Communication course.

Participate profiles.

Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Course
<u>Jeanette</u>	Female	Black	N6 Communication
Reginald	Male	Black	N6 Communication
Erad	Male	Black	N6 Communication
Mildret	Female	Black	N6 Communication
Hector	Male	Black	N6 Communication
Morris	male	Black	N6 Communication
<b>RB</b>	<b>Do the learning objectives of the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries</b>		

	<b>plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication related to hospitality and tourism.</b>
Jeanette	<p><u>“Oh...no ... I do not know about objectives and their role....”</u>. ✓</p> <p><u>How come...you should know this?</u></p> <p>They were not introduced to us....</p> <p><u>“I do not know about objectives.... I think the lecturers for the N communication courses know”</u>.</p>
Reginald	<u>“I do not know about objectives.... I think the lecturers for the N communication courses know”</u> . ✓
Erad	<u>“We have not yet learned about the objectives. We may learn but I know that they are on the first page of the sections on language usage. Don’t you think that the lecturer knows, and they can give you the answer. Ask them ...I think they can help “</u> . ✓
Mildret	<u>“I do not ...mm ..I can say I am not sure about that...the objectives are on the first page of the section of the N communication book✓. They have not yet been introduced to us. I do not know if they are specific or not...”</u>
Hector	<p><u>“The objectives are on the first page of the sections of language usage module....But to be honest, I do not know what they are all about✓...maybe we will learn about them...currently, we learn the language usage”</u>.</p> <p><u>Were you not oriented on the purpose of learning the communication course?</u></p> <p><u>“No...we were not”</u>. ✓</p>
Morris	<u>“I am not sure about that...Objectives...no...I do not know if they address specific communications ✓or language content relevant to context”</u> .
	<p><b>FINDING/S</b></p> <p>The six participants mentioned that they do not know if the objectives are aligned to help them learn language in content of tourism or any business language.</p>
<b>RB</b>	<b>What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the hospitality and tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).</b>
Jeanette	<p>“Reading, writing and speaking.... sir”</p> <p><u>What kind of language content is often in the reading materials you use to learn to read and speak?</u></p> <p><u>“It is about tenses .... mostly grammar.... we learn how to pronounce certain words...but I cannot say that the sentences are in business and management ✓....”</u></p>
Reginald	“It is about reading and writing”.

	<p><u>Do you learn to read and to write using language content that is context driven...I mean that talks about English for specialised areas....?</u></p> <p><u>“No...it is like any English√...”</u></p>
Erad	<p>“It is reading, speaking and writing”.</p> <p><u>How is the diction, the register, and the tone of the sentences...do they communicate business and management? I asked.</u></p> <p><u>“No. They communicate any kind of content.”, √Erad answered</u></p>
Mildret	<p>“It is reading, writing and speaking.... let me say...and listening”.</p> <p><u>Are the teaching and learning materials used by the lecturers containing language content and communications skills....I mean the sentence and the vocational vocabulary....relevant to the field of the work ?</u></p> <p><u>“No”. √</u></p>
Hector	<p>“Reading, writing, speaking, and listening”.</p> <p><u>On reading and writing, how is the language content composed? Is the language content relevant to context? I mean are the sentences and vocabulary about the field or activities that take place in the field.</u></p> <p><u>“No...I can say no about that”. √</u></p>
Morris	<p>“We learn about reading texts, speaking in English, and writing sentences or paragraphs”.</p> <p><u>Are the reading texts all about the business and management or are the sentences in the context of business and management?</u></p> <p><u>“No.... They are general”. √</u></p>
	<p><u>FINDINGS/S</u></p> <p>All six participants indicated that they said that the language skills they learn are not for addressing a specific purpose, but they are generally taught like in grade 12</p>
RB	<p><b>Does the course’s vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts. (Cite examples from the syllabus to justify your response).</b></p>
Jeanette	<p><u>“Mm...Even this one...I think the lecturers for the N communication courses may respond...I do not know”. √</u></p>
Reginald	<p>“I know N5 communication and the kind of language content .... I mean the adjectives, tenses and passive and active voices ...etc. <u>I do not know the vocational language content”. √</u></p>
Erad	<p>“The answer for the level or relevant of the language content to vocation may be ...<u>let me say the lecturers can answer that one .... Just as the lecturers”. √</u></p>
Mildret	<p>“Even this question sir...I think the lecturer can give an answer....<u>I do not know anything about the vocational relevance of the language content√....”</u></p>

Hector	<p>“<u>I do not know how relevant the vocational language content is</u> ...I think the lecturer for the communication course may answer that one”.</p> <p>“<u>Remember, we were not taught about the aim of the course.</u> I√ assume that the language may be ok...but I am not sure about that√...”</p>
Morris	<p>“<u>I do not know√...I do not know what relevant vocational language content mean....</u> I think the lecturers can answer that question”.</p>
	<p><u>FINDINGS/S</u></p> <p>All six participants gave similar responses. They said that they do not know if the language content is relevant or not to the communicative context of tourism</p>
<b>RB</b>	<p><b>Can you share examples of how you've applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?</b></p>
Jeanette	<p>I do that only <u>in class</u>√ when we are learning, and the lecturers happen to ask questions. And, when we discuss about a given topic.</p>
Reginald	<p>“I can...we learn reading and, writing and speaking skills”.</p> <p><u>How are the materials you use composed? Is the language content and vocational vocabulary use in the context of the field?</u></p> <p>“No.... It is just English for general purposes√....”</p>
Erad	<p>“I learn the language skills <u>in the classroom</u>√. Sometimes the lecturer asks questions, and I answer. .... <u>We discuss with my classmates</u> √about what we are taught...that is when I can say I get an opportunity to talk or practice the language skills”.</p>
Mildret	<p>“We practice that...let me say.... I practice that in class ...and <u>only in the classroom</u>√ when the lecturers are teaching”.</p>
Hector	<p>“We practice that here ...<u>in the classroom.</u> √ After College hours we leave, and I begin using my home language”.</p>
Morris	<p>“I do that only <u>in class</u>”. √</p>
	<p><u>FINDING/S</u></p> <p>All the six participants gave similar responses, indicating that they only get an opportunity to practice communicating or apply the language skills in the classroom. When they are outside the classroom, they use their home languages.</p>
<b>RB</b>	<p><b>What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?</b></p>
Jeanette	<p>“There are no challenges”. √</p>
Reginald	<p>“There are no challenges”. √</p>
Erad	<p>“No”. √</p>
Mildret	<p>“No”. √</p>

Hector	“No√ challenges”.
Morris	“No√. I have not experienced challenges...no challenges”.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> All participants responded in similar voice, indicating that they do not experience challenges.
<b>RB</b>	<b>How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?</b>
Jeanette	“We write tests, assignments, and classwork”. <u>How is the context of the questions? Is the language content contextualised or not...?</u> “It is not contextualised√...you mean that is talking about business and communication, right?”
Reginald	“We are assessed through writing tests, assignments, and classwork”. <u>How are the questions formulated? Are they contextualised to require you to respond using the language content that is for the field of your study? √ I mean jargon and sentences that have diction through tone and register for your field?</u> “No...The questions are general” √.
Erad	“We are assessed through writing tests, assignments, and classwork”. <b>Are they contextualised to require you to respond using the language content that is for the field of your study?</b> “It is through writing tests, assignments, and classwork”. <b>Are the questions contextualised to require you to respond using the language content that is for the field of your study? I mean jargon and sentences that have diction through tone and register for your field?</b> <u>“No”. √</u>
Mildret	“We are assessed through being given tests, classwork, and assignments...” Is the content of the language contextualised...is it about business and management activities? <u>“No”. √</u>
Hector	“We are assessed through writing tests, assignments, and classwork”. <b>Are they contextualised to require you to respond using the language content that is for the field of your study?</b> “It is through writing tests, assignments, and classwork”. <u>“No...I would yes know...because the language content is the same as what I have learned prior registration here at the College” √.</u>
Morris	“It is through tests and assignments”. <b>How are questions framed?</b> <u>“I may not know that answer for that question”. √</u>
	<u>FINDING/S</u>

	The respondents indicated that the questions set are generic, and they do not require them to use or respond using language focused to a specific context.
<b>RB</b>	<b>Would you agree that the language content you learned from the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course addresses your writing and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively? Justify your answer.</b>
Jeanette	<u>“No...I would say no...√</u>
Reginald	<u>“No..I would say no”. √</u>
Erad	<u>“No”. √</u>
Mildret	<u>“No...I would not agree”. √</u> <u>Why?</u> <u>“I see no differences between what I have already learned about language content and communications skills when I compare with what I am learning here at the TVET College... That is why...I see no difference”. √</u>
Hector	<u>“I say no about that”. √</u>
Morris	<u>“I may not agree sir. √</u> I think, from my experience, there are many similarities between the language content and the communication skills we learnt in the previous classes when compared with what we are learning.... if they are containing similar language content ...it means the communication skills and the language content relevant to the field of work are not being addressed”.
	<u>FINDING/S</u> All participants gave similar answer, indicating that they do not agree that the language content they learn would help them to be effective communicators in tourism context.

## Appendix H

Transcript of the interview session held with Vhembe TVET College students for the NATED N5 Tourism Communication course.

Participant profiles:

Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Course
<u>Melva</u>	Female	Black	N5 Tourism Communication
Milicet	Female	Black	N5 Tourism Communication
James	Male	Black	N5 Tourism Communication
Bejah	Male	Black	N5 Tourism Communication
Nomoya	Female	Black	N5 Tourism Communication

RB	<p><b>Do the learning objectives of the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course talk about the specific role that the language used in the hospitality and tourism industries plays? Justify your answer by explaining how each objective addresses the type of communication-related to hospitality and tourism.</b></p>
Melva	<p>“I think ...Maybe let me say that I know that there are objectives on the first page of the language usage chapter or module of all our N Communication courses. However, <u>I am not in the know why they have been put there. The lecturer for the n Communication can have the answer for that question</u>” √.</p> <p>During my time, we were oriented as students so that we know why we learn certain modules and how helpful they are.....</p> <p>“<u>We were not oriented.... I just registered and then start learning. I know nothing about those objectives are there....</u>” √</p>
Milicet	<p>“Sir.... yes ...I know that we have objectives in the textbooks, but I do not know how they are used or their purpose...” √</p> <p><b>Were you not informed of their purpose during the orientation?</b></p> <p>“<u>I was not oriented.... there was no discussion on what to learn</u>√...I registered and then started learning”.</p>
James	<p>“Mumm ... That question may be answered by the lecturers ...<u>I think since they are the once who teach us and prepare the lessons...they can help give the responses</u>” √</p>
Bejah	<p>“<u>I do not know how to answer that one Sir. I am sorry about that... I do not know the answer</u>”.</p>
Nomoya	<p>“Look sir...the lecturers prepare the lessons...and they sue that ...they said they use that but until now...it is not clear to me why they use that.... <u>We never learned about objectives ...they are on the first page...that I know but we did not learn about how they function</u>”.</p>
	<p>FINDINGS/S</p> <p>All the five participants gave similar answer, saying they were not aware of the presence of objectives in the N5 Tourism Communication course...let alone knowing the aims thereof.</p>
RB	<p><b>What specific language skills and competencies in the syllabus do you think are relevant and important for success in the hospitality and tourism industry? How is technology used and how helpful is it in empowering you? Justify your answer by referring to the text(s).</b></p>
Melva	<p>“We learn to read, to speak and to write....”</p> <p><b>How is the language content of the reading materials that you use .... Is it in the context of the field of the study?</b></p> <p>“No...the sentences in the language content as well as the vocabulary are not necessarily about a single field of study. <u>The sentences are of generic nature...generic in the sense that</u></p>

	<p><u>you cannot associate the text with any field of study</u>√. I think it is about communication for all purposes”.</p>
James	<p>“We learn reading, writing, and speaking skills ...”</p> <p><b>How is the language content of the reading materials? Is the language content based in the field of your chosen career?</b></p> <p>“<u>No.... It is not based on that,</u>” √</p> <p><b>How is the nature of the sentences...the vocabulary etc...are they contextualized reflect career field diction...?</b></p> <p>“<u>No...they sound generic ...I can say</u>” √</p>
Bejah	<p>“We learn to read, to write and to speak”.</p> <p><b>How are the sentences and the vocabulary used in the readings? Are they addressing the communication needs in terms of producing sound that is touristic through tone and register applied?</b></p> <p>“<u>I would say no...</u>√. the sentences and the vocabulary.... phrases and clauses are in generic state.....sir or context. As you put it”.</p>
Milicet	<p>“We are taught reading, speaking, and writing...”</p> <p><b>How is the articulation of the sentences and the vocabulary...do they sound touristic can equip you with communication language skills that are touristic or sound business and managerial?</b></p> <p>“<u>No...The words and sentences are generic....</u>” √</p>
Nomoya	<p>“We learn to read, to write and to speak....”</p> <p><b>How are the sentences and the vocabulary used in the readings? Are they addressing the communication needs in terms of producing sound that is touristic through tone and register applied?</b></p> <p>“<u>I would say no....</u> the sentences and the vocabulary.... phrases and clauses are in generic state.....sir or context. As you put it” √</p>
	<p>FINDING/S</p> <p>All five participants mentioned that the language skills they learn are reading, speaking, writing and listening skills but the reading materials are generic....they read all types of texts....the lecturer could bring any reading material to teach them.</p>
RB	<p><b>Does the course’s vocational language address the communication needs of the hospitality and tourism industry? Relate this to how this vocational language and its sentences speak to the hospitality and tourism contexts. (Cite examples from the syllabus to justify your response).</b></p>

Milicet	<p>“Oh.... Sir. That question is like the first question...<u>I think the vocational level of the language content can be known by the lecturers for the N Communication courses. I am not sure about that</u>”.</p> <p><b>Why...do you say so?</b></p> <p>“Remember, it is the lecturers who prepare the lessons and then come to class and teach us.... we just learn whatever is taught to us by them. I do not know for sure sir”</p>
James	<p>“Even this question Sir...the level of the relevance of what you call <u>vocational language content in the N communication can be responded to by the lecturers</u> ...I think better they be asked to answer this question”</p>
Bejah	<p>“I do not know ...sir ...the state of the language content in terms of the level of the relevance to tourism or a field of work may be known by the lecturers ...<u>I do not know what to say about that sir</u>”.</p>
Nomoya	<p>“<u>I am not sure about that.</u> I also say that I do not know the vocational language relevance... All I know grammar sentences and vocabulary that are in the textbook. How relevant they are, may be responded to by the lecturers”.</p>
Milicet	<p>“<u>I am not sure if I would be able to answer that one...I think the lecturers can answer</u> ... They are the once who prepare and weigh the level of the relevance of the language content.”</p>
	<p>FINDINGS/S</p> <p>The participants indicated that they see no difference between the language content they learn in grade 12 and other lower classes</p>
<b>RB</b>	<p><b>Can you share examples of how you've applied the language skills you have learned in this course to real-world scenarios or industry-related tasks?</b></p>
Melva	<p>“I apply the language skills in the classroom...<u>only in the classroom</u> because after TVET College hours I use my home language ....”</p> <p><b>Were you not at sometimes place in a working environment and get an opportunity to interact with the employees, to enable you to learn to talk to them and observe how they work?</b></p> <p>“<u>No</u>...I have not been placed”</p>
Milicet	<p>“I do that only and only during the lessons or when we discuss with my classmates <u>in the classroom</u>”</p>
James	<p>“I practice speaking when we are learning <u>in the classroom</u>. At times I do so when I am given a topic to present and discuss with classmates. All these happen in the classroom...that is all”.</p> <p><b>Are the topics you discuss about in the context of tourism and hospitality?</b></p> <p>“No...really, it depends on what we will be instructed to do on that day.... but they are often not about tourism or hospitality”.</p>

Bejah	<p>“We...let me say <u>I do that in the classroom</u> when the lecturers are teaching. When they ask questions, I try to answer. They sometimes give us topic to discuss .... I make sure that I contribute”.</p> <p><u>Are the topics formulated form the perspectives of the state of the context of tourism and hospitality...or just general?</u></p> <p>“It is mixed...but I think at most the sentences and vocabulary are applied just like in any subject ...they are not narrowed to talk about a specific field”.</p>
Nomoya	<p>“<u>I do that with my classmates in the classroom</u> or around the TVET College campus. Let me say we always practice when the lecturers are lecturing in the class. They ask questions and then I sometimes try to answer”.</p>
	<p>FINDINGS/S</p> <p>They all indicated that they learn to practice speaking in English only when they are in the classroom with their teachers and either than that, they use their home languages in the TVET campus and at home.</p>
<b>RB</b>	<p><b>What challenges, if any, have you encountered in applying English communication skills within the contexts of hospitality and tourism during your internship period?</b></p>
Melva	<p><u>No</u> challenges Sir. Non.</p>
Milicet	<p>None. <u>No</u> challenges</p>
James	<p>I had <u>no</u> challenges</p>
Bejah	<p><u>No</u> challenges</p>
Nomoya	<p>No. Challenges ...<u>no</u> challenges at all.</p>
	<p>The five participants gave similar responses. They said thatthat they experience no challenges.</p>
<b>RB</b>	<p><b>How do you think the course assesses your English proficiency and communication skills?</b></p>
Melva	<p>“I am assessed through tests and assignments. OH...and classwork ...the textbook has assessment activities at the end of each chapter...we answer those questions”.</p> <p><b>Are the questions of the assessment activities instructive in terms of expecting you to apply language content relevant to the context of your career field?</b></p> <p>“<u>No</u>. They are not”</p>
Milicet	<p>“We are assessed. We write classwork, assignments, and tests”.</p> <p><b>Do the questions set require you to respond using language content relevant to the field of the study?</b></p> <p>“<u>No</u>. The <u>questions are not always in a specific context</u>...and we also answer according to the frame of the question”.</p>

James	<p>“We are assessed through writing assignment, tests, and classwork”.</p> <p>A follow up question was asked: <b>How is the nature of the questions? Are the instructions of the questions requiring you to use register and tone that sound touristic when you respond to the questions?</b></p> <p>“<u>No.....not at all ...The questions set are generic....</u> we respond in the same way .....the state of the touristic of our responses is conditioned by the level of the instructions”, replied to James.</p>
Bejah	<p>“<u>The questions set are generic....</u> we respond in the same way .....the state of the touristic of our responses is conditioned by the level of the instructions”.</p> <p>A follow up question was asked: Can you elaborate on that response?</p> <p>“I mean that the phrases, clauses and the vocabulary used to compose the questions are generic...<u>they are not contextualised to produce business and management sounds</u>”, replied Bejah.</p>
Nomoya	<p>“That is done through given exercises, homework, and assignments which we write and then submit to be marked”.</p> <p><b>How are the questions formulated? Are the instructions of the questions framed to also require you to use or contextualise the response to the field by using phrases, clauses, and terminologies that are vocationally talking about business and managerial activities? I asked.</b></p> <p>“The questions are straight forward...they simple require us to use English ...<u>not necessary to answer using a certain type of language or forced to use something either the English language</u>”, she mentioned.</p>
	<p>FINDING/S</p> <p>Each of the five-participant mentioned that the assessment questions are generic...</p>
<b>RB</b>	<p><b>Would you agree that the language content you learned from the Hospitality and Tourism Communication course addresses your writing and communication needs and prepares you to communicate in the hospitality and tourism workplaces efficiently and effectively? Justify your answer.</b></p>
Melva	<p><u>No...</u>I will not... think I gave enough reasons above sir...I am not agreeing. ✓</p>
Milicet	<p><u>No...</u>sir. I would say no✓.</p>
James	<p>“<u>I would say no✓</u>...although I may not provide many reasons”.</p>
Bejah	<p>“<u>No</u>”.✓</p>
Nomoya	<p>“<u>No✓</u>...I would say no...no about that. I think the reasons I gave in the previous questions may be enough”.</p>
	<p>FINDING/S</p>

	Each of the five participants mentioned that they would never say that the language content in the Tourism Communication course equip them with skills to effectively communicate in the sector of tourism.
--	---

**Appendix I: Data collection process evidence**

**schedules and pictures of recorded interview sessions extracted from my research data file**

I visited both Tshwane and Vhembe TVET Colleges. Telephonically, I arranged to meet with the campus managers via the administrators. I then agreed with the campus managers on the dates on which I could visit to have pre-meeting prior conducting the actual interviews. I visited the two TVET colleges on different months and dates. This was so due to the distance between the two provinces. Following the agreement, I had with the campus managers and the departmental heads, we agreed that I follow the time frames presented below. I drew it in consultation with the head of the departments and the lecturers who were involved in teaching N6 Communication and N5 tourism Communication course. Below the schedule are copies of audio recordings copied from the files saved in my computer that serve as evidence of the recorded interview sessions.

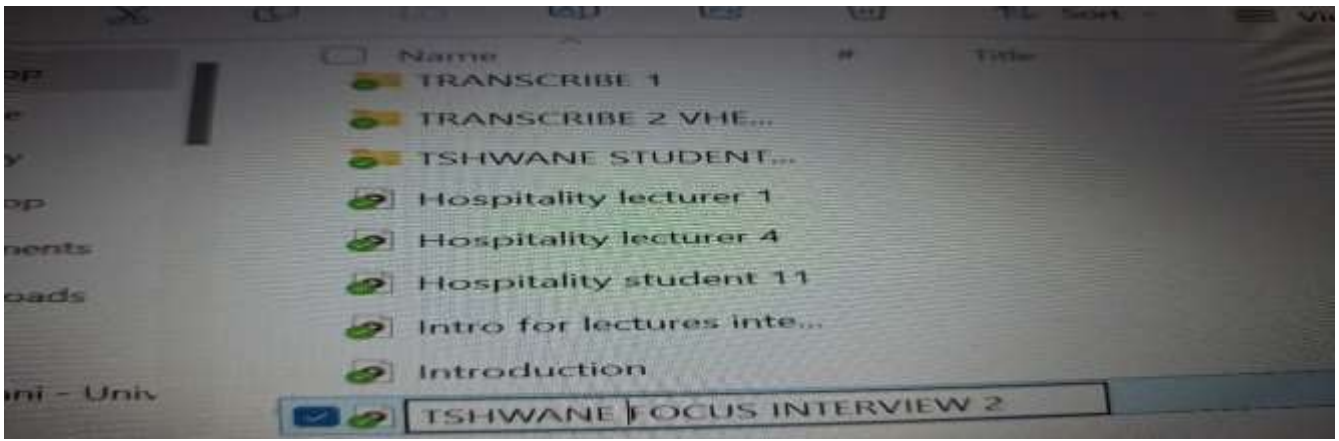
**Tshwane TVET College Interview schedule**

Schedule 1: Pre-visit dates/ actual interview dates and interview with lecturers and evidence

2024/03/06	Pre-visit to meet campus managers and arrange to meet lecturers
2024/03/11	Interview with lecturers for N6 Communication
2024/03/12	Interview with lecturers for N6 Communication
2024/03/13	Interview with lecturers for N5 tourism communication
2024/03/14	Interview with lecturers for N5 tourism communication
2024/03/23	Group-focused interview

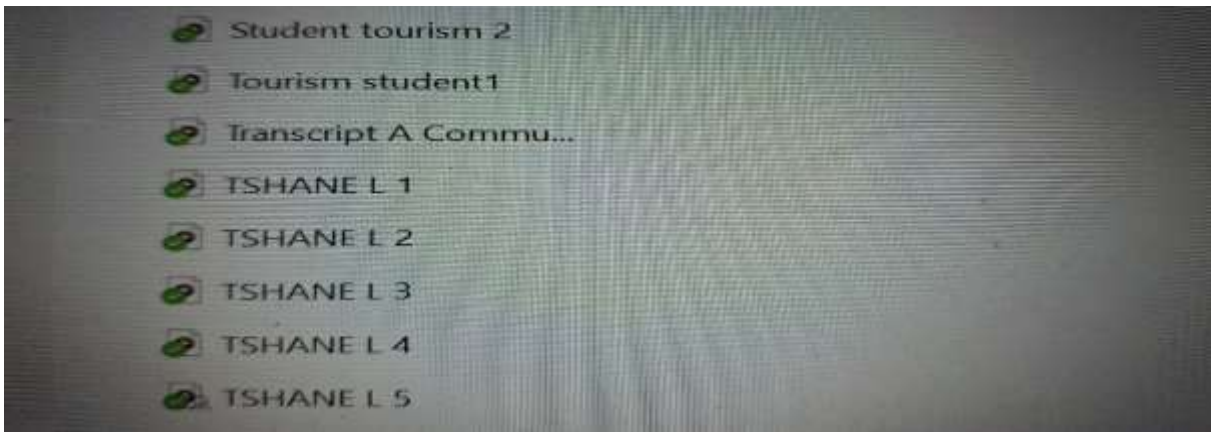
**Evidence**





**Schedule 2: Scheduled Interview with students from Tshwane TVET College**

2024/08/05	Interview with N6 Communication students
2024/08/06	Interview with N6 Communication students
2024/08/07	Interview with N5 Tourism students

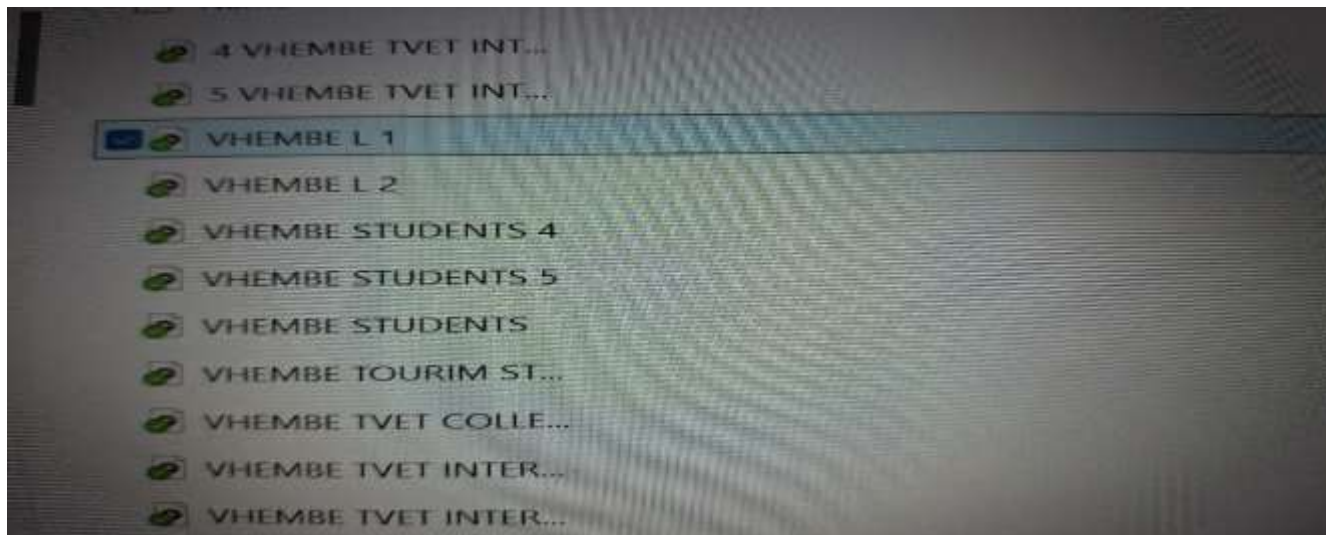


**VHEMBE TVET COLLEGE LECTURERS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Schedule 1: Pre-visit dates/ actual interview dates and interview with lecturers and evidence

2023/10/06	Pre-visit to meet campus managers and arrange to meet lecturers
2024/02/06	Interview with lecturers for N6 Communication
2024/02/07	Interview with lecturers for N6 Communication
2024/02/08	Interview with lecturers for N5 tourism communication
2024/02/09	Interview with lecturers for N5 tourism communication
2024/05/08	Group-focused interview

## Evidence 1



### Schedule 2: Scheduled Interview with students from Vhembe TVET College

15/04/2024	Interview with N6 communication students
16/04/2024	Interview with N6 communication students
17/04/2024	Interview with N6 communication students
18/04/2024	Interview with N5 Tourism communication course students
19/04/2024	Interview with N5 Tourism communication course students

## Evidence 2



## Appendix J: Ethical Clearance Documents

### (a) Ethical clearance certificate

The application for the ethical clearance certificate was approved in 2023. Following a request for amendment and extension of the approval period, the certificate was amended and extended to remain valid until July 2026. Below is the copy.

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

30 July 2025

Dear Mr Baloyi Mzamani Reckson

NHREC Registration # :

Rec-240816-052

CREC Reference # :

53301846\_CREC\_CHS\_2025

**Decision:**

**Ethics Approval from 30 July 2025 to  
29 July 2026**

Researcher(s): Name: Mr. B. M. Reckson  
Contact details: [baloymr@unisa.ac.za](mailto:baloymr@unisa.ac.za)  
Supervisor(s): Name: Prof. C. Chaka  
Contact details: [chakacp@unisa.ac.za](mailto:chakacp@unisa.ac.za)  
Co-Supervisor(s): Name: Dr. C. Ndlangamandla  
Contact details: [cndlanga@unisa.ac.za](mailto:cndlanga@unisa.ac.za)

**Title: Exploring the Relevance of the English Language Content of the Hospitality and Tourism Communication Courses Offered at Two Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges.**

**Degree Purpose: PhD**

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for one year.

The *low-risk application* was reviewed by the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

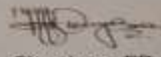
1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
  5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
  6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
  7. No fieldwork activities may continue after the expiry date **(29 July 2026)**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.
- Note:*  
The reference number **53301846\_CREC\_CHS\_2025** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Signature:

Prof. KJ Malesa  
CHS Research Ethics Committee Chairperson  
Email: maleskj@unisa.ac.za  
Tel: (012) 429 6054



Signature: PP

Prof ZZ Nkosi  
Executive Dean: CHS  
E-mail: nkosizz@unisa.ac.za  
Tel: 012 429 6758



University of South Africa  
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**(b) Turnitin report**

**Page 2 of 201 - Integrity Overview**  
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**( C ) Permission Letters**



higher education  
& training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**VHEMBE TVET COLLEGE**

Central Office

Site 203, Unit A  
SIBASA

LIMPOPO, 0970

Tel. (015) 963 7000  
Fax (015) 963 3150/4



Enq: Office of the Deputy Principal Academic Services  
015 963 7000/7093

To: Mzamani Reckson Baloyi  
Contact Number: 0763174028/0124296167

**RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT VHEMBE TVET COLLEGE**

The above matter refers;

After review of the study protocol, Vhembe TVET College hereby grants Mzamani Reckson Baloyi permission to conduct his study at Vhembe TVET College under the following research topic:  
***Exploring the Relevance of the Language Content in Hospitality and Tourism Communication Courses Offered at Two Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges.***

Approval is given with an exception that the research will be conducted without interference in the daily activities of the college.

Kind Regards.

Deputy Principal Academic Services

Mrs. Boo M

Date: 12/12/2023

**higher education & training**

**Department: Higher Education and Training**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Tshwane TVET College**

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*"Achieve the future"*



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**TO: Mr. Mzamani Reckson Baloyi**

**From: Deputy Principal: Academic Services**

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT TSHWANE  
TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL TRAINING (TVET) COLLEGE**

**DATE: 29 January 2024**

**From: Principal**

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**Dear Mr. Mzamani Reckson Baloyi**

**Tshwane Technical and Vocational Education and Training College acknowledges receipt of your letter requesting to conduct research in Exploring the Relevance of the Language Content in Hospitality and Tourism Communication Course Offered at Two Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges.**

**Permission is hereby granted on condition that the College will be made privy to the outcome of the research.**

**We wish you success with your research study.**

**Kind regards**

**Deputy Principal: Academic Services**

2024 -01- 29

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**MEMO PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH 2024-01-29 Page 1**

**CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT WITH RESEARCH THIRD PARTIES**

Hereby, I [name], ID number, in my personal capacity as a [transcriber/coder/data capturer/statistician, counsellor, social worker etc.] collaborating with Mr Baloyi Mzamani Reckson on research titled: Exploring the Relevance of the Language Content of the Hospitality and Tourism Communication Course Offered at Two Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges

acknowledge that I am aware of and familiar with the stipulations and contents of the conditions of ethical clearance specific to this study. I shall conform to and abide by these conditions. Furthermore, I am aware of the sensitivity of the information collected and the need for strict controls to ensure confidentiality obligations associated with the study.

I agree to the privacy and confidentiality of the information that I am granted access to in my duties as a [transcriber/coder/data capturer/statistician, counsellor, social worker etc]. I will not disclose nor sell the information that I have been granted permission to gain access to in good faith, to anyone.

I also confirm that I have been briefed by the research team on the protocols and expectations of my behaviour and involvement in the research as a [transcriber/coder/data capturer/statistician, counsellor, social worker etc]

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (TSHWANE TVET COLLEGE)**

Date: 9 September 2023

Title: Exploring the Relevance of the Language Content of the Hospitality and Tourism Communication Course Offered at Two Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges

My name is Baloyi Mzamani Reckson and I am doing research with Prof Chaka CP and Dr. Ndlangamandla SC. Dr. Ndlangamandla is a senior lecturer while Prof Chaka is a professor. They are both in the Department

of English Studies towards a Ph.D. at the University of South Africa. I have funding from the University of South Africa. I have funding because I am a staff member of the Department of English Studies. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled Exploring the Relevance of the Language Content of the Hospitality and Tourism Communication Skills Course Offered at Two Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

**The purpose of the study is to :**

- a) determine the extent to which the skills embodied in the Communication N6 skills course are relevant to Tourism and Hospitality fields of study.
- b) determine the extent to which the communication skills taught in these courses reflect elements of ESP.
- c) probe and analyse the assessment guidelines and the examination question papers to check the relevance of the questions set to the fields of Tourism and hospitality fields of study.
- d) explore and analyse the perceptions of the lecturers of the subject guidelines and compare them to the Tourism and Hospitality field of study.

### **WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?**

You have been selected to participate in the study so you contribute by providing information that will be asked during the interview session. As a lecturer for English Communication course, I believe that your knowledge of the subject matter in the field of English Communication Skills for tourism and hospitality field will help me gain in-depth knowledge of how the course addresses the specific needs of the students. The study intends to sample participants from the two targeted TVET colleges i.e., one from Gauteng province and the other one from Limpopo province.

### **WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?**

The role of the sampled participants will be to respond to the questions during the interview session. I will make an appointment with each participant, arrange a time, and set up the venue. The interview will be on face to face. I will avoid conducting interviews during TVET college time so that there be no disturbances during the participants' time for teaching.

## **CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?**

Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw from the study any time without any penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation.

There is no payment for participating in the study. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form.

## **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

The participants will benefit from this study by attaining critical thinking and language skills. Lectures will have an opportunity to share and exchange ideas and experiences regarding the content of the communication courses. Their interactions with me will also help participants to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject content and contribute to aligning it to suit the context of the Tourism and Hospitality industry.

## **ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?**

There are no known or foreseeable risks and discomforts in this study, and in the event of risks or discomforts, they will be minimised through the application of necessary measures such as ensuring that the participants are timeously treated with respect. In case the nature of the study creates psychological discomfort, participants will be informed about this ahead of time and they will have freedom to voice their dissatisfaction.

## **WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

Participants and all individuals with an interest in improving the Communication Course Syllabus by adjusting it to suit the context in which it is intended to be used will have access to the data. The contributors in data collection will be given pseudonyms to protect their identity and maintain their confidentiality. To protect the participant, I ensured that the consent form is read and signed after clarifying and addressing their concerns. To further ensure their protection, confidentiality of data, and the right to privacy as well as right to full disclosure of my intentions will be maintained. Individuals will be protected from harm by avoiding exploitative activities. I will familiarise himself or herself with the religious activities, norms and

values of the school and the general social view of the society. In the event of psychological harm participants will be referred to a professional psychologist for counselling while those physically harmed will be sent to a medical institution to receive treatment. The researchers' outcome will be subjected to review by the Ethics Review Committee to ensure that the study is done properly. All participants will be informed that their data will be kept anonymously and will be used for purposes such as research reports, journal articles, and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants' information will not be identifiable in such a report.

### **HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?**

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in the principal researcher's safe which is opened by a code only known by him. The safe is kept in the office of the researcher. For future research or academic purposes, electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. The hard copies will be shredded and/or electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer using a relevant software programme.

### **WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

The participants will not receive any payment or reward. However, during the process of collecting data, students will be provided with information on how to improve their language skills. In case the researchers plan to meet participants at a venue that is not within the school premises, free transport will be provided, and the costs will be incurred by the researchers.

### **HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL**

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Human Sciences [*identify the relevant ERC*], Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

### **HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?**

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings or require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Mr Mzamani Reckson Baloyi whose telephone no: 012 419 6167 or send an email to [baloymr@unisa.ac.za](mailto:baloymr@unisa.ac.za) or [baloyireckson@gmail.com](mailto:baloyireckson@gmail.com). Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact the research ethics chairperson of the research ethics chairperson Prof Khan Khatija and whose contact details are as follows: [khankb@unisa.ac.za](mailto:khankb@unisa.ac.za). Tell number 012c4296549.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you

signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mzamani Reckson Baloyi', written over a horizontal line.

Mzamani Reckson Baloyi