

Research Article

Cite this article: Nguyen, D. T. (2025). English Proficiency Requirements for Hotel Front-desk Staff by the Vietnam Tourism Occupational Standards: Implications for ESP Curriculum in Vietnam. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 18, e2025491.

<https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.18.491>

Received June 28, 2025

Accepted September 09, 2025

Keywords: Hotel front-desk, VTOS, English proficiency, English language teaching, occupational standards

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English Proficiency Requirements for Hotel Front-desk Staff by the Vietnam Tourism Occupational Standards: Implications for ESP Curriculum in Vietnam

Dung Thi Nguyen 

Abstract

Background/purpose. As Vietnam expands its tourism industry and integration into ASEAN, English proficiency has become crucial for hotel front-desk staff. This issue not only affects the tourism workforce but also how educational programs, particularly English for Specific Purposes (ESP), prepare their students for this demand. This study examines the current English proficiency of hotel front-desk staff and the proficiency required for specific tasks outlined in the Vietnam Tourism Occupational Standards (VTOS), with implications for ESP curriculum design.

Materials/methods. A mixed-methods design was employed, including a questionnaire administered to 82 receptionists and in-depth interviews with eight staff from 1-star to 4-star hotels. The research utilized VTOS competencies to investigate the language proficiency required for specific job tasks.

Results. Listening and speaking skills emerged as the most essential skills, while the tasks related to guest interaction, safety, and legal compliance required higher language competency. English proficiency requirements rose with the hotel star gradings; however, a notable gap persisted between national standards and actual workplace requirements.

Conclusion. The study indicated the importance of English skills and insight of specific task evidence for ESP curriculum design. ESP curricula should integrate VTOS competencies, focusing more on real-world hotel scenarios that incorporate oral communication, and diversify listening input with various accents. These improvements offer practical directions for enhancing student employability and the competitiveness of Vietnam's tourism workforce.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of the tourism industry in Vietnam, particularly in the Mekong Delta, the urgent demand for a labor force with international communication skills has emerged. English, as a global lingua franca, has become widely used as both a tool for communication and a medium for delivering high-quality services across various tourism sectors worldwide. As a result, personnel working in this field, especially the front-desk staff, are required to possess a certain level of English proficiency to effectively communicate with customers, carry out professional tasks, and handle various service situations (Saigontourist Hospitality and Tourism Vocational School, 2023).

In Vietnam, English proficiency requirement for front-desk staff based on the Vietnam's Foreign Language Competency Framework (FLCF) were aligned with the scale and rating of hotels as follows: for one-star hotels, employees must possess a minimum of level 1 English proficiency; for two- and three-star hotels, a minimum of level 3; and for four- and five-star hotels, employees must be proficient in two foreign languages—English at level 4 and another language for basic communication (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2015). It was noticeable that these English language requirements represented the minimum standards. Many hotels, especially at the front office, demanded even higher proficiency levels.

Therefore, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses tailored to receptionist roles are essential in preparing students for workplace expectations. Rather than focusing solely on language, effective ESP instruction should integrate real-world scenarios to build both linguistic and professional competencies (Simion, 2012). Furthermore, learning English for tourism differs from general English programs in that it tends to involve more practical, task-based activities rather than abstract theory and inference (Barron & Arcodia, 2002; Dale & McCarthy, 2006). However, while many researchers have focused on the tourism labor market and language challenges, less attention has been paid to how universities, educational institutions, and vocational schools can prepare their students to meet the standards of both domestic and international markets.

In response to this issue, this study approaches English proficiency from the perspectives of being not only a workplace requirement but also an educational mission. Specifically, this study employs receptionist tasks outlined in the Vietnam Tourism Occupation Standards (VTOS) to investigate the actual English proficiency requirement and how the findings are implemented in the ESP course and curriculum design. By identifying the workplace expectations and current workforce challenges, this research provides practical implications for universities, educational institutions, and vocational schools to enhance training quality.

Therefore, this study was conducted, aiming to investigate (1) the current English language proficiency of hotel front-desk staff in An Giang province in relation to the national standards set by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, (2) the levels of English proficiency are required for performing specific front-desk tasks as outlined by VTOS, and (3) how the research results inform the development of ESP curricula for hospitality program. By reframing the issue from the perspectives of education and curriculum design, this research contributes not only to tourism workforce development but also to the enhancement of ESP training in Vietnam.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Role and Responsibilities of Front Office Staff in the Hospitality Industry

In this study, the term front-desk staff (also known as receptionists) is used consistently to refer to employees who are in charge of reception desks – key operations at the hotel lobby and are often seen as the 'face' of the hotel. As the first point of contact, they played a crucial role in shaping guests' impressions and the overall service quality. As such, the quality of service provided by a hotel or

restaurant is primarily influenced by the performance of its front-desk operations (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2015).

According to the Vietnam Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs (2017), the core duties of front-desk staff include welcoming guests, handling check-in procedures, assigning rooms, and responding to all questions or service requests during the guests' stay. Upon departure, front desk personnel are also responsible for managing the checkout process. Additionally, depending on the size and type of accommodation facility, front-desk staff may also be tasked with handling guest complaints, operating telephone services, and preparing reports.

To meet the demand of globalization in the tourism sector, English proficiency is crucial for receptionists to effectively handle their daily tasks and provide exceptional service and positive experiences for international guests. Receptionists must be proficient in speaking and listening to engage in spontaneous conversations with guests and provide accurate information to guests (Al-Jufri et al., 2024; Ratmanida et al., 2020). Specifically, receptionists had to make guests feel welcomed, describe the services, take reservations, handle guests' inquiries, and deal with complaints. Being competent in English speaking and listening was also crucial when dealing with non-native English speakers, as it helped to understand diverse accents of English (Pham, 2023). Additionally, competence in reading and writing is essential for effectively interacting with guests in written form, such as via emails, faxes, and online platforms (Ratmanida et al., 2020). Receptionists often need to write clearly and professionally to maintain effective communication (Kaharuddin et al., 2019; Moendee et al., 2024). Additionally, a strong command of vocabulary and grammar is essential for clear and professional communication. This includes understanding and using terminologies and maintaining grammatical accuracy in both spoken and written interactions (Al-Jufri et al., 2024; Karuniawan & Robiasih, 2018). While English proficiency is undeniably important for hotel receptionists, it is also essential to recognize the role of other factors, such as cultural understanding and interpersonal skills in providing exceptional guest service. These elements, combined with language skills, contribute to creating a welcoming and professional environment for guests from diverse backgrounds. Additionally, collaboration between educational institutions and the hospitality industry can further enhance the training and preparedness of future hotel staff (Ariyati, 2022).

2.2. Vietnam Tourism Occupational Standards (VTOS)

Based on the guidelines of the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA), the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism has issued occupational standards for various job positions within the tourism sector (ASEAN, 2014, 2018), known as the Vietnam Tourism Occupational Standards (VTOS). VTOS consists of two major areas: (1) Hospitality (including 9 occupations), and (2) Travel Services (including 4 occupations) (Vietnam Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism, 2015). A set of competencies for each occupation, which were classified into five qualification levels, was designed to align with Vietnam's regulatory context while also being standardized to ensure compatibility with international and ASEAN standards (see Appendix I).

Front-desk staff is one of the occupations listed under the Hospitality area in VTOS. Front-desk staff competencies outlined by VTOS comprise a total of 53 competency units, divided into three categories: General competencies (12 units), Core competencies (10 units), and Job-specific competencies across five levels (31 units). Details of the competency units for the Receptionist occupation are presented in Appendix II.

2.3. Foreign Language Proficiency Requirements for Front-Desk Staff in Vietnam

According to the hotel grading standards issued by the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, front-desk staff were required to meet a minimum level of foreign language proficiency

based on the Vietnamese Six-Level Foreign Language Proficiency Framework (see Appendix III) to ensure the quality of the services (Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, 2014; Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2015). Details regarding the English proficiency requirements are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. English Proficiency Description for Hotel Front-desk Staff

Hotel grading	1-star	2-star	3-star	4-star	5-star
Required Proficiency Level	Level 1	Level 3	Level 3	Level 3	Level 4
	(A1)	(B1)	(B1)	(B1)	(B2)

These requirements aimed to ensure that front-desk staff can effectively communicate with international guests and meet the professional demands of different hotel categories. Moreover, it was noteworthy that the aforementioned language proficiency represented only the minimum requirements. In practice, front-desk staff in some establishments are expected to possess higher levels of language proficiency, including the ability to communicate fluently in two foreign languages, one of which must be English. Specifically, staff at 1- to 2-star hotels are expected to use at least one foreign language (English) at level C (equivalent to level 3). 3-star hotel staff must be proficient in at least one foreign language (English). 4-star-hotel staff must be able to use two foreign languages, with fluent proficiency in English and at least conversational proficiency (level C or higher) in a second foreign language. 5-star hotel staff are expected to be fluent in two foreign languages, one of which must be English (Minh Tâm, 2023). These elevated expectations reflect the increasing demand for high-quality, internationally competitive service in Vietnam's hospitality sector.

2.4. Related Studies

Recent investigations into the use of English among hotel front-desk staff have provided valuable insights into their English proficiency levels, communicative needs, and challenges; however, significant gaps remain, necessitating further research.

Al-Jufri et al. (2024) investigated the English language demands of hotel receptionists in Sikka District, Flores Island, Indonesia, through in-depth interviews with four participants. By employing qualitative methods, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with four receptionists to gather data. The findings revealed that the receptionists generally possessed a good command of English, which provided positive experiences for the guests and contributed to the growth of the hospitality sector. However, persistent difficulties were noted in using technical vocabulary, comprehending various accents and dialects, and responding in emergency situations.

Yutthapirut (2023) assessed English proficiency among receptionists in Bangkok, Thailand, using survey data from 368 hotels. The results indicated high overall English proficiency, with reading emerging as the most competent skill and speaking as the weakest. Furthermore, demographic and professional factors, such as age, job, education, and work experience, significantly influence English proficiency, while gender did not.

Ariyati (2022) investigated the use of English and challenges among hotel front-desk staff in Bali, Indonesia, through interviews with three receptionists. The study identified recurrent communication functions, including greetings, check-in and check-out procedures, providing information, and handling problems. However, they reported being unconfident in communicating and struggling with understanding slang and idioms in English.

Rahmani and Supardi (2021) distributed questionnaires to ten hotel managers, five travel agents, and 86 students to investigate the needs for English usage in the tourism sector. The findings indicated that speaking skill played the most significant role, followed by writing, listening, and

reading. The topics of concern for each group of stakeholders were also identified, including the common concerns of hoteliers.

Yamin (2021) employed questionnaires administered to 27 hotel staff in Bandung, Indonesia. The results revealed that English skills, particularly speaking, were crucial for addressing guests' complaints, describing hotel facilities, and providing services. The study also highlighted common challenges encountered, such as communication anxiety, limited vocabulary, and difficulties with listening comprehension. English lessons with more detailed activities were suggested, such as conversations in hotel settings, complaint handling, and explanations of hotel facilities and services.

Ratmanida et al. (2020) investigated the needs of English for hotel staff through a survey with 41 receptionists from three hotels in Padang, Indonesia. The findings indicated that the most needed skill was listening, followed by speaking, reading, and writing. Additionally, the functions of each English skill were also revealed, such as asking and giving information, offering services, or providing directions.

Kaharuddin et al. (2019) conducted a needs analysis through a survey, involving 105 hospitality students, two English teachers, and 21 hotel employees in Indonesia. Findings highlighted speaking as the most important skill, followed by writing, reading, and listening, with key functions such as telephone conversations, handling requests, describing facilities, and managing complaints. Besides, the problems related to English learning included a lack of vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and topic knowledge.

In the Vietnamese context, Do and Cheng (2021) applied Woodrow's (2018) needs analysis framework in ESP course design to identify the English skills and challenges of receptionists in international hotels. Through interviews and observations with 15 receptionists and three managers from five different hotels, they found that speaking and listening skills were the most frequently used, while reading and writing were less common. A key challenge identified was understanding different accents and maintaining a conversational pace in high-stakes interactions, such as dealing with complaints or making telephone contacts. The researchers recommended that ESP courses should focus on listening and speaking activities tailored to the real workplace tasks.

Pham (2023), through a questionnaire administered to 18 hotel receptionists in Can Tho, Vietnam, found that speaking and listening predominated reading and writing in daily practice. Besides, receptionists faced difficulty communicating with non-native English speakers, particularly Asian tourists; therefore, the study underscored the need for ESP materials that incorporate a greater variety of non-native accents.

Overall, previous Vietnamese and international studies have contributed to clarifying the dominant English skills required of hotel front-desk staff, their persistent difficulties, as well as some suggestions for ESP curriculum development. However, several significant gaps remain and need further investigation. Firstly, a considerable methodological shortcoming arises as many studies relied on either a brief qualitative or quantitative approach without triangulation; specifically, interviews and observations (e.g., Do and Cheng (2021)), only interviews (e.g., Al-Jufri et al. (2024); Ariyati (2022)), only surveys/questionnaires (e.g., Kaharuddin et al. (2019); Pham (2023); Rahmani and Supardi (2021); Ratmanida et al. (2020); (Yamin, 2021); Yutthapirut (2023)). The single methodology has limited the thorough comprehension of the research issues. Secondly, the research sample sizes in many previous studies were literally small, resulting in limitations of generalization of the research results; to be specific, three to four interviewees (Al-Jufri et al., 2024; Ariyati, 2022), 10 – 41 questionnaire respondents as hotel employees (Kaharuddin et al., 2019; Pham, 2023; Yamin, 2021). Thirdly, the inconsistent findings of the most needed English skills, such as speaking (Ariyati, 2022; Kaharuddin et al., 2019; Rahmani & Supardi, 2021; Yamin, 2021), listening (Ratmanida et al., 2020), or reading (Yutthapirut, 2023), which highlight the need for further investigations. Finally, the

tasks or topics that emerged in the previous were not clearly defined in the official documents, but were subjectively developed by the researchers.

These gaps limit the reliability and generalization of the research findings, as the clear picture of the English proficiency levels required for receptionists to meet the job demand remains unclear. Therefore, difficulties emerged not only in the hotel workplace but also in educational institutions, particularly in ESP curriculum design, as a means to prepare a qualified future workforce. They highlighted the need for further research to address the English proficiency levels required for receptionists as a reliable target situation analysis for the ESP curriculum in Vietnam.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

To address the aforementioned research gaps, this study employed the needs analysis framework of Woodrow (2018) (see Figure 1) and the competencies outlined in the VTOS – Receptionist occupation (Vietnam Ministry of Culture Sports and Tourism, 2015) to get insights into hotel receptionists' English proficiency requirements. The research fin

This study aimed to investigate the English proficiency requirements for hotel receptionists from the perspectives of target situations, with the English proficiency levels needed to perform daily tasks and unexpected situations. Therefore, the identified stakeholders of this study were hotel receptionists. Then, previous research was reviewed to address to research gaps and develop the data collection tools. In this step, a mixed-method design with competencies outlined in VTOS – Receptionist occupation was employed in the investigations. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were implemented with receptionists across the hotel segments to ensure triangulation from multiple methods, sources, and situations.

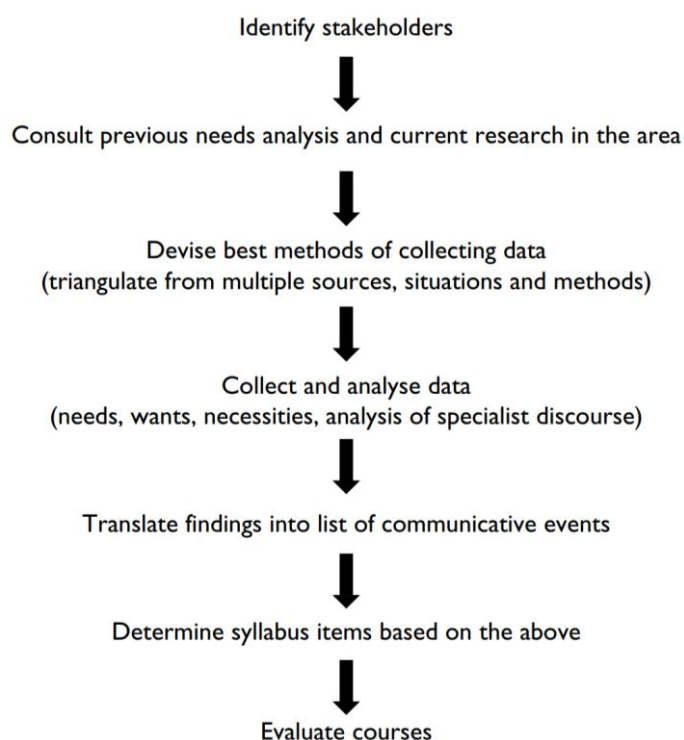


Figure 1. Steps in Needs Analysis (Woodrow, 2018)

3.2. Data collection tool

3.2.1 Quantitative Data Collection Tool

The questionnaires aim to investigate the importance of English to front-desk staff at hotels in An Giang province and the English proficiency requirements for specific tasks. The questionnaires consist of 46 investigated items, besides the participant demographic information and were distributed in four parts: (1) Part I: Personal Information, (2) Part II: The Importance of English, Part III: English Proficiency Requirements for Specific Tasks, and (4) Part IV: Open-ended Questions. The items of the questionnaire were developed based on the competencies stated in the VTOS – Receptionist Occupation. The competences from only levels 1 to 3 were included in the questionnaires, as those in levels 4 and 5 were reserved for the manager levels. The structure of the questionnaire was described as follows:

Part I: Personal Information

Part II: Importance of English

Question 1: Multiple-choice question regarding the perceived importance of English.

Question 2: Ranking question on the importance of English language skills.

Question 3: Multiple-choice question assessing the extent to which English meets the actual job requirements.

Part III: English Proficiency Requirements for Specific Job Tasks

A 6-point Likert-scale checklist of 39 typical receptionist tasks requiring participants to indicate the required level of English proficiency for each task.

Part IV: Open-ended Questions

Question 1: Short-answer question on which tasks require the highest level of English proficiency.

Question 2: Short-answer question on confidence in English proficiency to meet job demands.

Question 3: Short-answer question on difficulties encountered when using English at work.

Question 4: Short-answer question on skills and knowledge students need to equip themselves with to work as a hotel receptionist.

3.2.2. Qualitative Data Collection Tool

The semi-structured interviews served to explore the receptionists' perspectives on the research issues insightfully. The interview data were also used for triangulating the responses from the questionnaires. The interviews comprised eight questions, including questions 1 to 4 that addressed the importance of English skills for receptionists, question 5 investigated the current English proficiency of the staff, and questions 6 to 7 that focused on the expectations of the labor market for receptionists. Detailed interview questions were presented in Appendix VI.

3.3. Data Collection Tool Reliability

The data collection tools were validated and approved by An Giang University's scientific research council with reference number 24.02.NNG. Then, to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated. The overall reliability coefficient for the scale measured was .976, indicating high internal consistency. All alpha values exceeded the acceptable threshold of .70 (Nunan, 1992), confirming questionnaire reliability.

Table 2. Research Instrument Reliability

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	82	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	0.0
	Total	82	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	
.977	.976	43	

3.4. Research Site and Research Sampling

An Giang province in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, has 100 accommodations certified for serving tourists, of which 68 are officially graded, including two four-star hotels, seven three-star hotels, ten two-star hotels, 21 one-star hotels, and 29 establishments that meet the minimum standards for physical facilities and tourism services. However, the specific number of staff working as receptionists was not currently updated.

The convenience research sampling method was employed to maintain data accessibility, while the purposive sampling method was employed to ensure data diversity across different hotel segments. As a result, 82 questionnaire responses were collected from receptionists of 26 one- to four-star hotels, and eight semi-structured interviews with receptionists across the hotel segments were conducted (e.g., 1 from a two-star hotel, 4 from three-star hotels, and 3 from four-star hotels) to ensure data from multiple sources and situations.

3.5. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed, employing normality test, descriptive statistics, and one-way ANOVA to compare English level requirements across the hotels. Besides, effect sizes were also calculated to indicate the magnitude of differences.

Qualitative analysis was conducted employing content analysis steps of Creswell and Creswell (2018) to analyze the qualitative data, including transcribing and translating raw data, reading through the data and marking key words, coding the data, and grouping them according to research objectives. To preserve the participants' confidentiality, the interviewees were assigned pseudonyms, denoted by the letter 'S' followed by a number in square brackets (e.g., [S1], [S2]).

4. Results

In this section, the research results are presented according to the research issues, based on two datasets: questionnaire responses and interviews. The data were triangulated to delve into the research issues in greater depth.

Before analyzing quantitative data, a normality test was conducted. Consequently, the skewness value ranged from -0.481 to 0.142, and the kurtosis values ranged from -0.826 to 1.163, indicating that the quantitative data obtained a normal distribution (Hair et al., 2022). Details of the normality test were presented in Appendix IV.

4.1. Demographic Information

The study involved 82 front office staff working across four hotel segments, from one star to four stars. Females made up the majority of respondents (64.6%), followed by males (31.7%), and 3.7% preferring not to say. Most participants were young adults, with 43.9% between 18 and 25 and 39.0% between 26 and 35. It is noted that, despite the similarity in age distributions across hotel segments, the older staff were more prevalent in the four-star segment.

Regarding professional experience, the group of participants with 1–5 years of experience accounted for the largest proportion (35.4%), followed by the 6–10 year group with 26.8%, the less than 1 year group with 22%, and the over 10 years group with 15.9%. Noticeably, participants from the 4-star hotel were reported to have longer tenure, which indicated a possible relationship between employee retention and hotel grades.

Table 3. Participants' Demographic Profile

Gender		Age				Experiences					
Male	Female	Prefer not to say	From 18 to 25	From 26 to 35	From 36 to 45	Over 45	Under 1 year	From 1 to 5	From 6 to 10	Over 10	
N	26	53	3	36	32	12	2	18	29	22	13
%	31.7	64.6	3.7	43.9	39.0	14.6	2.4	22.0	35.4	26.8	15.9

4.2. Educational Background and English Proficiency

The majority of staff hold a university degree (70.7%), followed by a college degree (12.2%). It is noticeable that 8.5% of the participants held postgraduate qualifications, which were more prevalent in 3-star and 4-star hotels, while secondary, high school, and vocational-level qualifications were more common in 1-star and 2-star hotels.

Table 4. Educational Background of Participants by Hotel Segments

		Educational background						Total
		College	University	Master	Vocational school	Secondary school	High school	
Hotel segment of work	1 star	2	6	0	0	0	0	8
	2 stars	1	7	1	3	1	3	16
	3stars	2	34	3	0	0	0	39
	4stars	5	11	3	0	0	0	19
Total		10	58	7	3	1	3	82
Percentage		12.2	70.7	8.5	3.7	1.2	3.7	100

The receptionists obtained English proficiency certificates, ranging from A1 – C2. It was revealed that intermediate English proficiency was dominant (B1: 51.2%, B2: 20.7%), while a small scale was reported for lower levels (A1: 9.8%, A2: 4.9%). Notably, only 8.5% of respondents possessed advanced proficiency (C1 or C2), with higher English levels more commonly found among staff in 3-star and 4-star hotels (B2+).

Table 5. Staff English proficiency

		Staff English proficiency							Total
		A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2	Bachelor's in English	
Hotel segment of work	1 star	2	1	5	0	0	0	0	8
	2 stars	3	3	9	1	0	0	0	16
	3stars	3	0	25	6	2	0	2	39
	4stars	0	0	3	9	4	1	2	19
Total		8	4	42	17	6	1	4	82
Percentage		9.8	4.9	51.2	20.7	7.3	1.2	4.9	100

4.3. The Importance of English

English was perceived as a critical requirement as two-thirds of the responses (67.1%) considered it very important, while 32.9% labeled it important. It was noted that the higher the hotel segment, the more respondents rated English as very important, indicating varying expectations for English proficiency depending on the hotel's clientele.

Table 6. Perceived Importance of English by Hotel Segments

		The importance of English		
		Important	Very important	Total
Hotel segment of work	1 star	4	4	8
	2 stars	7	9	16
	3 stars	11	28	39
	4 stars	5	14	19
Total		27	55	82
Percentage		32.9	67.1	100.0

The interview findings consistently affirmed the essential role of English for front-desk staff, highlighting its importance for both daily task performance and long-term career development. Details about the interviews are presented in the following excerpts.

For job performance

In my opinion, English is a crucial requirement for front-desk tasks, as at my hotel, the front-desk staff interact primarily with foreigners, with approximately 70% being foreigners and 30% being Vietnamese. In addition, we need to use English for communication and all paperwork and documents; thus, English is very important. [S2]

A hotel is a four-star establishment with international credit, so English is crucial for all departments, especially the front desk staff. The reason why English is so important is that international guests constitute 70% Moreover, due to the 4-star international credit, all of the procedures and operation systems are in English; thus, we have to use English a lot. [S4]

English is an essential part of my job as we need to use it every day, from official tasks to guest interaction. We contact international guests every day. Most of the emails are also written in English, so I believe English is crucial for working in this sector. You cannot work well without English. [S6]

For career development

In my opinion, English is really important at A Hotel. With approximately 18 years of working experience, no heads of departments with limited or no English competence were appointed. Therefore, normal employees must be proficient in English if they want to advance in their careers, as all manager-level tasks, such as meetings and discussions, within the hotel system are conducted in English. Thus, the managers' English proficiency has to be high to meet the working demands. [S4]

I would also like to share one example about Mr. T. He used to be the Head of the Reception Department, and now he is the Director of A and B hotels. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in English, which is advantageous for him. He also meets customers in English, and having good English communication skills to talk to customers benefits a lot for his work and career advancement. [S7]

In my opinion, English proficiency significantly influences career development because the higher positions we hold, the more English proficiency we are required to obtain. [S5]

Yes, I think so. When I was promoted to be a front office supervisor, my boss told me that front-desk staff obtaining higher levels of English proficiency would have more priority and easier career advancement, compared to those with lower levels of English proficiency. [S8]

4.4. The English Skills Used Frequency

Regarding the most frequently used skill, questionnaire respondents reported using listening skills ($M = 3.46$) and speaking skills ($M = 3.04$) considerably more than reading skills ($M = 1.98$) and writing skills ($M = 1.54$). Notably, the frequency of listening and speaking usage was recorded to increase with hotel star levels, indicating higher demands for oral communication. In 3-star and 4-star hotels, the majority of staff claimed the highest usage level for listening skills, compared to just less than half in 1-star hotels.

According to ANOVA results, there were no significant differences in using listening skills across the staff of hotel segments ($F = 2.070$, $p = .111$, $\eta^2 = .074$), while speaking skills revealed marginal differences ($F = 2.699$, $p = .051$, $\eta^2 = .094$), indicating higher demand for oral skills in higher-grade hotels. Similarly, reading skills ($F = 2.552$, $p = .062$, $\eta^2 = .089$) and writing skills ($F = 1.286$, $p = .285$, $\eta^2 = .047$) also showed no considerable variance, also suggesting slightly more use in higher-grade hotels.

Table 7. Frequency of English Skills Used by Hotel Segments

English skills	Level of Frequency 4-Most to 1-Least	Hotel segment of work				Total
		1 star	2 stars	3 stars	4 stars	
Listening	1	1	2	1	0	4
	2	2	1	1	2	6
	3	2	2	9	7	20
	4	3	11	28	10	52
Total		8	16	39	19	82
Speaking	1	1	1	1	1	4
	2	1	5	2	1	9
	3	4	9	27	9	49
	4	2	1	9	8	20
Total		8	16	39	19	82
Reading						

	2	5	7	25	11	48
	3	2	4	3	2	11
	4	1	1	0	1	3
Total		8	16	39	19	82
Writing	1	6	9	26	13	54
	2	0	3	11	5	19
	3	0	1	0	1	2
	4	2	3	2	0	7
Total		8	16	39	19	82

ANOVA							
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta-squared
Listening	Between Groups	4.159	3	1.386	2.070	.111	.074
	Within Groups	52.231	78	.670			
	Total	56.390	81				
Speaking	Between Groups	4.222	3	1.407	2.699	.051	.094
	Within Groups	40.668	78	.521			
	Total	44.890	81				
Reading	Between Groups	3.834	3	1.278	2.552	.062	.089
	Within Groups	39.056	78	.501			
	Total	42.890	81				
Writing	Between Groups	3.129	3	1.043	1.286	.285	.047
	Within Groups	63.261	78	.811			
	Total	66.390	81				

The responses from the interviews about the frequently used and important English skills were aligned with the questionnaire findings. The details are presented in the following excerpts.

Listening and speaking skills are the most important ones because we have to understand and meet the customers' requests. Furthermore, listening and speaking skills account for 80% of a front-desk shift.
[S5]

In my opinion, listening comprehension is the most important skill for front-desk staff because we can meet the guests' demands only when listening and comprehending them. [S8]

For receptionists, I think listening and speaking skills are equally important. They are necessary because when foreign guests come, they will talk directly to us, and we will introduce our services to them. Thus, these two skills are the most important. Additionally, we have some procedures that must be conducted in English. For example, we often need to write emails in English; hence, writing and reading skills are also important, but the most important skills are listening and speaking. [S7]

For me, listening and understanding the information that the customer conveys is the most important. Regarding speaking skills, it is okay for me to use some simple words, but foreigners still can understand. [S3]

4.5. English Proficiency Required for Specific Tasks

Regarding the findings from the questionnaires, front office staff self-rated English proficiency required to effectively perform across 39 professional tasks with the 6-point Likert scale from 0 to 5 based on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Proficiency Scale. Overall, most of the tasks required a high level of English proficiency ($M \geq 3$) (See Appendix IV). The English proficiency requirements for front-desk staff to perform well in their careers were presented in four groups of competencies, as follows.

Guest Interaction-Related Tasks

English was indispensable to effectively conduct guest interaction-related tasks, which comprised the core communicative tasks of receptionists, with an average mean of 3.27. Specifically, competencies, such as Receive and resolve complaints ($M = 3.40$), Promote and sell products and services ($M = 3.32$), and Provide concierge services ($M = 3.30$) were reported to be reliant on effective spoken and interpersonal English proficiency. These tasks involved explaining hotel services and facilities, giving directions, dealing with inquiries, and upselling the services, in which fluent and polite English was highly required. Besides, the tasks, including Provide guest services ($M = 3.27$), Provide check in and registration services ($M = 3.22$), and Provide checkout services ($M = 3.24$), also suggested good competence in both speaking skills and listening skills since the front-desk staff must explain the procedures, answer the questions, and build rapport with guests.

IT and Administrative Tasks

With an average mean of 3.15, IT and Administrative competencies required moderate to high English proficiency, which was related to functional and technical language, particularly in written form. Tasks like Use property management systems ($M = 3.29$), Provide telephone and IT services ($M = 3.29$), Apply information and communication technology knowledge ($M = 3.22$), and Operate an online reservation system ($M = 3.17$) demand a good command of digital interfaces commonly in English and technical vocabulary, hence, good reading comprehension skills. In addition, Complete routine administrative tasks ($M = 3.15$), Maintain document filing and retrieval systems ($M = 3.02$), Process financial transactions ($M = 3.21$), and prepare business documents in English ($M = 3.05$) explicitly required strong written English skills, such as emails, reports, and forms.

Supervision and Teamwork Tasks

Supervision and Teamwork Tasks, with an average mean of 3.14, reflected a range of tasks requiring interpersonal and managerial communication, especially in formal or team contexts. Prepare and present reports ($M = 3.20$), Plan, manage, and conduct meetings ($M = 2.93$), and Deliver a group training session ($M = 3.16$) required a good command of both spoken and written English, particularly for presenting information clearly and facilitating group discussions. Tasks including Quality Assurance work in your team ($M = 3.24$), Provide on-the-job coaching ($M = 3.15$), and Conduct a staff performance review ($M = 3.07$) involve providing training, giving instructions, and offering

feedback. Those activities were reliant on clarity, tone, interpersonal communication skills, and professional performance in English.

Safety and Legal Compliance Tasks:

Safety and Legal Compliance Tasks revealed an average mean of 3.19, but the English proficiency demands varied significantly based on the task's nature. High English proficiency was required for Apply responsible tourism principles ($M = 4.00$) and Maintain industry knowledge ($M = 3.28$), as these tasks involved understanding national and global policies, reading industry updates, and communicating regulations, which were often available in English. Moderate English Proficiency was required for responding to emergencies ($M = 3.06$), dealing with intoxicated and unauthorized persons ($M = 3.05$), and providing safety and security ($M = 3.06$), which involved clarifying instructions, understanding protocols, and reporting incidents where miscommunication could lead to serious consequences. Lower English proficiency was likely adequate for Provide basic first aid ($M = 2.77$), as it focused more on actions than communication, despite the necessity of basic vocabulary for guiding the guests.

Regarding the responses from the interviews, the interviewees also shared the same opinions on the high English proficiency requirements for tasks related to guest interactions. Among these tasks, taking reservations via telephone was reported to require the highest English proficiency. As it was not a face-to-face interaction, the staff found it challenging to listen, answer inquiries, and take note of the information. It was also hard because they could not see the guests' facial expressions and mouth shapes. Other guest-interaction tasks also required high English competence, including dealing with guest inquiries or receiving and resolving complaints. Some of them claimed the difficulties deriving from the poor connections or the guests' accents in English. As a result, without high English proficiency, the staff would miss or mess up the information. Besides, several interviewees emphasized that email-based reservations required the highest levels of English proficiency because most written forms were related to important official documents like contracts, booking details, booking confirmations, special requests, or prices. Therefore, the staff had to be concise and precise.

The highest English level is required for the reservation-taking staff, especially when handling phone calls. If our English is not good or fluent, we will miss or take the wrong information. Besides, we also have to reply to the guests via email in English. Customer service staff also need to respond to guests' feedback in English. [S4]

I think taking reservations via phone calls is the most difficult and requires the highest English competence. If I talk to the guests in person, at least, I can see their mouth shape to guess or understand what they are conveying. On the contrary, when I talk on the phone, the poor sound and the guests' accents make it hard to catch the information. [S6]

In my opinion, reservation taking via email requires the highest English proficiency because mistakes in speech can be corrected more easily than those in writing. Mistakes in official written documents are very serious. [S5]

I think taking reservations via email is really important and requires the highest English proficiency. Most of the tourism companies send emails with booking details in English, for example, dates, lengths, notes, etc. We have to read carefully and confirm the details. Some of the guests have special requests about the room floors, views, or food, so we have to take note clearly for further arrangements. [S2]

Between-Group Analysis (ANOVA)

To further understand how English proficiency demands varied across the hotel segments, the ANOVA analysis was employed to identify several statistically significant differences in task performance. Notably, Operate an online reservation system ($F = 3.234$, $p = .027$, $\eta^2 = .111$), Provide telephone and IT services ($F = 3.397$, $p = .022$, $\eta^2 = .116$), and Use property management system ($F = 2.792$, $p = .046$, $\eta^2 = .097$) all showed significant variation, with higher requirements in 4-star hotels.

Besides, supervisory and administrative competencies, such as Monitor front office operations ($F = 6.169$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta^2 = .192$), Conduct a staff performance review ($F = 5.427$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .173$), Provide on-the-job coaching ($F = 3.309$, $p = .024$, $\eta^2 = .113$), and Quality assure work in your team ($F = 3.250$, $p = .026$, $\eta^2 = .111$) also varied significantly, with 4-star hotel staff reporting higher skill requirements. Furthermore, tasks relevant to communication skills like Promote and sell products and services ($F = 5.472$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .174$) and Receive and resolve complaints ($F = 3.938$, $p = .011$, $\eta^2 = .132$) showed strong differences, favoring 4-star hotel staff. In contrast, the other competencies exhibited no significant between-group differences, suggesting that requirements for these competencies were evenly distributed across hotels regardless the segments. Details about the ANOVA analysis were presented in Appendix V.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to explore the English proficiency of hotel receptionists in An Giang Province and determine how well it aligned with the standard requirements of the Vietnam Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism. The research also investigated the levels of English proficiency required to effectively perform the competencies outlined in the VTOS. The findings revealed several major insights, as follows.

First, there was a clear correlation between the hotel star segments and the English proficiency of front-desk staff. Employees at higher hotel segments (3-star and 4-star) consistently demonstrated higher English proficiency level certificates, compared to those at 1-star and 2-star hotels. This difference is derived from the varied customer profiles among the hotels as ‘international guests constitute 70%’ [S2] and [S4], and from the working environments as ‘all of the procedures and operation systems are in English’ [S4]

Secondly, many of them mastered B2 or beyond levels, which are higher than the standards regulated by the Ministry, requiring English proficiency of B1 for 3-star and 4-star hotel staff (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2015). Notably, some of the 2-star and 3-star hotel receptionists obtained a lower level of English proficiency than required, specifically, A1 and A2 levels instead of the minimum B1. This reflected the imbalance of English levels among the hotel front-desk staff. According to the regulation, either these employees might be laid off or these hotels might not be accredited for those segments.

Thirdly, despite obtaining higher English competencies than being required by the Ministry, the hotel staff self-reported gaps in their abilities to deal with non-native accents, respond to complaints and emergencies, or produce formal documents in English. This reflects the reason why the recruitment of hotel receptionists also requires higher proficiency levels than the stated standards (Saigontourist Hospitality and Tourism Vocational School, 2023).

Fourthly, in this study, the dominance of listening and speaking roles among the four English skills reflected the growing demand for high communication competence in customer-facing roles as tourism services diversified and international guests increased. This also confirmed the conclusions of previous studies. Specifically, Do and Cheng (2021) and Pham (2023) reported that these two skills were the most frequently used in real-world hotel tasks in Vietnam. Besides, Kaharuddin et al. (2019), Rahmani and Supardi (2021), and Yamin (2021) indicated that speaking is the most needed skill, while Ratmanida et al. (2020) stated the important role of listening. However, the findings from Yutthapirut (2023) found that reading proficiency among Thai receptionists was the highest, with speaking as the weakest.

Fifthly, certain job tasks, particularly taking reservations via telephone and email, receiving and resolving complaints, and applying responsible tourism principles, required significantly higher levels of English proficiency. These tasks relied not only on general language ability but also on professional

vocabulary, pragmatic competence, and clarity in both spoken and written communication. The inability to operate these tasks accurately could result in guests' dissatisfaction and operational disruption. The sources of difficulties in functioning in these tasks were derived from the different accents and poor connections, reflecting the findings from Al-Jufri et al. (2024) and Pham (2023), who identified technical vocabulary and diverse English accents as persistent barriers in hospitality communication. This study also confirmed the findings on the necessity of reading and writing skills for interacting via written forms and online platforms by Kaharuddin et al. (2019), Moendee et al. (2024), and Ratmanida et al. (2020).

Sixthly, notably, this study explored the importance of the English proficiency level to the career advancement of hotel staff, which was not investigated in previous studies. The English competence obviously impacted the progression of hotel front-desk staff's careers. Specifically, the receptionists with a good command of English have more chances of promotions, compared to those with lower commands and the same competence in professional skills. As interviewee [S8] stated, "When I was promoted to be a front office supervisor, my boss told me that front-desk staff obtaining higher levels of English proficiency would have more priority and easier career advancement, compared to those with lower levels of English proficiency." However, although all interviewees emphasized English as a crucial factor in career advancement, other factors, such as seniority, social networks, or managerial trust, also matter. Therefore, English should not be considered a driver but a necessary condition.

Seventhly, this study possessed some methodological improvements; however, limitations still remained. The strength of this study was to employ the mixed method design, including questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, which therefore addresses the gap of mono-methodology of previous studies with only quantitative or qualitative method (Al-Jufri et al., 2024; Ariyati, 2022; Kaharuddin et al., 2019; Pham, 2023; Rahmani & Supardi, 2021; Ratmanida et al., 2020; Yamin, 2021). Besides, the number of participants (e.g., 82 questionnaire respondents and 8 interviewees) was much enhanced, compared to the small scale of the previous studies, which improved the generalization reliability of this research. Moreover, incorporating governmental occupation standards – VTOS in developing a data collection tool also helped ensure the reliability and validity of the research. However, the unspecified number of receptionists in the research site limited the generalization ability of the research findings. In addition, the number of interviewees, despite being across various hotel segments, was still decent and might be limited in providing multidimensional viewpoints.

Finally, from a pedagogical perspective, this study fulfilled the perspectives of the target situation needs analysis of Brown (2016), Hutchinson and Water (1987), and Woodrow (2018) about multiple sources (e.g., current hotel staff, governmental occupation standards, and governmental Elanguage proficiency requirements) and multiple methodology (e.g., quantitative and qualitative data collection tools). Besides, this study added to the body of literature on task-specific English requirements, which were often overlooked in previous research. While many prior studies acknowledged the importance of English and the four English skills in general communication, this research quantified the levels of proficiency requirements for specific VTOS-outlined competencies. This mirrored the perspectives of ESP teaching and learning, in which English for tourism should be integrated with real-world scenarios and involve more practical and task-based activities to enhance both linguistic and professional competencies for learners (Barron & Arcodia, 2002; Dale & McCarthy, 2006; Simion, 2012). In addition, the current study also supported the course design framework of Brown (2016); Hutchinson and Waters (1987), and Woodrow (2018), in which needs analysis set the foundation and drove the syllabus contents. By identifying the most linguistically demanding tasks, the present research provided an empirical foundation for curriculum designers to tailor more targeted instructional materials.

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the English language proficiency of hotel receptionists in An Giang Province, focusing on how well their English skills aligned with the standards set by the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism and the actual linguistic demands of specific tasks outlined in the VTOS for receptionists. The findings revealed a misalignment between the current English proficiency and actual requirements, especially in lower-segment hotels. While most of the hotel front-desk staff possessed B1 English skills, some of them obtained only A1 or A2 levels. Notably, job tasks, such as taking reservations via phones, resolving guests' complaints, and producing formal emails, often demanded a higher level of competency at B2 or beyond.

Furthermore, listening and speaking emerged as the most essential skills across hotel tiers, with higher segment hotels showing significantly greater usage and expectations. This reflected the growing importance of oral communication in delivering professional guest services, particularly in international contexts. The study not only confirmed findings from previous Vietnamese and international research but also extended the literature by providing a task-based proficiency analysis, highlighting the specific language faced by receptionists in real-world environments. These insights are particularly valuable for designing targeted ESP programs.

In conclusion, this study highlights the gaps between the national standard and authentic workplace English proficiency requirements. It also contributes to building the bridge between the workplace demands and educational training, especially task-specific, pragmatic, and situational usage, which is crucial for improving job performance, career mobility, and the overall competitiveness of the Vietnam tourism workforce in the ASEAN region.

7. Implications for ESP Curriculum Design

Based on the research findings, several recommendations are proposed for ESP curriculum developers, teachers, and educational institutions, as follows.

Firstly, ESP curriculum developers should integrate VTOS competencies into ESP courses, particularly for receptionist roles. Based on the research findings, the course developers should explicitly map the competencies based on levels of necessity, level of English proficiency requirements, or levels of difficulty in aligning with the course duration. The competencies should be translated into classroom modules (e.g., Receive and Process Reservation, Provide Checkout Service, or Receive and Resolve Complaints) with clear learning objectives.

Secondly, the program should integrate real-world tasks, role-plays, and simulations reflective of hotel operations. Specifically, the activities should emphasize oral communication, including listening comprehension and speaking fluency, targeting scenarios such as complaint resolution, guest inquiries, and reservation taking.

Thirdly, the training programs should diversify language input. Specifically, listening tasks should incorporate a wide range of English accents (e.g., Chinese, Indian, Thai, Mexican, European, or American) and intercultural communication strategies to reflect the diversity of international guests' identities. Students should be exposed to authentic hotel documents such as booking forms, contracts, and financial reports.

Fourthly, the educational institutions should collaborate with the hospitality sector to provide teachers and students with exposure to actual working environments, such as the authentic hotel management system and online reservation platforms.

Finally, training institutions should strengthen industry-academic collaboration with local hotels to ensure alignment between training content and real workplace needs, such as regular feedback

from hotel employees. Besides, it also benefits students with internship or on-site training opportunities.

Strengthening English proficiency among hotel front-desk staff is not only a workforce necessity but also an educational responsibility. By integrating VTOS competencies into ESP curricula, fostering collaboration between educational institutions and industry, and enhancing pedagogical methodologies, Vietnam's hospitality education can better equip students with the realities of local and international working environments. Ultimately, this alignment will improve employability, service quality, and the competitiveness of Vietnam's tourism workforce within the ASEAN region and beyond.

Declarations

Funding. This research is funded by An Giang University (AGU), Vietnam National University HoChiMinh City (VNU-HCM) under grant number 24.02.NNG.

Ethical Approval. This research is approved by An Giang University ethics committee with reference number 24.02.NNG

Data Availability Statement. The authors confirm that the data supporting this study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Acknowledgments. The author would like to express her sincere gratitude to the hotel receptionists in An Giang province who participated in this study. The author used EndNote 20 to assist with generating references and ChatGPT to assist with translating interviewees' responses. The author declares that she reviewed, edited, and cross-checked the final output and takes full responsibility for the content of the published article.

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Appendix I.

Description of the Five VTOS Qualification Levels (Adapted from Vietnam Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2015)

VTOS consists of five qualification levels	
Level 5 (Advanced Diploma 5)	Sophisticated, broad, and specialised competence with senior management skills
Technical, creative, conceptual or managerial applications built around competencies of either a broad or specialised base and related to a broader organisational focus.	
Level 4 (Diploma 4)	Specialised competence with managerial skills
Assumes a greater theoretical base and consists of specialised, technical or managerial competencies used to plan, carry out and evaluate work of self and/or team.	
Level 3 (Certificate 3)	Greater technical competence with supervisory skills
More sophisticated technical applications involving competencies requiring increased theoretical knowledge, applied in a non-routine environment and which may involve team leadership and increased responsibility for outcomes.	
Level 2 (Certificate 2)	Broad range of skills in more varied context with more responsibilities
Skilled operator who applies a broad range of competencies within a more varied work context and capable for working in groups, working independently in some cases and taking a significant responsibility for their own work results and products.	
Level 1 (Certificate 1)	Basic, routine skills in a defined context
A base operational qualification that encompasses a range of functions/activities requiring fundamental operational knowledge and limited practical skills in a defined context.	

Appendix II.

Front Office Tasks in VTOS and Qualification Levels (Adapted from Vietnam Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2015)

No	Code	Tasks	Levels	Core	Generic
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			2	3	4	5
1	FOS1.1	Receive and process reservations	.			
2	FOS1.2	Provide check in and registration services	.			
3	FOS1.3	Provide guest services	.			
4	FOS1.4	Provide checkout services	.			
5	FOS1.5	Provide bell boy and porter services	.			
6	FOS2.1	Operate an online reservation system	✓			
7	FOS2.2	Provide telephone and IT services	✓			
8	FOS2.3	Use property management systems	✓			
9	FOS2.4	Provide concierge services	✓			
10	FOS3.1	Conduct a night audit		✓		
11	FOS3.2	Monitor front office operations		✓		
12	HRS3	Conduct a staff performance review		✓		
13	HRS7	Provide on-the-job coaching		✓		
14	HRS8	Deliver a group training session		✓		
15	HRS9	Quality assure work in your team		✓		
16	HRS10	Plan, allocate and monitor work of a team		✓		
17	FMS4	Prepare and analyse financial statements and reports		✓		
18	GAS5	Plan, manage and conduct meetings		✓		
19	FOS4.1	Manage revenue			✓	
20	FOS4.2	Manage front office operations			✓	
21	GAS6	Manage daily operations			✓	
22	FMS1	Prepare budgets			✓	
23	RTS4.8	Apply responsible tourism to accommodation services			✓	
24	HRS1	Identify staff development needs			✓	
25	HRS4	Initiate and follow disciplinary procedures			✓	
26	HRS5	Recruit, select and retain staff			✓	
27	HRS6	Handle staff grievances and resolve problems			✓	
28	HRS11	Implement occupational health and safety practices			✓	
29	CMS1	Manage quality service and customer satisfaction			✓	
30	GAS2	Optimise effective use of technology				✓
31	GAS3	Establish policies and procedures				✓
32	COS1	Use the telephone in the workplace				✓
33	COS2	Work effectively with others				✓
34	COS3	Complete routine administrative tasks				✓
35	COS4	Use english at a basic operational level				✓
36	COS5	Maintain industry knowledge				✓
37	COS6	Provide basic first aid				✓
38	COS7	Provide safety and security				✓
39	COS8	Respond to emergencies				✓

40	COS9	Apply information and communication technology knowledge	✓
41	COS10	Use common business tools and technology	✓
42	GES1	Prepare for work	✓
43	GES2	Receive and resolve complaints	✓
44	GES3	Close down the shift	✓
45	GES4	Process financial transactions	✓
46	GES6	Promote and sell products and services	✓
47	GES7	Maintain document filing and retrieval systems	✓
48	GES9	Develop guest relationships	✓
49	GES10	Prepare and present reports	✓
50	GES12	Apply responsible tourism principles	✓
51	GES13	Monitor facilities and operations to ensure child protection	✓
52	GES15	Deal with intoxicated and unauthorized persons	✓
53	GES16	Prepare business documents in English	✓

Appendix III.

The six-level English Language Proficiency Framework for Vietnam (Adapted from Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, 2014)

Level	General descriptions
Elementary	Level 1 Can understand and use daily structures; simple words meet the requirements of the specific communication needs. Can introduce yourself and others; can respond to information about yourself, such as where you live, relatives/friends, etc. Can communicate simply if the speaker speaks slowly, clearly, and is ready to cooperate.
	Level 2 Can understand simple sentences and common sentence structure related to communication needs at a basic level (topics such as family, yourself, shopping, how to ask for directions, job). Can communicate about simple information, daily themes. Can make a clear and understandable description of yourself, your surroundings, and necessity problems.
	Level 3 Can understand the main ideas of a passage or speech about frequent topics in work, school, free time, etc. Can process most situations that arise when you come to the place where people speak that language. Can write simple passages related to familiar topics of personal interest. Can make a description of experiences, events, dreams, desires, and aspirations, and present brief reasons, explaining opinions and plans.
Intermediate	Level 4 Can understand the main ideas of a complex text on particular and abstract topics, including technical discussions about their own expertise. Can communicate at a fluent, smooth level with native speakers. Can write coherent and detailed texts on various themes and can express opinions and knowledge on matters, and give advantages and disadvantages for distinctive options.
	Level 5 Can understand and identify the implications of long and wide texts. Can express fluently, immediately, without having word retrieval difficulty. Can use language flexibly and effectively for society and work, academic, and professional purposes. Can write clearly, concisely, and detailedly the complex topics. Can demonstrate text organization ability, utilize conjunctions, and linking words.
Advanced	Level 6 Can understand most spoken and written languages easily. Can reference spoken or written sources easily, rearrange information, and present it logically. Can express and distinguish precise words' meanings in complicated situations instantly, fluently, and accurately.

Appendix IV.

Descriptive Statistics for English Proficiency Requirements by Tasks

Tasks	Mean	N	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Error of Mean	Skewness	Kurtosis
Guest interaction-related tasks								
Receive and process reservations	3.2	82	0.999	0	5	0.11	-0.405	0.651
Provide check in and registration services	3.22	82	0.982	0	5	0.108	-0.458	0.914
Provide guest services	3.27	82	0.956	0	5	0.106	-0.481	1.068
Provide checkout services	3.24	82	0.963	0	5	0.106	-0.427	0.940
Provide concierge services	3.21	82	1.097	0	5	0.121	-0.119	-0.639
Provide bell boy and porter services	3.3	82	1.096	1	5	0.121	-0.253	-0.126
Receive and resolve complaints	3.4	82	0.928	2	5	0.102	0.055	-0.826
Promote and sell products and services	3.32	82	1.029	1	5	0.114	0.091	-0.605
Develop guest relationships	3.23	82	0.947	1	5	0.105	0.142	-0.192
Average mean	3.27							
IT and administrative tasks								
Operate an online reservation system	3.17	82	1.04	0	5	0.115	-0.622	1.163
Provide telephone and IT services	3.29	82	1.012	1	5	0.112	-0.109	-0.413
Use property management systems	3.29	82	1.012	0	5	0.112	-0.328	0.614
Monitor front office operations	3.17	82	0.979	1	5	0.108	0.052	-0.627
Complete routine administrative tasks	3.15	82	1.09	0	5	0.12	-0.239	-0.026
Maintain document filing and retrieval systems	3.02	82	0.968	1	5	0.107	0.118	-0.167

Prepare business documents in English	3.05	82	1.053	0	5	0.116	-0.034	0.058
Use the telephone in the workplace	3.2	82	1.059	0	5	0.117	-0.147	0.053
Apply information and communication technology knowledge	3.22	82	0.875	2	5	0.097	0.232	-0.643
Use common business tools and technology	3.22	82	0.917	1	5	0.101	0.235	-0.335
Process financial transactions	3.21	82	1.063	1	5	0.117	0.015	-0.757
Prepare and analyse financial statements and reports	3.01	82	1.272	0	5	0.14	-0.356	-0.055
Prepare for work	3.21	82	1.039	0	5	0.115	-0.227	0.180
Close down the shift	3.21	82	1.039	1	5	0.115	-0.159	-0.287
Conduct a night audit	2.9	82	1.161	0	5	0.128	-0.388	0.491
Average mean	3.15							

Supervision and team work tasks

Plan, allocate and monitor work of a team	3.11	82	1.089	0	5	0.12	-0.223	0.103
Work effectively with others	3.24	82	1.061	1	5	0.117	0.065	-0.623
Plan, manage and conduct meetings	2.93	82	1.174	0	5	0.13	-0.090	-0.107
Prepare and present reports	3.2	82	0.961	1	5	0.106	0.108	-0.394
Conduct a staff performance review	3.07	82	1.052	0	5	0.116	-0.345	0.413
Provide on-the-job coaching	3.15	82	1.177	0	5	0.13	-0.664	0.746
Deliver a group training session	3.16	82	1.071	0	5	0.118	-0.263	-0.263
Quality assure work in your team	3.26	82	1.028	0	5	0.114	-0.258	0.118
Average mean	3.14							

Safety and legal appliance

Maintain industry knowledge	3.28	82	0.933	1	5	0.103	0.060	-0.119
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Provide basic first aid	2.77	82	1.069	0	5	0.118	-0.079	-0.186
Provide safety and security	3.06	82	0.934	1	5	0.103	0.063	-0.244
Respond to emergencies	3.06	82	0.986	0	5	0.109	-0.045	0.183
Apply responsible tourism principles	4	82	1.144	0	5	0.126	-0.913	0.317
Monitor facilities and operations to ensure child protection	3.13	82	1.108	0	5	0.122	-0.439	0.757
Deal with intoxicated and unauthorized persons	3.05	82	1.088	0	5	0.12	-0.217	0.335
Average mean	3.19							

Appendix V.

ANOVA Analysis of English Proficiency Requirements by Tasks

Tasks		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta-squared
Receive and process reservations	Between Groups	4.282	3	1.427	1.454	0.234	.053
	Within Groups	76.596	78	0.982			
	Total	80.878	81				
Provide check in and registration services	Between Groups	3.558	3	1.186	1.242	0.3	.046
	Within Groups	74.491	78	0.955			
	Total	78.049	81				
Provide guest services	Between Groups	4.842	3	1.614	1.818	0.151	.065
	Within Groups	69.256	78	0.888			
	Total	74.098	81				
Provide checkout services	Between Groups	4.342	3	1.447	1.595	0.197	.058
	Within Groups	70.78	78	0.907			
	Total	75.122	81				
Provide bell boy and porter services	Between Groups	4.134	3	1.378	1.152	0.334	.042
	Within Groups	93.342	78	1.197			
	Total	97.476	81				
Operate an online reservation system	Between Groups	9.692	3	3.231	3.234	0.027	.111
	Within Groups	77.918	78	0.999			
	Total	87.61	81				
Provide telephone and IT services	Between Groups	9.589	3	3.196	3.397	0.022	.116
	Within Groups	73.387	78	0.941			
	Total	82.976	81				

Use property management systems	Between Groups	8.047	3	2.682	2.792	0.046	.097
	Within Groups	74.929	78	0.961			
	Total	82.976	81				
Provide concierge services	Between Groups	1.886	3	0.629	0.513	0.674	.019
	Within Groups	95.492	78	1.224			
	Total	97.378	81				
Conduct a night audit	Between Groups	3.634	3	1.211	0.895	0.448	.033
	Within Groups	105.586	78	1.354			
	Total	109.22	81				
Monitor front office operations	Between Groups	14.883	3	4.961	6.169	0.001	.192
	Within Groups	62.727	78	0.804			
	Total	77.61	81				
Conduct a staff performance review	Between Groups	15.465	3	5.155	5.427	0.002	.173
	Within Groups	74.096	78	0.95			
	Total	89.561	81				
Provide on-the-job coaching	Between Groups	12.674	3	4.225	3.309	0.024	.113
	Within Groups	99.57	78	1.277			
	Total	112.244	81				
Deliver a group training session	Between Groups	11.04	3	3.68	3.505	0.019	.119
	Within Groups	81.899	78	1.05			
	Total	92.939	81				
Quality assure work in your team	Between Groups	9.514	3	3.171	3.25	0.026	.111
	Within Groups	76.108	78	0.976			
	Total	85.622	81				
Plan, allocate and monitor work of a team	Between Groups	7.716	3	2.572	2.272	0.087	.080
	Within Groups	88.296	78	1.132			
	Total	96.012	81				
Prepare and analyse financial statements and reports	Between Groups	11.467	3	3.822	2.494	0.066	.088
	Within Groups	119.521	78	1.532			
	Total	130.988	81				
Plan, manage and conduct meetings	Between Groups	10.843	3	3.614	2.799	0.045	.097
	Within Groups	100.718	78	1.291			
	Total	111.561	81				
Use the telephone in the workplace	Between Groups	13.061	3	4.354	4.364	0.007	.144
	Within Groups	77.817	78	0.998			

	Total	90.878	81				
Work effectively with others	Between Groups	8.728	3	2.909	2.754	0.048	
	Within Groups	82.394	78	1.056			.096
	Total	91.122	81				
Complete routine administrative tasks	Between Groups	6.616	3	2.205	1.919	0.133	
	Within Groups	89.628	78	1.149			.069
	Total	96.244	81				
Maintain industry knowledge	Between Groups	5.693	3	1.898	2.282	0.086	
	Within Groups	64.856	78	0.831			.081
	Total	70.549	81				
Provide basic first aid	Between Groups	9.215	3	3.072	2.874	0.042	
	Within Groups	83.382	78	1.069			.100
	Total	92.598	81				
Provide safety and security	Between Groups	5.508	3	1.836	2.197	0.095	
	Within Groups	65.187	78	0.836			.078
	Total	70.695	81				
Respond to emergencies	Between Groups	4.205	3	1.402	1.468	0.23	
	Within Groups	74.491	78	0.955			.053
	Total	78.695	81				
Apply information and communication technology knowledge	Between Groups	5.128	3	1.709	2.342	0.08	
	Within Groups	56.921	78	0.73			.083
	Total	62.049	81				
Use common business tools and technology	Between Groups	3.874	3	1.291	1.57	0.203	
	Within Groups	64.174	78	0.823			.057
	Total	68.049	81				
Prepare for work	Between Groups	6.47	3	2.157	2.076	0.11	
	Within Groups	81.006	78	1.039			.074
	Total	87.476	81				
Receive and resolve complaints	Between Groups	9.171	3	3.057	3.938	0.011	
	Within Groups	60.548	78	0.776			.132
	Total	69.72	81				
Close down the shift	Between Groups	4.889	3	1.63	1.539	0.211	
	Within Groups	82.586	78	1.059			.056
	Total	87.476	81				
Process financial transactions	Between Groups	6.032	3	2.011	1.835	0.148	.066

	Within Groups	85.444	78	1.095		
	Total	91.476	81			
Promote and sell products and services	Between Groups	14.911	3	4.97	5.472	0.002
	Within Groups	70.845	78	0.908		.174
	Total	85.756	81			
Maintain document filing and retrieval systems	Between Groups	5.658	3	1.886	2.093	0.108
	Within Groups	70.293	78	0.901		.074
	Total	75.951	81			
Develop guest relationships	Between Groups	5.367	3	1.789	2.075	0.11
	Within Groups	67.231	78	0.862		.074
	Total	72.598	81			
Prepare and present reports	Between Groups	6.81	3	2.27	2.601	0.058
	Within Groups	68.068	78	0.873		.091
	Total	74.878	81			
Apply responsible tourism principles	Between Groups	4.145	3	1.382	1.058	0.372
	Within Groups	101.855	78	1.306		.039
	Total	106	81			
Monitor facilities and operations to ensure child protection	Between Groups	6.26	3	2.087	1.745	0.165
	Within Groups	93.264	78	1.196		.063
	Total	99.524	81			
Deal with intoxicated and unauthorized persons	Between Groups	4.106	3	1.369	1.164	0.329
	Within Groups	91.699	78	1.176		.043
	Total	95.805	81			
Prepare business documents in English	Between Groups	5.541	3	1.847	1.71	0.172
	Within Groups	84.264	78	1.08		.062
	Total	89.805	81			

Appendix VI:

Interview questions

1. In your opinion, what is the importance of English proficiency for a receptionist?
2. Which English skill (listening, speaking, reading, or writing) is the most critical one for a receptionist? Please explain why.
3. How does English proficiency impact the job performance and career development of a receptionist?
4. Based on your work experience, which task requires the highest level of English proficiency?
5. During your work, which English skill (listening, speaking, reading, or writing) do you find the most challenging to use? Please provide one example.
6. What skills and knowledge should students aspiring to work as receptionists acquire to remain competitive and secure their desired jobs in the current labor market?
7. If an employee has strong English proficiency but limited professional skills, will he/she be able to secure a receptionist position? Please explain why.

