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The case of Wall Street English

Diana da Soledade Vieitas Pinto Fernandes

Internship Report

Masters in Intercultural Studies for Business

Porto – 2018

INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE CONTABILIDADE E ADMINISTRAÇÃO DO PORTO
INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DO PORTO

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presented to Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto to obtain the Master's Degree in Intercultural Studies for Business, under the supervision of Dr. Alexandra Albuquerque

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Resumo

A globalização é um processo que dura há seculos e tem modificado as dinâmicas do mundo em relação a, por exemplo, negócios, pessoas e culturas. O seu impacto tem tido consequências como a expansão internacional das empresas, os fluxos elevados de migração e o incremento da cooperação mundial. Estes exemplos promovem encontros interculturais, particularmente em empresas multinacionais, que agora procuram potenciais colaboradores para lá das fronteiras de países, o que pode criar dilemas, especialmente devido a barreiras linguísticas e culturais. Contudo, o uso da língua inglesa como uma ferramenta de comunicação intercultural tem sido uma solução amplamente usada, sendo, por muitos, considerada uma "língua global" (Crystal, D. 2003) – uma língua que tem um *status* não-oficial a nível internacional e que é favorável em contraste com outras línguas quando barreiras de comunicação precisam de uma solução.

A necessidade de aprender Inglês tem, também por isso, vindo a crescer, sobretudo através de escolas e cursos de formação.

Wall Street English, criada nos anos setenta do século XX, é uma das empresas que contribui para o crescimento do número de falantes do inglês, em Portugal e no mundo, daí ter sido escolhida como a empresa de acolhimento do meu estágio curricular.

Este relatório dará, por isso, enfoque às atividades por mim desenvolvidas durante os seis meses de estágio na Wall Street English, ao perfil da organização e à importância da língua inglesa na sociedade global.

Abstract

Globalization is a centuries-long process that has shaped the world's dynamic forces regarding, as examples, business, people, and culture. Its impact has had consequences such as companies' international expansion, high flows of migration, and a vivid inclination to worldwide cooperation. These three examples by themselves have promoted intercultural encounters, particularly in multinational companies, which now seek potential collaborators beyond countries' frontiers, which can lead to dilemmas, especially due to linguistic and cultural barriers. Yet, the use of English as an intercultural communication tool is being fairly used solution, being, by many, considered a "global language" (Crystal, D. 2003) – a language that has an unofficial status at an international level and which is favored against others when communication barriers need a solution.

The need to learn English has, therefore, been growing, mostly through schools and training courses.

Wall Street English, created in the seventies, is one of the companies responsible for the growth of English speakers, not only in Portugal, but also in the world. Thus, it was the host company for my curriculum internship. This report will focus on the activities developed by me throughout the six-month internship at Wall Street English regarding the organization's profile and the importance of the English language in the global society.

Key words

Globalization – English language –- Global English – Wall Street English – Internship – English Learning

"E, se de alguma coisa estamos certos, é que partiremos sabendo que seremos sempre mais do que o que nos quiseram fazer ser."

Unknown Author

Acknowledgments

To my family who has always supported me in my decisions and allowed me to grow with the freedom to choose who I wanted to be.

To those who have walked side by side with me in this adventure and, with me, have given a new meaning to the colors that a rainbow can have.

To the WSE team who welcomed me into their school and helped me grow as a professional. Thank you for everything.

To ISCAP and the Masters in *Intercultural Studies for Business*.

To professor Alexandra Albuquerque for her guidance, patience and honesty.

To Filipa. These past five years would not have the same meaning without you. Thank you for all the adventures, all the cooking, all the pillow talks, but, above all, thank you for the friendship we have.

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List of Abbreviations

NEST – Native English-speaking teachers

NNEST – Non-native English-speaking teachers

ISCAP – Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto

UK – United Kingdom

USA – United States of America

WSE – Wall Street English

Introduction

The Master's in Intercultural Studies for Business at ISCAP works on contemporary issues that provide insight on how the world now operates. It also focuses on subjects such as soft skills, the importance of the English language, and the need to study interculturalism. Therefore, choosing Wall Street English as the company to do my internship at was a clear step forward as it could provide me with an insight of a company born out of a global consequence; that is, a company whose expansion was only possible because of globalization and the new needs that brought to society.

This report will describe not only my six-month internship in one of the subsidiaries of Wall Street English but will also try to shed some light on the impact of globalization in societies and approach the rise of the English language as an international communication tool and a facilitator in intercultural encounters.

Wall Street English, as later will be thoroughly explained, is an almost fifty years old company which works as an English school for adult learners found in twenty-eight countries. In Portugal, it counts with thirty-five centers spread across the country.

As an intern at Wall Street English, I was part of an intercultural working environment and had to deal directly with adults looking for English courses as they felt the need to learn this specific second language for various personal reasons.

1.1. Objectives

This report has the following objectives:

- To be a conclusive step for the Masters in *Intercultural Studies for Business;*
- To describe the internship experience at Wall Street English;
- To analyze *in loco* the importance of English in the global world;
- To analyze how intercultural work environments are a reality in global businesses;
- To analyze how Native and Non-native English-speaking teachers can be used as a business strategy;

1.2. Report structure

This report is divided into three main parts:

- a theory-based part about globalization and its consequences on the world such as intercultural working environments and the rise of English language as the world's most spoken language. In this part, we will also see how intercultural communication as risen due to the influence of intercultural working environments in many international companies.

- a part dedicated to the hosting company, Wall Street English. First, a general overview of the historical and contemporary backgrounds of the company is drawn. Then, the chapter is divided into two subsections: the Wall Street English as an English school for adult learners, and the Wall Street English as a business, The first subsection explains how the company operates regarding its school model, while in the second subsection there will be a description of how the company works in its sales department.

The last part of this chapter presents a brief portrayal of the Wall Street English's contemporary situation.

- the last main part of this report in focused on the internship: on my role as a 'customer manager', on my involvement in the center's activities, namely by creating a 'Game Week'. It will also present what I have learned by working in an intercultural environment, and the reasons behind people's decision to start learning English. In this part, a brief research on the center's students' profile and the staff's opinions regarding the contemporary reality of the company, and its main results will also be described.

2. English: a global language

Throughout history, the world has been shaped into many realities, has been involved into new dynamics and has faced several issues. Currently, globalization can be considered the new reality, containing new changes and bringing unknown issues to the spotlight.

This chapter lays a theory-based path to the internship, later discussed in this report, taken at the company Wall Street English. In this chapter, globalization, based on the longevity of the British Empire and the growth of America, shall be considered the biggest cause for the world's new reality, the creator of new challenges and issues. Globalization is a century-long process that has slowly been shaping the world into what today is called a "global village". Therefore, topics involving the new, *intercultural* environments of multinational companies and the rising need to learn the English language, leading to its status as a global language, will be discussed as consequences in this chapter.

2.1. What is a 'global language'?

> A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country. (Crystal, D, 2003, p.3)

The concept of "global language" does not only describe a consequence of the world's changing dynamics but is also an expression that can only be used to describe one specific living language: English.

In 2004, it was estimated that almost one billion people knew English[1] - and no, the number did not represent the total of English native speakers. Furthermore, in 2005, English was the fourth most spoken language in the world, coming after Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, and Spanish. In 2018, the number of non-native English speakers was around 378 million[2].

As quoted above, according to David Crystal, who wrote *English as a global language*, the concept of 'global language' labels a language that has risen so high in the

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[1] St George International Ltd. (n.d.). How Many People In The World Speak English? Retrieved June 7, 2018, from http://www.stgeorges.co.uk/blog/learn-english/how-many-people-in-the-world-speak-english
[2] Source: Statista (2018)

global scale that it is recognized by every country as the *favored* language when communication between people from different nationalities/cultures is needed.

Globalization, as explained in section 2.3., opened countries' frontiers to allow the free movement of people, services and resources (namely in Europe). Consequently, outbound business has exponentially increased, between companies willing to go international and, therefore creating new branches or moving to regions outside their national frontiers. As a consequence, we could see an intercultural mix of people jumping from country to country, looking for better lives, better jobs. Adding to it, the expansion of the technology, the appearance of the Internet, and the boost of American cultural resources – cinema, literature and music -, have brought one language to the tip of everyone's tongue: English. The reasons behind that will be discussed further on in the following subsection.

We have therefore reached a point where English has been unofficially chosen as that 'global language', especially over the previous years, when the search for English courses has increased: as an example, we can have a look at the year of 2017, when, according to the British Council[3], over 1 billion people were learning English. Furthermore, expectations are that English learners will grow over to be 2 billion people in 2020[4]. The estimative for the world's population in that year is of over 7 billion people (more precisely, 7,758,156,792[5]). If we do the math, we can see that predictions show that almost one-third of the world will know English as a foreign language.

2.2. Globalization and the rise of English as the most spoken language in the world

> Globalization therefore, is in fact that different cultures and economic systems around the world are being connected and similar to each other because of the influence of large multinational companies and improved communication. (Okoye, H. N., & Nwaigwe, L. C, 2015, p.18)

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[3] The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organization that works on behalf of the country's cultural relations and educational opportunities. Their website is: http://www.britishcouncil.org
[4] Beare, K. (2017, September 18). How Many People Learn English Around the World? Retrieved June 6, 2018, from https://www.thoughtco.com/how-many-people-learn-english-globally-1210367
[5] Population Pyramids of the World from 1950 to 2100. (n.d.). Retrieved June 15, 2018, from https://www.populationpyramid.net/world/2020/

Globalization[6] is one of those mouthful words which has been buzzing in our ears for the past few decades. We have heard of it, time after time, used it almost as if it were a fashion-word, but most importantly, we have seen its consequences in boosted economies and companies, and in the free movement of people.

In his book *The world is flat* (2006), T.L. Friedman divides Globalization in three big eras. The first goes back to the fifteenth century, with the Discoveries, and lasts until round 1800. The Discoveries' era, which, for example, gave us the commercial bond between Portugal and India, and the discovery of the Americas, brought us one of the largest movements of interaction between distinct cultures, something that nowadays we might know as *intercultural communication*. Intercultural Communication is a term/skill first presented by Edward T. Hall in the 1960s, and it refers to the growing need to communicate, or share information between people with different cultural backgrounds. It is not something unilateral, or just between two cultures apart, since it can be inter-cultures; that is, a mingle of cultures in need to communicate with each other.

Going back to Friedman's theory, he names the first era of globalization "Globalization 1.0", which "was about countries and muscles" (Friedman, T. L, 2006, p. 9). Friedman then talks about the second era, named Globalization 2.0., which lasted from 1800 to roughly 2000, and was only interrupted by the Great Depression and World Wars I and II during the twentieth century. Friedman states, "In Globalization 2.0, the key agent of change, the dynamic force driving global integration, was multinational companies" (Friedman, T. L, 2006, p.9). Within globalization, we would like to highlight the phenomenon of Internationalization, consisting of

1. Commerce: The growing tendency of corporations to operate across national boundaries.
2. Marketing and Computing: An approach to designing products and services that are easily adaptable to different cultures and languages.[7]

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[6] According to Merriam-Webster site, Globalization is "the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets", in https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/globalization; yet, we can also see Moore and Lewis (2009)'s designation of it: "globalization is the spread of free market capitalism to virtually every country in the world".

[7] What is internationalization? definition and meaning. (n.d.). Retrieved July 11, 2018, from http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/internationalization.html

Companies have branched out of their country's frontiers and sought out markets abroad. Additionally, we find many companies designed to serve a worldwide market instead of national or regional ones. Manufactures are no longer producing for the home consumers, but for the world (Okoye, H. N., & Nwaigwe, L. C, 2015, p.19). Societies' needs and/or desires have slowly emerged as one, especially when you have a McDonald's opening in the United States of America, then in Europe, and going further into countries in Asia; or having fashion companies dictating how/what the entire world should be dressing.

These multinational companies are one of the most valuable keys that keep up this globality era we are living in – they are the ones giving us the sensation that we are just one-something: one economy, one society, one culture (with many subcultures thriving underneath).

International organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) also played an important role in this globalization process, as, through their actions, they shape and increased the global influence in societies. An International Organization can be defined, according to the International Law Commission, as an "organization established by a treaty or other instrument governed by international law and possessing its own international legal personality"[8], while a NGO is a non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or *international* level. They serve humanitarian purposes[9].

Finally, Globalization 3.0 starts right at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Quoting Friedman (2006, p.10),

> Globalization 3.0 is shrinking the world from a size small to a size tiny and flattening the playing field at the same time. (….) the dynamic force in Globalization 3.0 – the thing that gives it its unique character – is the newfound power for individuals to collaborate and compete globally.

We are now living in a phase of globalization in which the people are the key to the dynamic changes of the world as they are the most moveable pawns on the board, walking

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[8] International Organizations - Research Guide International Law | Peace Palace Library. (n.d.). Retrieved July 25, 2018, from https://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/research-guides/international-organisations-and-relations/international-organizations/

[9] DEFINITION OF NGOS. (n.d.). Retrieved July 25, 2018, from http://www.ngo.org/ngoinfo/define.html

in and out of open frontiers in search for a job or other experiences. Not only do we have multinational companies coming from various cultural backgrounds doing business with each other, but we also have groups of employees from different *cultures* working together to achieve the same objectives.

The concept of culture has been enlightened and defined by many authors – Hofstede defines it as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede, G., 2010) yet Hans Gullestrup, presented his definition of 'culture' on a much deeper level:

> Culture is the philosophy of life, the values, norms and rules, and actual behavior – as well as the material and immaterial products from these – which are taken over by man from the past generations, and which man wants to bring forward to the next generation – eventually in a different form – and which in one way, or another separate individuals belonging to the culture from individuals belonging to other cultures. (Gullestrup, H, 2002)

If this new phase of globalization is about people, then it is about cultures, and how we must find solutions to deal with cultural diversity happening all around us due to movement of people which has boosted not only migration numbers, but also the tourism industry, for example, but most importantly, changing the culture inside the companies.

Therefore, as we entered Globalization 3.0, the communication tools in companies underwent an inevitable change (Charles, M, 2007, p.261). According to Mirjaliisa Charles, "What is needed is a sharing of language facility. Only language can enable individuals and companies (and countries) to communicate" (Charles, M, 2007, p.261). This is an issue that will increase over the years as globalization opens wider frontiers between countries and the need for one common language is even more pressing, followed by a necessary cultural tolerance among co-workers. For this part of the report, I will pay more attention to what it means to have a "common language" in a working environment.

To have a "common language" in the workplace is to find common ground between all employees when it comes to functional and reasonable communication. It is the act of communicating – sending and receiving abilities/information – that determines how well either individuals, industries, organizations, and even nations can do in both

acquiring and applying knowledge: "The better the communication, the greater likelihood of success." (Martinez, S.)

Yet, when your employees come from different cultural backgrounds – something that has become a reality in many companies, you find yourself with a handful of people whose mother language is not the same. So, how do they communicate? Should they pick the language of the country the company is in? But if it is a multinational company, it is dispersed through several countries. So, must we pick its founder's mother language? But then, when doing business with others, how do we communicate with them if their 'common language' is different from ours?

There has been a growing need to find one common language within the world of business. A language adopted as a common language between speakers with different native languages; a language that helps communication all around the globe. Companies use it on a daily-basis, to work in intercultural teams, and to do business among them. The other solution for this is the traditional practice of employing interpreters and translators, yet it is less appreciated nowadays due to its costs, logistics and time.

The global language is one that can be accepted by all as a fundamental communication tool. People can even go further as to prioritize it in our foreign-language teaching even though it was never set officially as a mandatory language to be learned (Crystal, D, 2003, p.4).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, this is where we stand: as a global village seeking a common ground to communicate with each other. This is where expressions such as **global language**, **improved communication**, and **common language**[10] appeared. We can name it in a hundred different ways, yet, we cannot deny that we are all talking about one single language: English.

Nowadays, English is a required skill, although only around 30% of the world speaks English. We are living in an English era where you see, hear and breathe English almost everywhere: when traveling, English can be your lifesaver-language. As a student, English is mandatory (or becoming) as one of the subjects. If you are a college student,

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[10] Highlighted by the author

most articles you read are written in English. And if you work, you will probably be asked to know English at some point, if not right at the job interview.

This is where we ask: Why English, though?

We can go as back as the sixteenth century when the British Empire first started to spread throughout the world. "The British empire has given way to the empire of English" (Phillipson, R, 2012, p.1). Not only did it cover every continent of the planet, but it also sustained itself for over three centuries before officially changing its name to British Commonwealth – meaning: it is still a thriving force in the world. The migration flows of English-speaking people grew in these centuries as they flew from their home country to North America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Roux, P. W. 2014, p.49). The impact of its use in North America can also explain the influence of English today.

In addition, we cannot forget its involvement in the African continent. The number of colonies that the British government held grew during the first half of the twentieth century as after the two world wars ended, Germany and Italy's colonial territories were distributed among the winner countries. "English became the language of law, education, and most other aspects of public life" (Crystal, D, 2003, p43).

There was also the English's influence on the Asian continent through the British East India Company created in 1600, and then when universities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were first established in 1857, English was the primary medium of instruction (Crystal, D. 2003, p.47-8).

The United Kingdom has been a political and economic force in the world: not only was it the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution – with it came new scientific and technical terms that were added to the English lexicon - but also one of the biggest winners of both world wars, as seen above, and has nowadays one of the most influential creative industries' networks.

Why English, though?

It may also have to do with its people, or the military power of the country (Crystal, D., 1997), which in fact may apply to the growth of Americanization since the 1940s.

But we are now living in a world which wants to appear less military and more intercultural, with free and peaceful movement of services, goods and people. Moreover, we have stepped into a technological age – technology improvements are growing every day right before our eyes -, and the English language has been riding side by side with it. Most research and development have been done in the USA, most of the scientific meetings, databases and papers are in English, and communications technology, alongside document-handling software, are also mostly developed in English (Graddol, D. 2001, p. 33).

Furthermore, English importance as an international communication tool is also seen for being selected as one of the two official languages of the League of Nations – nowadays, United Nations -, or in other big organizations such as the European Union, or the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Crystal, D. 2003, p.87).

We also cannot forget its influence over the media. It was during the nineteenth century that the number of newspapers written in English grew as censorship was happening all over Europe and American newspapers were being produced with increasing speed – there were over 400 daily newspapers in the USA in that century (Crystal, D. 2003, p.91).

Moreover,

Of course English is a global language, they would say. You hear it on television spoken by politicians from all over the world. Wherever you travel, you see English signs and advertisements. Whenever you enter a hotel or restaurant in a foreign city, they will understand English, and there will be an English menu. (Crystal, D. 2003, p.2)

For many of us, English became important without us realizing it; a subtle move, which perhaps has not been that subtle, known as the Americanization phenomenon. This phenomenon has been booming since the end of World War II.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Americanization was a word used to define the activities provided to foreign-born residents of the United States of America that wanted to apply for the American citizenship[11]. Yet, halfway through the century, with the victory of the Allied side in the world wars, the United States of America and

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[11] Britannica, T. E. (2014, July 28). Americanization. Retrieved June 6, 2018 from https://www.britannica.com/topic/Americanization

the cultural euphoria/patriotism around the country caught the world's attention. Even though the United States of America have no official language, English is the most spoken language in the country. We see it every day in American TV shows, cinema, official documents, newspaper, and every kind of means of communication in the USA. The USA started to become a brand to the world – a brand of victory and development. With it, the English language started to slowly rise to a pedestal in a non-stop rhythm till today having the 1990s, and globalization as a strong drive. The link between these two phenomena is, according to us, one strong reason for the increasing demand for English.

Natural- and consequently, the world is adapting to its own needs. English has become a priority without an official title; the demand for English is higher than for any other language. With one quick click on Google using the words "English schools" will get you a range of places within your residence area that offer English: British Council, Wall Street English, Pingu's English Portugal, just to name a few examples[12]. Thus, the following words by David Crystal are read with no surprise:

> English achieves a special role when it is made a priority in a country's foreign-language teaching policy; it has no official status, but it is nonetheless the foreign language which children are most likely to encounter when they arrive in school, and the one most available to adults in further education. Over 100 countries treat English as just a foreign language (…), and in most of these it is now recognized as the chief foreign language being taught in schools, or the one which a country would most like to introduce (if only more trained staff and teaching resources were available). (Crystal, D, 2006, p.423)

The younger generations are certainly more prepared than older generations when it comes to face the world's current reality. We have been teaching kids the importance of knowing a foreign language since they were very young. In Portugal, for example, in the first decade of the 21st century, English started to be mandatory from the 5th to the 9th grade. Currently, children are already getting acquainted with the English language since the 1st grade. -and still, many parents are enrolling their children in private schools of English so that they can get more proficiency. In many other countries, children start their English learning even younger, when they first go to kindergarten.

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[12] These are schools found in Porto, Portugal.

Another scenario, though, is related to the older generations. The people who were already set for one kind of reality and suddenly everything turned upside down and they were asked for something they did not know they needed to have. What can we say about their foreign language skills? Has the world adapted to their needs? The answer is quite simple: it had to. As governments and society in general are working for younger generations to be prepared for the future, there are also efforts to create opportunities for older generations to adjust to the world's changes, namely the demand for the global language: English.

This status of global language has given rise to some criticism and resistance, from several authors, like for instance Robert Phillipson, who speaks of the language imperialism and considers this phenomenon a case of linguicism – that is, "ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language" (Phillipson, R, 2014, p.47).

Also, there has been opposition to the rise of English as the language of intercultural communication, from colonized countries, European parliaments, political enemies of core English-nations (Crystal, D. 2003, p.35), just to name a few. At a certain point, there was an attempt from the French government to banish any presence of foreign languages in French advertising, as an attempt to rise their language and culture's prestige above all (Mora, M. D., 2016). In 2001, the French were spending around one billion dollars a year on a variety of aids and programmers designed to promote their civilization abroad .Yet, it did not seem that it had a big impact on stopping the English language from its influential pedestal nor boosted the French language to a more prestigious place as it ranked in the ninth position among the world's languages[13].

At the same time, there has been a *linguistic borrowing* phenomenon taking place regarding the use of English language in the daily lives of foreigners. What we see nowadays is a blend of languages in informal communication[14], used daily by people. Portuguese, for instance, have incorporated the quick "yeah"-answer from the American

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[13] The triumph of English: A world empire by other means. (2001, December 20). Retrieved December 18, 2018, from https://www.economist.com/christmas-specials/2001/12/20/a-world-empire-by-other-means

[14] According to Business Jargons, Informal Communication is "the casual and unofficial form of communication wherein the information is exchanged spontaneously between two or more persons without conforming the prescribed official rules, processes, system, formalities and chain of command."

English – just to name one of many examples. And there are words connected to social networks which are used by people in its original form (take as example 'Facebook' or 'Instagram').

At a global scale, the feeling is that English is either replacing other languages or displacing them – "displacement occurs when English takes over in specific domains, whether in computers or entertainment" (Phillipson, R, 2014, p. 27). To some, its triumph as a global language means that minority languages are slowly disappearing; "Of the world's 6,000 or 7,000 languages, a couple go out of business each week. Some recent victims from the rich world have included Catawba (Massachusetts), Eyak (Alaska) and Livonian (Latvia)"[15].

As we can conclude, the concept of English as a global language might be one that creates controversy – some believe in its rightness, others perhaps fear it will kill other languages, and there is still the folklore-thinking that this is something temporary – English might be on the rise right now, but it will someday lose its spot to another language. However, that does not seem to be the case, at least in the coming years. We should stop thinking of English, a global language, as something temporary, like a fashion statement, and more like progress and evolution – evolution in the terms that society is learning how to globally cooperate without losing its diversity.

Although Friedman (2006) discusses the first phase of globalization as a phenomenon that begun in the sixteenth century, it was in the twentieth century, as a result of the world wars, that the world started to move towards international cooperation; this results in the direct and constant interaction of varied cultures, that find the need to communicate with each other without linguistic barriers (their different native languages). English, therefore, became the most common international communication tool. The diagram below tries to show this in a simpler way:

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[15] The triumph of English: A world empire by other means. (2001, December 20). Retrieved December 18, 2018, from https://www.economist.com/christmas-specials/2001/12/20/a-world-empire-by-other-means
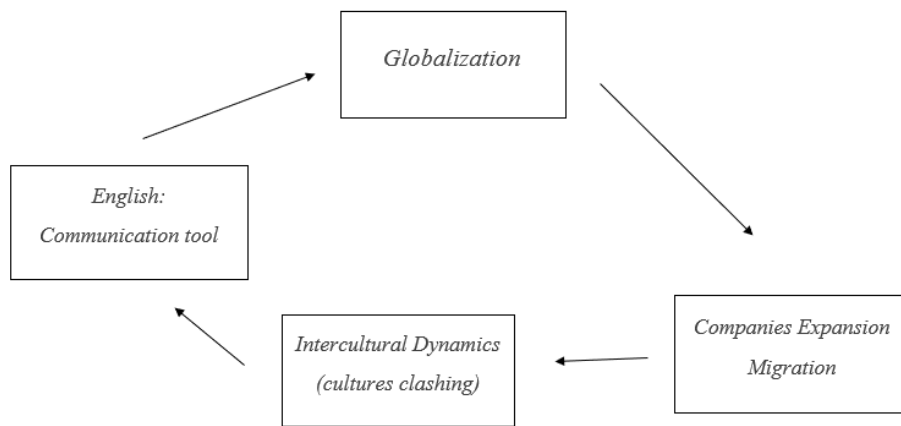
Figure 1 The Globalization Cycle[16]

The diagram above can be read as a cycle. Although, in a first moment, globalization is indeed the big cause, while the following realities are consequences, that can now be discarded. This phenomenon is not a straight line that ends in the use of English as a global language. What we are seeing nowadays is the survival/expansion/development of deeper globalization through the continuous use of English language. The global world is sustaining its existence through this means of communication. Therefore, the number of people speaking English is still rising as swiftly as the demand to know it as a basic skill. Therefore, the search for English courses is also an increasing reality.

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[16] Source: author

3. Wall Street English

This chapter aims to describe the multinational company, Wall Street English, the hosting company of my internship.

3.1. Company's Background

Wall Street English (WSE)[17] is a multinational company whose main purpose is to help the fast learning and, consequently, expansion of the English language. It was first known as Wall Street Institute, but that changed a few years back, mainly due to marketing strategies.

WSE was born in Milan, Italy, in 1972, founded by Lugi Peccenini[18]. Its expansion began in Switzerland, moving afterwards to Spain, where its international headquarters were created in 1990. From then to 1995, Wall Street English went from having 102 centers in 8 countries to spreading to 28 countries and growing to over more than 400 centers[19]. Below, we have the list of those countries:

➢	Angola	➢	Israel	➢	South Korea
➢	Argentina	➢	Italy	➢	Spain
➢	Chile	➢	Malaysia	➢	Switzerland
➢	China	➢	Mexico	➢	Thailand
➢	China - Hong Kong	➢	Morocco	➢	Tunisia
➢	Colombia	➢	Myanmar	➢	Turkey
➢	Czech Republic	➢	Peru	➢	Venezuela
➢	Ecuador	➢	Portugal	➢	Vietnam
➢	France	➢	Russia		
➢	Indonesia	➢	Saudi Arabia		

Figure 2 Countries in which WSE centers are located[20]

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[17] Throughout this report, Wall Street English will also be designed as WSE, an abbreviation used by the company itself.

[18] Lugi Peccenini, born in Italy, in 1939, started his career in sales-based and management jobs. In 1968, he came up with Computex which provided training for programmers operating mainframes. This first idea of business was later adapted by himself into a language learning method.

[19] Sobre Nós. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.wsenglish.pt/internet/wsi/ws-sobre-nos.asp

[20] Source: Wall Street English

The company's fast expansion in the nineties can be explained by the boost of English referred to in the previous chapter and by the reasons why it was first created: to help those who wanted to learn English for professional or personal reasons[21], but did not find the time to attend traditional classes. In this report, 'traditional classes' is a term used to describe face-to-face classes with a teacher, fixed-scheduled – most likely with just one or two class-options for the student during a week[22]. The course plan is already set from the beginning, with each class being dedicated for a specific part of the language-learning process.

Wall Street English's founder created the company after facing some adversities himself. In an interview, he explained that he came up with the idea for Wall Street English when he first decided to learn German. He found it difficult to keep up with the lessons since he was a busy man who could not attend weekly fix-scheduled classes. In an interview, he said,

> When I was the age of 20, I wanted to study German, and I went to a school (…) and it was always
> Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and then I couldn't go the following week because I was travelling,
> so I was missing lessons and then stopped. (Peccenini, L., 2012, July 24)

Wall Street English revolutionized the teaching of the English language by introducing a new method of learning – blended learning. According to the company's founder, blended learning is "a combination of traditional way of teaching and (…) technology" (Peccenini, L., 2012, July 24). On WSE website[23], blended-learning is described as "practical and results-oriented way of learning to communicate effectively in English" and "adaptive mixture of learning modes and approaches [that] enables everyone to succeed". The company also offers a customized curriculum instead of standard ones, mentioning that their courses are "personalized and most importantly, flexible".

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[21] Sobre Nós. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.wsenglish.pt/internet/wsi/ws-sobre-nos.asp
[22] Erstad, W. (n.d.). Online vs. Traditional Education: What You Need to Know. Retrieved from http://www.rasmussen.edu/student-life/blogs/college-life/online-vs-traditional-education-answer-never-expected/
[23] https://www.wallstreetenglish.com/

At this stage, we can start to see the line that divides WSE as a company and as a school. Yet, so that the business model of WSE can be understood, it is necessary to first understand it as an English school.

3.2. Wall Street English as a school for adult learners

Prospective students of the WSE centers are presented with a study cycle. It answers the possible client's unspoken/spoken question: How am I going to study English here?
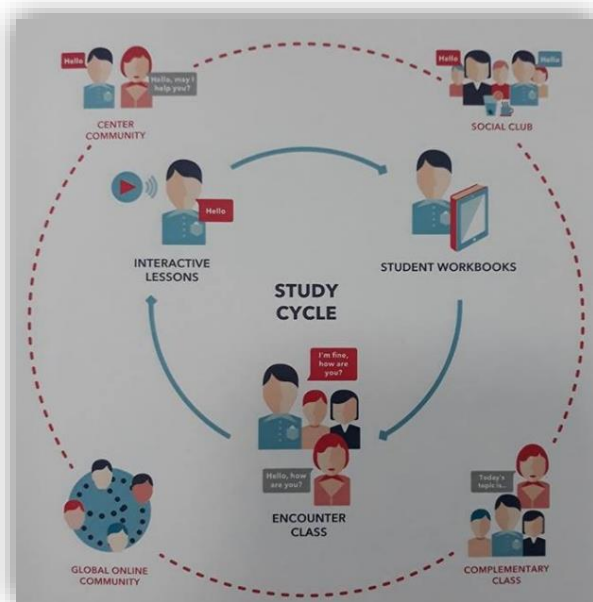
Figure 3 A study cycle at WSE[24]

The idea to have a study cycle was first created by Luigi Peccenini when he first worked in an IT training company. He made the act of studying something more autonomous to the student – "I found the methodology of centering the teaching on the students, not the teachers," he says in an interview (Peccenini, L, 2012, July, 24). Indeed, we are not talking about the traditional idea of what a student is – maybe a high schooler

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[24] Source: Wall Street English

or a college student -, but of adults with family, jobs, little time to attend fixed classes. The student must also take a share of responsibility for their own study time

So, what does a study cycle consist of?

First, there is the online course – shown in Figure 2 as Interactive Lessons. When it was first explained to me, it was said that it was like WSE had its own TV series. Level by level, the students can follow the lives of a small group of characters. Each level focuses on a specific part of the English language such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

Below, we can see a representation of how this works:

```
┌─────────────────┐
│     Level       │
│  (from 1 to 20) │
└─────────────────┘
         │
         ▼
   ┌──────────────┐
   │     Unit     │
   │ (Four per level) │
   └──────────────┘
         │
         ▼
   ┌──────────────┐
   │    Lesson    │
   │ (Three per unit) │
   └──────────────┘
```
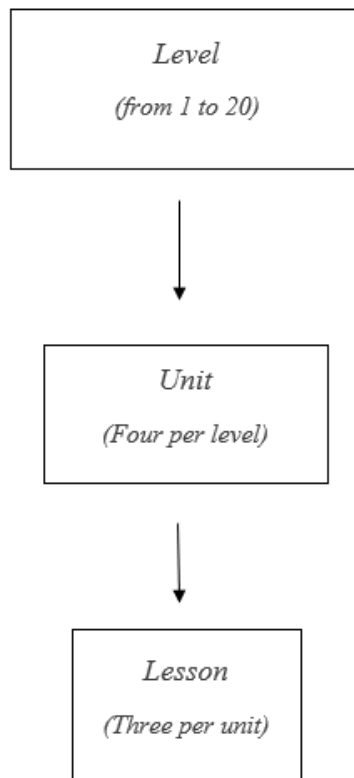
Figure 4 WSE Level Division[25]

Wall Street English has divided the English learning process into twenty levels. Every potential client/student is offered an entry-test that takes up to thirty minutes in order to figure out which level they belong to in this scale.

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[25] Source: Author

The levels are divided into five stages of language proficiency by using the CEFR (the Common European Framework of References for Languages) and its six *Common Reference Levels*: (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). The C2 is still not available in the company's offers.

As seen in the diagram, each level has four units, and each unit has three Interactive Lessons. Each level has a manual which included all these specifics, including three lessons per unit that give continuity to the Multimedia Lessons. To finish a level, a student needs around two to three months. The third month is always given as extra time in case the student falls back at any point. Once again, we are talking about adult learners who either are taking a college degree or working a full-time job. Sometimes unplanned situations happen, and an evaluation or a class must be postponed.

The other option of the learning process at WSE are the Group Classes – shown in Figure 2 as "Complementary Class" and "Social Club". They are the "traditional" face of WSE's blended learning. Students can have one of each per week, although they can be found in the schedule at different hours of the week.

Still, what does each class represent?

Complementary Classes are classes whose line of work – it can be vocabulary, grammar, conversation, and so on - is based on the interactive lessons' content.

Social Clubs are usually divided into three main classes: Conversation, in which the idea is to give a random topic up for discussion, Grammar, in which students can learn and practice grammatical exercises compatible with their level, and Manual Session, in which you can take one hour to work on your Manual exercises while simultaneously have the help of a teacher.

Having both group classes and practicing Multimedia Lessons are important for the 'Encounter'. Encounter is the designated word for the evaluation class that happens every two or three weeks, depending on the student's availability. To be prepared for this evaluation, a student must finish all three Multimedia Lessons of the unit they are in, adding the manual exercises. Although attending group classes is not mandatory so that they can book their Encounter, it is asked that they try to attend at least one or two per week so that they can practice the language within a group of people.

The diagram and all this information are explained during a first presentation with the interested, so that he or she knows what to expect from the school, or during a First Lesson[26].

When coming to a First Lesson in the school, a student gets to know the learning method through a diagram such as the one below.
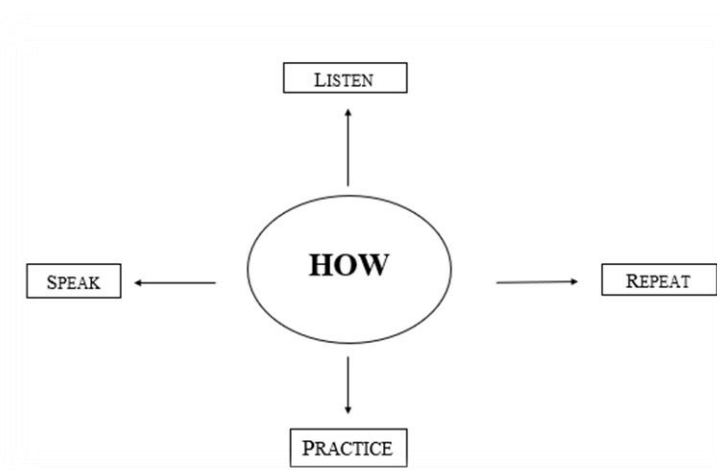
Figure 5 WSE Learning Method[27]

The Wall Street English's learning method is based on how a person would learn their own mother tongue. That is something said in the First Lesson given in the school. The presenter usually asks, "How did you learn how to speak Portuguese?", or "How do babies start talking?", making those questions the first step for the school's method presentation. Like babies, you first must listen. Then, you try and repeat what you've listened. Slowly. Sometimes it may come out wrong, but that's part of the process. After that, you practice. You practice with empty slots that you must fill in, you practice by having an 'online' talk with a character, and in group classes. Finally, you speak. You go to the evaluation class - encounter – and you speak, showing what you have learned so far.

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[26] A First Lesson in Wall Street English is the name given to the first hour spent between a teacher and a new student of the school. It is then that a student gets acquaintance with the school's method of learning.
[27] Source: author

The diagram above is drawn as the process is explained in every single First Lesson given. It must be assured that the student, who is also a client, feels completely at ease with the learning method.

3.3. Wall Street English as a business

At Wall Street English, the line between the terms "student" and "client" is rather thin. The calculations are simple: losing a student means losing a client, which consequently means losing profit for the company. Therefore, the role of the company as a school is of paramount importance.

Wall Street English is a company that sells the learning of the English language as a product. That is why each WSE center has sales consultants. This is the point to focus on this subtopic as the way each center functions, in terms of business, provides the image of the company as a whole.

The consultants are the ones that must sell the English course to possible clients or renew contracts with old students so that they keep studying English with the school.

For the first group of consumers, the possible clients of the company, they are usually divided into two ways: Webleads and Walk-ins. Webleads are people who received a phone call from the company telemarketing department and were offered a promotion (vouchers or fifteen free-days to try out the school), scheduling therefore a hour to go to a nearby WSE center so that they can have the entry test and then talk to a consultant. Walk-ins are those people who have no appointment but wants to know some information regarding the school's offers. Nevertheless, the entry test is also offered to them and, afterwards, a consultant also talks to them.

The consultants' role is to know the "pain" of the possible client and dig around it during a presentation of the product. "Why do you need English?", they always ask, and the answers vary regarding the person.

If the possible client is a teenager, they will probably answer that they need help for school's final exams. If it is a college student, their need for English will fall between future possible or academic demand.

Now, if it is an adult, their answers will depend on their background:

- Are they active workers? If yes, then they need English to progress in their career.
- Are they unemployed? Then, they are looking for skills to better help them find a new job.
- Are they immigrants? Then, they came to Portugal looking for a job and realized that the demand for English has risen here, and therefore they need it as a skill.

If the person interested in the course is already someone in the age of retirement, then their answer will probably be something more family-oriented (Their grandchildren cannot speak any Portuguese, and only English, for example), or even hobby-related (learning English is a way to spend their free time). Travelling abroad and being able to be independent in their trip is also a reason that sometimes comes up when people are asked why they need English.

With this said, we can sum up people's need to learn English in four big groups: "Work requirement", "Future possibilities", "Studies", and "Leisure".

The presentations can take a lot of time from the consultant, yet, it is their obligation to go as deep as they can to try and, one, understand the possible client's need, and, two, sell the course.

Regarding the renewals, the sales department must keep in check which students might be finishing off their courses so that they can approach the student in the best time. Students might finish their courses sooner than the time given in contract, or they might fall behind and have little time to finish all the levels they have bought previously. Therefore, a consultant must deal with each situation as unique, and find the best solution for the student.

The sales department must complete monthly objectives to have a good successful rating inside the company. Promotions and marketing tactics also have an important role in getting contracts. The most used promotion in a WSE center is a fifteen-day trial where Promos, as they are called, get to study online and attend group classes for free.

Also, the company is always improving its method and way of selling. Meetings with the CEO of Portugal and all WSE centers (directors and services managers) often happen throughout the year.

Eventually, the value of Wall Street English relies on each center's productivity.

3.4. WSE's contemporary situation

Starting small, WSE is now a big multinational company found in many locations. Currently, its centers are divided into two big pieces – the franchising centers (aimed at attracting investors) and the corporate centers (connected to the mother-company). Moreover, as a multinational company, it is divided into smaller influential areas. The one to which Portugal belongs to also includes Spain and Angola – the latter has been a recent addition to the WSE family.

As seen before, the company is located in twenty-eight countries. Although there is a standard regulation for all of them, the company must adjust itself to each case regarding its conditions and needs.

When speaking to one of the Operations Team[28] member, I took the chance to ask about the marketing criteria – how does a company with Wall Street English's size use marketing strategies to its benefit? Does it do it at a larger scale, or does it change its criteria locally? She said that the strategies must be adapted, since the realities are completely different.

According to the Operations Team member, in Portugal, it is easier to have a larger marketing since the company has thirty-five centers for a population of ten million. It is easier to do a national marketing strategy for Portugal. However, in Spain, the reality is another. In Madrid, there is only one center, so the marketing must be local. In Angola, it is also completely different. It is considered a privileged school. As she explained, not only is the method different, but also the infra-structure of the school.

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[28] Operations Team member is someone who supervises, oversees the franchising centers at WSE. In this case, the interviewee oversaw Spain, Portugal, and Angola.

Marketing strategies are always coming up. For the company of Wall Street English, the summer months (June, July, and August) have slow tendencies regarding students' interest and high sales' plan. Thus, there is the necessity to find a way to boost a center's productivity during those months. This year, for instance, the WSE marketing team presented a game called #I'maSuperEnglishHero, where a student would get a chance of throwing a dice every time they came to a class.

The game's purpose was not only to keep the students interested in coming to classes, but also to bring in new people. To keep playing the game, the student had to have lives. If you brought friends to try out the school for fifteen days, you would win two lives. If you came to three activities in a month (group classes), you would win one life. If you did two evaluation classes and two CCs (Complementary Classes) in a month, you would win two lives. At the end of the month, the three students with most lives would get prizes such as a smartwatch, a power bank and a powerset.

If a student reached the end of the line – House 70 – they would win an extra level to study English within their contract time. Furthermore, if halfway through the game the student brought a friend to enroll at the school or if the student himself renovated their course, they would also win a 300-euro voucher.

The game was meant to last until half of September, when it was expected the increase of the center's productivity.

Although the marketing strategy in Portugal does not vary according to the region a WSE center is located in, there are clear differences between how a center operates and its location. A big difference I found out is how people like to be treated depending on whether you are in the North of Portugal or the South of Portugal. In the South, everything is more pragmatic, and the relationship between a WSE staff member and a student is stricter and indifferent while up in the North students like to have a closer relation to the WSE staff.

Although the company tries to adapt itself locally, it also tries to keep it as global and simple as possible. A student can walk into a center anywhere in the twenty-eight countries the company is located in and they will find a common line of work. The work methodology, the objectives, and the learning method will be the same. As a teacher said

in an interview, "It doesn't matter which WSE center you walk in, you feel the same. The experience is the same".

Even though the company's presentation was quite extensive, it was, in my perspective, significant to describe and explain in detail how the WSE organizational culture is composed so that the activities described in the following chapter are better contextualized. As it will be presented in the following chapter, the kind of openness and acceptance given by the WSE staff helped developing a more flexible and proactive internship. To be welcomed in a team as an equal meant having my ideas heard and my proposals taken seriously.

4. Internship

This chapter aims to describe a six-month internship at a center of Wall Street English, located in the city of Porto. Therefore, it will focus on topics such as the link between my academic background and the internship, my role in the company as a 'Customer Manager', and the functions I had to perform during the week, my schedule, and the input I brought to namely the activity 'Game Week'.

4.1. Internship at Wall Street English

To finish my master's degree in *Intercultural Studies for Business* at Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto (ISCAP), I decided to do a six-month internship at a company located in Porto, which could be a follow-up of my master's curriculum. I spent a few months sending e-mails and curricula to various international companies located in Porto, one of them being WSE, of course.

As mentioned before, Wall Street English is a multinational company operating in 28 countries, being therefore a good example of a globalization "output". On the one hand, it is a multinational company serving a global purpose and, on the other hand, it also serves the global need to learn English. Furthermore, as a multinational company, it comes with no surprise that it has cultural diversity.

My expectations were, thus, that an internship at Wall Street English could provide me with an insight of a global company, where I could practice and develop my intercultural communication skills, among others.

As a result of my search for a hosting company, I was offered an interview by two different companies. One of them was Wall Street English.

During the interview, in which I met the center director, I was asked a series of questions regarding my academic background, my English skills, and what kind of objectives I had for this internship. I explained what kind of theory and skills the Master's in *Intercultural Studies for Business* had provided me with, and that I had spent nine years of my life studying English and was now taking a course where the English language was a working tool for class participation and written essays. Finally, I explained that my goal was to be part of an international company and, although WSE is a school for adult

learners, I would want to see how the sales department operated. I was therefore given the possibility to become the 'Customer Manager' at this WSE center.

I accepted the position as intern at Wall Street English from January 24th to June 15th, 2018, for five days a week, six hours a day.

4.1. The daily routine of a Customer Manager at WSE

The Customer Manager has an important role in any WSE center, as it was explained to me by the center director, since they are the first face that most people who walk in meet (from students to any potential client). I was to oversee tasks such as supervising the students' study process, booking students' classes, selling manuals, and welcoming in possible clients/students. This group of people were usually divided into two ways: Webleads and Walk-ins (as described in the previous chapter, p.31). In both cases, I would provide them with a little bit of information regarding the school's offers. Afterwards, I would insert them into the school's system as a Prospect and would give them a login and password so that they could try out the entry test and find out what their English level was according to the WSE scale.

In the first week of my internship, I was to observe what other employees did daily, while slowly learning how to perform my tasks. I was also submitted to the entry test of the school so that they would know what my English level was according to their scale (I was a level 17 out of 20). The Services Manager, who is also one of the teachers, gave me a First Lesson, explaining to me everything about the center as if I were a possible student. I was also given a username and password in order to try out Multimedia Lessons and understand how they worked so that I could later help students in need.

After that first week of soft training, a weekly schedule was arranged for me, as shown below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
14:00-15:00	Confirm Encounters (Mon-Thurs)	Confirm Encounters (Tues-Fri)	Confirm Encounters (Wed-Sat)	Confirm Encounters (Thur-Mon)	Confirm Encounters (Fri-Tues)
15:00-16:00	Confirm Enc. Send Messages Encounters	Confirm Enc. Send Messages Encounters	Confirm Enc. Send Messages Encounters	Confirm Enc. Send Messages Encounters	Confirm Enc. Send Messages Encounters
16:00-17:00	FL & SL Check	A2B	FL & SL Check	A2B	FL & SL Check
17:00-18:00	FL & SL Check	A2B	FL & SL Check	A2B	FL & SL Check
18:00-19:00	Reception	Reception	Reception	Reception	Reception
19:00-20:00	Reception	Reception	Reception	Reception	Reception

Figure 6 Customer Manager's schedule[29]

Every day from 14:00 to 16:00 I was to check the students' progress for their evaluation class and call them so that I could personally have a confirmation of their presence in the class. I would also remind them of finishing the Multimedia Lessons, or we would have to rebook the encounter. WSE regulation stated that a student must have everything done at least two days ahead of the encounter. Since we are dealing with adult learners who have complicated schedules, we could also allow them to have one lesson to complete on the day before their evaluation, but only if we confirmed with them that they have intentions of finishing everything. It was very important to make sure that no encounter-hours were left empty since that would be an hour lost in a teacher's service.

During this time, I would also send a message to students whose encounters would be happening in the following week. The messages would be sent as a reminder so that they could start practicing their Multimedia Lessons.

From 16:00 to 18:00, I would have two different tasks, depending on the day of the week. Three times a week I would check the First Level and Second Level students' files. As explained previously, WSE has its own English-knowledge scale, going from 1 to 20. Anyone who enrolls at the center buys a set of levels to complete during a time

given in the contract. Each level must be completed in up to three months and, depending on the date of the contract, each student had a different day to have the level done. Therefore, during the first two levels of a student's course, they must be followed carefully by the WSE team to see if they finished up on time.

For this task, I had to check Excel files (divided into months of the years) where I could check which students were in their First or Second Level and make sure they had Encounters booked within the range of time they had to complete that level. I would also have to call them when they were through with the four units of the level so that they could do the Checkpoint (the last part of the Multimedia Lessons) and have that level completely finished with a grade.

The hours between 18:00 and 20:00 were defined as "Reception"-time for me. Those hours are known in the center as 'rush hours', meaning when the number of students attending classes and encounters is higher.

Although my schedule was planned out to be like this, there were other small tasks I would help others with throughout the day, if needed. I would also be welcoming in any possible clients, who might have or not a scheduled hour to come in and do the center's entry test. Furthermore, I would participate in the monthly meetings with both services and sales departments so that I was aware of the center's projections for the month. At 20:00 I clocked out.

4.2. Game Week

Every month the WSE staff would meet for two hours in what was known as the General Meeting. I participated in all of them, during the internship period, so that I could visualize how both departments worked together to boost the center's activity and good ratings. There were always suggestions to be made and problems to be fixed.

In the General Meeting of May, the director of the center asked us to find ways to boost up the activity in the center and keep the schedule and the center as busy as possible, since the months of summer are usually slow ones.

I took into consideration that four types of classes were offered to the WSE students: Conversation, Complementary Classes, Grammar, and Manual Sessions. All of these classes followed an already established line of work: they were meant to pass on knowledge. Therefore, I tried to aim for a different type of class, which could involve more dynamic and funnier issues, yet still having that knowledge-based value. I knew my target public were adults. These liked to be involved in fun activities (I had already seen it in past activities done in the center), yet they looked at these activities with a goal: what can I learn from this? In the end, my suggestion was to have a Game Week, held in the month of June.

The Game Week was a week which would involve a different kind of thematic class for the students of the center. This class would be divided into four hours in the week: two hours would be for the low level students (L1, L2 and N2), while the other two would be for the high levels (N3, N4, N5 and N6). There would be two classes in the morning and two in the late afternoon so that they could suit every student's schedule.

This is how the Game-classes were scheduled to happen:

Monday 11/06	Tuesday 12/06	Wednesday 13/06
12:00 L1, L2, N2[30]		11:00 N3, N4, N5, N6
19:00 N3, N4, N5, N6[31]	18:00 L1, L2, N2	

Figure 7 Game Week's Schedule[32]

To promote the Game Week, posters around the WSE center were used as well as announcements at the end of the classes, when teachers could talk to students about upcoming activities, and at the reception, where I was and could book them into the activity.

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[30] L1 and L2 represent students that, within the WSE English scale, are in levels 1 and 2. N2 group represent students who are within levels 3 to 5.
[31] N3 group represents students who are within levels 6 to 9. N4 is for students between levels 10 and 13. N5 is for levels 14 to 17. N6 is for the higher levels, from 18 to 20.
[32] Source: the author

Although I was not the host of the games – that role was better left to the teachers who knew the students better inside a classroom and knew how to carry on an one-hour class -, I was entrusted with organizing every detail of it: What were we doing? When were we doing it? How were the games going to be presented? What types of games were we going to display?

As mentioned before, at Wall Street English, students are generally offered four types of group classes. When suddenly there is a Game-class, there are two kinds of reactions in students: they either get very interested and ask to be in that Game-class, or they believe it will not be worth it because they will not learn anything new.

Considering this last reaction, I knew that I had to offer something that could intrigue the students, yet it could not be took out of the ordinary, or far from their comprehension, since that could scare them away from the activity.

So, the games chosen were traditional ones such as *Pop Quiz*, *Charades*, and *Let's Draw*, mixed up with *Solve the Mystery* questions, *Continue the Story*, or a *Who/What am I?*. There was not a precise order to how the games would pop out in the interactive screen[33] as I made them to be random to attract even more the students' attention: if they did not know what to expect, they would be at the edge of their seats, curious to what kind of game they would be playing next.

For the Game presentation, I decided to use the PowerPoint as it is the tool that I am more comfortable with. Moreover, it is also the tool that best works for what I had envisioned for the games.

When I first started to prepare the PowerPoint presentation, I created two different files, one that would be used for the high level students and one for the low level students. The type of questions given to each group would be different regarding their level of comfort with the English language. Yet, the first three slides of both PowerPoint presentations were the same for both groups, as we can see below:
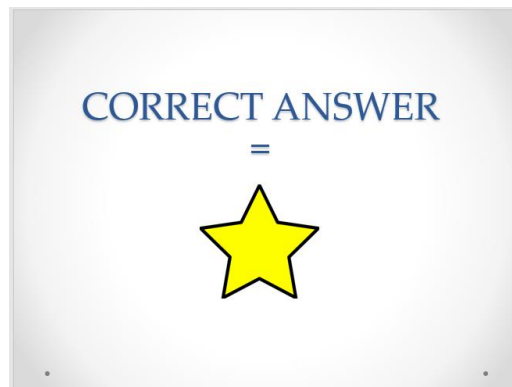
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[33] A Wall Street English center is equipped with various interactive screens used during the classes.

Slide 1

Slide 2

Slide 3

Figure 8: Slides used in Game Week

Slide 1 was the cover for the Game Week. As it was an activity in a WSE center, the company's slogan was used in it – as seen in the top left corner. There is also the title for the activity – Game Week. The images presented in it already gave an idea of what kind of games the participants could expect from the game hour.

For the games, the students were gathered in small groups (therefore, slide 2 says "Team Up!") and each group had a set of paper-signs with letters from A to D to use in the pop quiz questions. For each correct answer, they would win a star (as stated in Slide 3). The idea of giving out stars was to bring out the competitive side in them. It is part of the human nature to desire something more when it becomes a competition; it is their need to win against others which rises inside of them. During one of the Game-classes, I

even had one student saying, "I'm not even competitive, but I really want to win a star", before starting a new round.

Although it was a Game-hour and the core of the idea was to make something dynamic and fun, I also wanted the students to feel like they were learning something. The pop quiz questions, which were all multiple choices, including the True-or-False questions, were of three kinds: cultural knowledge, historic knowledge and English idiomatic expressions.

Here are some examples:

1. What year did Whitney Houston's 'I Will Always Love You' reach number 1 in the US?
   a) *2000*
   b) *1990*
   c) *1981*
   d) *1992*

2. 'Once in a blue ….'
   a) Moon
   b) Sun
   c) River

3. The Romans used to clean and whiten their teeth with urine.
   a) *True*
   b) *False*

The correct answers to the questions above are: d), a), and a).

Every group that got a correct answer would win a star. That is, if all teams in the game got it right, they would all win.

The *Let's Draw* had words connected to the students' English knowledge-range as I had chosen them from their level manual books. For this game, two people from

different groups had to come to the front and draw the same word at the same time in the interactive screen. The first group to guess the correct answer would get a star.

For this game, it was the teacher in charge of the class that would be choosing what to draw within the range of words given in a small bag of cards that had vocabulary such as:

TO DRIVE	TO PROPOSE	OCTUPUS

Figure 9: Let's Draw-Cards used in Game Week[34]

Students had the right to pick another one in case they were not aware what the word meant. In the same class, it was possible to have someone with the English knowledge A1 and A2; it was expected that their vocabulary range would be different.

The *Who/What am I?*-challenge was an individual game, which meant that no star would be won by any group. The idea for this game was to bring more dynamics to the class as, until then, they had been sitting and working in groups. When this game came up, each student would be given a paper glued to their forehead with a word representing who or what they were. They could a famous person (like Freddie Mercury or Barack Obama), or general idea of someone (such as a Mom or a Teacher), an animal (for instance, a cat or a kangaroo), food (as in a Mushroom or a Banana), cities (like Miami), or objects (such as a Washing Machine, Lost Keys, and a Fridge).

For this activity, they had to stand up and walk around the classroom for five minutes, asking other students only yes-or-no questions such as: Am I a person? Am I famous? Can I be found in a kitchen/living-room?

The *Continue the Story* challenge was only available to groups with a higher language level. The idea of this game was to boost the students' creativity as a group.

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[34] The cards presented are an exact copy of those used in the games.

They would be given the first sentence of a possible story and five words that they should include into their short story. We can have a look at the two examples below:
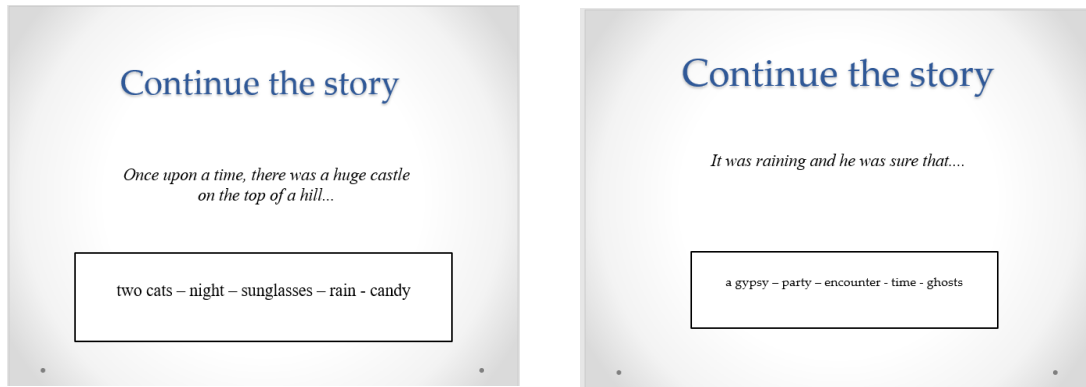

Figure 10: Examples of games used in Game Week

In both cases, the words given to be included in the stories were obviously random so that the groups would have to think together and come up with something funny. They could not change the words to any kind of derivation (for instance, 'rain' turning into 'raining').

The *Solve the Mystery* part was one of the most challenging activities in the Game Week. They acted out as riddles that needed to be solved and the teams that guessed it would win three stars.

For this part, I did some research on the Internet to find some good puzzles for people to guess. I had mysteries such as

A woman is sitting in her hotel room when there is a knock at the door. She opened the door to see a man whom she had never seen before. He said, "Oh I'm sorry, I have made a mistake. I thought this was my room." He then went down the corridor and in the lift. The woman went back into her room and phoned security. What made the woman so suspicious of the man? (Answer: If it were his room, he would have the key)[35]

and

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[35] Source: Riddles.fyi

A doctor and a bus driver are both in love with the same woman, an attractive girl named Sarah. The bus driver had to go on a long bus trip that would last a week. Before he left, he gave Sarah seven apples. Why? (Answer: "An apple a day keeps the doctor away")[36]

The groups would have a couple of minutes to think before writing down an answer and then, telling it to the class.

Both PowerPoint presentations were made so that they could last more than one hour, although the classes were of one hour only. I did this as a precaution move since I could not know if the participants would be completing the activities fast or slowly.

4.3. Game Week's Outcomes

The results from the Game Week-activity were not as good as it was expected regarding students' attendance. Although students seemed interested in having a different class and had been reminded of the activity through a text message, most who had signed in (the average was twenty per class) did not show up. Only less than ten showed up in each class.

Nevertheless, the activity had success among those who indeed participated. The aim I had for the classes was to boost people's interest and knowledge and help them learn interesting facts regarding cultural and historic happenings, or English idiomatic expressions. One student, from the morning class, even said, "I considered not coming since I could sleep in, but this was fun".

Students enjoyed themselves and, afterwards, asked if there were going to be more activities like this one. The idea of having such a week was to increase the activity and interest of the students in the center's offers. This week was the beginning of a month full of different activities, the rest of them being prepared by the English teachers.

What I could conclude from doing this activity is that adult students react to untraditional activities in a different way from children (I have had past experiences with children in tutoring/babysitting jobs): kids get excited about it because it will be

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[36] Source: riddles.tips

something new and fresh; yet, adults, although they seem quite interested, they will only actually feel it was productive once they participate in it.

4.4. Brief analysis of the internship

My internship at Wall Street English was a great experience, taking into consideration what the company offered me as an intern and how I could interlink the tasks with my academic background.

First, the role of a Customer Manager at WSE is important for the company's customer service since the person in that role must create a bond with the students and be someone who they can rely on immediately. Additionally, we must bear in mind that WSE not only receives Portuguese native students, but also immigrants, especially from Brazil, African countries and Spanish speaking countries This diversity can lead to misinterpretations because of cultural or linguistic backgrounds, an awareness that made me develop my intercultural skills throughout the six months of the internship.

In addition, being part of an intercultural team meant to be in constant communication regarding the center's activity, the students, or any kind of improvement that needed to be done. Each person has an important role in the service provided, and throughout those six months, I learned how to work in a team and how important interpersonal relations are for a good work environment.

Furthermore, I was given credit to propose ideas to contribute to the activity plan of the center and had the chance to plan out a month of different activities, as described in the second topic of this chapter, in a quite autonomous way.

The experience of working in customer service also helped me develop a set of soft skills that can be useful in future circumstances. Soft skills are traits connected to our personality which have grown to be a set of valuable skills to have in almost every job. In this work experience, soft skills are a must-have ability that the company demands of its collaborators. The essence of customer service relies on the human empathy traits such as interpersonal relations, communication, friendliness, that we have as part of our personality, or, if lacking them, we can develop.

A WSE staff deals with a broad target public – from young teenagers in school to retired people in their sixties – and therefore must be prepared to deal with each case in its own personal way.

These skills are also valuable in a team-working environment such as the one in WSE. Therefore, developing these skills helped me improving throughout the internship.

5. Analysis of global issues found at WSE

In the following chapter, two issues shall be analyzed regarding the representativeness found at the host WSE center: the reality of intercultural work environments in multinational companies and the issue of Native English speaker teachers versus Non-Native English speaker teachers.

Nowadays, finding intercultural teams at a multinational company comes with no surprise. In the following subsection, that fact shall be analyzed and described with the example of this WSE center.

Then, we could not skip the services department, where the majority of intercultural encounters inside the center take place. Also, the WSE teachers are not all native speakers of English; at WSE Porto they have four different nationalities with different teaching methods.

5.1. Brief introduction to intercultural communication

Geert Hofstede (2010), who has dedicated his life to studying and researching the differences among cultures, has given us six cultural dimensions that can help us tell apart each culture's variances (Hofstede, G, 2010). He names these dimensions *Power Distance*, *Individualism versus Collectivism*, *Masculinity versus Femininity*, *Uncertainty Avoidance*, *Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation* and *Indulgence versus Restraint*, and states which a culture can have a high level or low level of each, and that result might shed some light into understanding how people from the same culture, who live, work, and share a space in society, can behave. Below, there is a brief explanation of each of them:

Power Distance[37] involves the society's way of handling inequality, and how a culture deals with the hierarchical pyramid.

Individualism vs Collectivism goes deep into a society's belief regarding what is more important: that each member takes care of themselves and their direct family or if it believes in the power of the collective, the "we" instead of the "I".

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[37] Emphasis added. It was added to the next dimensions as well.

The **Masculinity vs Femininity** cultural dimension can be put in simpler terms such as 'tough versus tender' cultures. While Masculinity gives emphasis to ambition and differentiated gender roles, Femininity looks for more nurturing behaviors and more fluid gender roles in a culture.

The **Uncertainty Avoidance** relates to how a society handles the ambiguity and uncertainty of the future.

The **Long-Term Orientation vs Short-Term** Normative Orientation dimension handles how a society relies in its traditions and norms, or if they have a more pragmatic approach that encourages thrift from the past.

Finally, there is an **Indulgence vs Restraint** factor, which sees how a society accepts its natural human drives to enjoy life and "have fun", or if it is a society that suppresses those natural instincts and reinforces playing by the book.

With these cultural dimensions, Hofstede has managed to give a sense of *understanding* to what makes a culture different from the others, so that, instead of diving into the *unknown,* people could have some intercultural tool and knowledge before dealing with other cultures.

As said previously, multinational companies now try to serve global needs. Serving these needs can also mean adapting to the local market of a country. A multinational company's subsidiaries are spread outside the headquarter country, taking several cultures under its wings. The situation of most countries nowadays follows this hypothetical idea: a company sets itself in a foreign country. It sends out hiring adverts. People answering those adverts are not only natives of that country, but also immigrants that are trying to make a living in there as well. Therefore, when hiring the best candidates, a company will not be hiring only one culture.

Having an intercultural team can bring both advantages and disadvantages to a company. There are advantages such as an increasing power of creativity, a Melting Pot[38] of ideas, as we are dealing with a diverse team of people whose backgrounds has led them to see the same problem in different perspectives. It also leads to an increase of the range

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[38] According to Cambridge dictionary, Melting Pot is "a place where many different people and ideas exist together, often mixing and producing something new"

of services. "If management gets an in-depth understanding of the culture of a particular race, they can also provide services that would appeal specifically to them."[39]

On the other hand, when having diversity in a work team, disadvantages can appear in the shape of misunderstandings, integration issues, and lack of linguistic knowledge.

Yet, if the team is well-trained and prepared, the odds can go in favor of the advantages. This leads us back to the cross-cultural training. We can first start with the value of *cultural tolerance*, an important issue to be discussed nowadays. Tolerance is the willingness to accept behavior and/or beliefs that are different from our own[40].

In addition, intercultural communication is also an important issue under discussion. It is a soft skill taken into consideration by Edward T. Hall in the sixties (discussed in subsection 2.3.) and is now a helpful asset in any multinational company.

As work environments become multicultural, intercultural communication rises as a solution/skill which can help alleviate the differences between people from different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural communication is a skill involving the ability to communicate and share information between people from differing cultures and social groups. This means that people understand what is unknown to them – they accept that people from another culture have different patterns, thoughts, standards and social morals. [41].

People must be prepared to "work in networks, communicate, share knowledge and learn in teams" (Ala-Louko, 2017), and to be aware that they must keep an open-mind regarding who they might work with.

However, cooperation between different cultures might have barriers based on language, if there are different mother tongues and no common language. As seen before, that common ground is nowadays, almost always, English. English, which has been

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[39] 11 Advantages and Disadvantages of Diversity in the Workplace. (n.d.). Retrieved August 28, 2018, from https://futureofworking.com/11-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-diversity-in-the-workplace/
[40] Definition according to Cambridge Dictionary, taken from the website: https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/tolerance
[41] 2011-2018, (. C. (n.d.). Intercultural Communication Skills. Retrieved September 1, 2018, from https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/intercultural-communication.html

deprived of its culture[42], is now the language of international communication – companies require it as a skill to have, give training to its employees in case they need to improve it.

English as a global language has turned the possibility of successfully working in an intercultural environment[43] into a reality. Yet, it has come with a price: the obligation to know a foreign language. Not all of us are apt to learn a language easily – we all have our strengths and weaknesses, and sometimes learning a foreign language might be a weakness. However, we are all being asked to know, at least, one; English, to be more precise.

Right now, intercultural workplaces are a phenomenon that characterizes the twenty-first century's world. In Marja Katisko's words (2015), "Cultures have mingled with each other as a result of global population movements and factors such as the development of data transfers technology". Cultures in clash with each other on a daily basis as they work together to achieve the same goals. In other words, we talk about cross-cultures management, which usually occurs when intercultural communication is largely involved (Gullestrup, 2002, p. 3). Hans Gullestrup (2002) names three kinds of management in his article, one of them being the "Management of organizations employing people from different cultures"[44], which is the case of Wall Street English.

5.2. WSE as an Intercultural Workplace

To find an intercultural working environment at Wall Street English is no surprise. As a multinational company, located in twenty-eight countries, WSE knows how productive/important a multicultural team can be.

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[42] What we see nowadays is the search for a standard English (Standard English is the "correct" form of English accepted and used in formal speaking and writing) – however, this has been proved to be unsuccessful as any person who learns English as a second language or a foreign language tends to be influenced by the first language they learnt, regarding their way of speaking. (Ritchie, H., 2013) What we are seeing nowadays is a deprivation of culture regarding the English language and its origins – whether is it British, American, Australian, or its African-variations.

[43] An Intercultural Environment is defined by IGI Global as "environment where members of different cultures interact or live together". For this report, I will be focusing on working intercultural environments in the reality of companies where people from different cultures were hired to work together.

[44] The other two managements that Hans Gullestrup speaks of in his article are "management of organizations based in countries with different cultures to one's own" and "management of international organizations."

However, when stating that Wall Street English is an example of an intercultural workplace, it is important to reinforce that it is not the company as a whole that we take as a practical example here[45], but rather the host center of my internship: a WSE center in Porto, in the north of Portugal, whose team was composed of people from Portugal, Canada, South Africa, Russia and Brazil.

Having such a mingle of cultures, expectations regarding cultural barriers or miscommunications could be anticipated by someone who entered such intercultural environment with the status of a trainee. Expectations based on cultural traits given, for instance, by Hofstede with his six cultural dimensions were considered at the beginning of the internship by me.

There were indeed some differences regarding the cultural background of each person. The Portuguese members of the group could be characterized as the most collective people of the group, yet even the most individualist "cultures" – as Canadian – tried their best to work for the team.

The indulgence-factor of Hofstede shows that Portugal and Russia are two restraint cultures while Brazil and Canada are more relaxed. However, when dealing with one or two persons of a cultural, specially outside their culture, you cannot accurately tell if this is right or wrong. Therefore, I could not "prove" Hofstede's theory during my internship, although I studied my lesson and was prepared to deal with more diversity.

This did not come as a surprise, though, since, according to Hofstede himself, "statements about just one culture on the level of "values" do not describe "reality"; such statements are generalisations and they ought to be relative" (Hofstede, G.).

Anyway, and being a student of intercultural studies for business, during my internship, I took the time to talk personally with each staff member and asked them if they thought that having such an intercultural team affected their work environment in any way[46].

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[45] Although the company as a whole could be taken as a great case of intercultural work environment, since throughout the six-month internship, there were plenty of examples of such. All of those examples were simply not investigated or examined in detail, and therefore the author will not be using the company as an example.

[46] There are recorded audios of these conversations, yet they were not transcribed as they were not official interviews.

The Peruvian WSE Operations Team member who I talked to said, "I'm going to be honest: In Portugal, people accept (intercultural encounters) very well. There are little things, like a phrase… But… Portuguese people embrace that well."

The Brazilian teacher explained that she had worked before in other multicultural work environments, but that this experience at WSE was different since there was more diversity. Even among the Portuguese staff, the members of the team came from different cities of the country and there are small differences that could be noticed in the way they worked. Yet, in the end, the Brazilian teacher believes having such multiculturalism can be good. Although there can be some misunderstandings, she admits that they often do not happen in English, but between Brazilian Portuguese and European Portuguese. She mentioned some stereotypes[47], giving the example of how Portuguese from the north of the country are intense and harsh when they communicate, and sometimes very ironic, while the Canadian teacher follows the stereotype of Canadians being extra polite – a stereotype that the Canadian teacher herself agrees with, as well.

When speaking to the Canadian teacher, she explains that she indeed feels that sometimes there is a cultural shock regarding information exchange as people have different approaches on how to deliver a message to another. Regarding working in an intercultural team, she says that there sometimes can be issues regarding cultural traits but remembering that fact can help avoid misunderstandings. She talks about how, for instance, the Russian teacher does not have that Latin culture in her words, as she is very direct and cold, and sometimes can be misleading, especially if someone is not used to that kind of approach.

One of the consultants, who is Portuguese, had an interesting answer; she said that to know if a team can work together or not the culture does not matter, but rather the personality of every individual should be taken into account.

Indeed, the practical case of WSE center is not precise regarding cultural traits of each collaborator, since we were dealing with individuals trying to fit in the corporate culture. That means, and as quoted before from Hofstede, culture manifests itself when found in mass – a sole individual cannot possibly take in the entire weight of their culture. In these

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[47] According to Oxford Dictionary, stereotype is "A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing." They can cover racial, demographics, or political groups, cultures, gender, and even activities.

cases, revelations regarding one's personality – which can in fact be a consequence of a cultural background – would be more intense than a culture itself.

In my opinion, the biggest barrier, however, that one faces when entering such a team is not the culture, but communication itself. As explained above, intercultural communication is an important skill as it bounds people from different cultures into operating together. In the case of Wall Street English, the intercultural team uses the English language as a working tool. Furthermore, since it is an English school for adult learners, having English as a communication tool is expectable.

Although most of the team I work with for six months was Portuguese, the language used daily – inclusive in important staff meetings – is never Portuguese as not all members can speak it reasonably well. Therefore, we use English. Moreover, the image presented to the students is more coherent if the staff tends to use English among themselves. It becomes an example of how English is indeed needed, especially in work-related issues, and an inspiration to them.

At the beginning, it was quite strange to switch to English and a lot of times there was a pause in the middle of a conversation because of missing vocabulary: for instance, one could think of the word in their mother tongue and, although the translation to English was known to them, they simply could not remember it.

Regarding the team's easiness with the language, it is quite interesting to see how, even among Portuguese, the tendency was to speak in English. Of course, since the majority can speak Portuguese fluently, sometimes it is easier to switch languages to the one we are more comfortable with and brings you less frustration.

Concerning the staff who cannot speak Portuguese well, as for instance the Russian teacher, she explains that sometimes it is odd to speak to others and feel that they do not understand what she indeed means, though they are speaking the same language: English. She says that sometimes she says something, and another member of the staff will be bewildered because they had understood something else in a previous conversation, and then she has to clarify the message again.

Yet, for the rest of the team, speaking in English is never an issue for misunderstandings. The Canadian teacher praises how all the team has a fairly high level

of English, and that she had never noticed any misinterpretations regarding the use of English.

One of the Portuguese consultants explained that, it did not matter if communicating was is in Portuguese or in English. In her opinion, if there were any kind of misunderstandings, it was the team's fault because the information did not go around as it should have.

The Brazilian teacher had an interesting input as she stated that she often felt that communication was more misleading when she spoke in Portuguese with the Portuguese people than when she spoke in English, as there are some words whose meaning is different in Brazilian Portuguese or European Portuguese.

As we could notice, in the case of WSE, using English as a common working language was more a solution than a problem. Being an English school and being a requirement that all staff members are proficient in English this was also expected.

5.3. Native English speaker teachers VS Non-Native English speaker teachers

As explored previously, this WSE center in Porto has a very intercultural team. Yet, its intercultural profile is more relevant in the services department. The services department of the company is actually the didactics' department, and, to some, it might come as a surprise that it is composed of four teachers who are a mix of native English speakers and non-native English speakers from four different cultures -South African, Canadian, Brazilian, and Russian.

Indeed, when English first started to rise as the language of business, media and of internet in the late 20th century, the demand for English courses grew and of course native English-speaking countries such as the UK or the USA used the opportunity to disseminate the language with their native speakers as much as possible.

However, nowadays,

The people of the world are learning English in order to communicate; and that, more effectively. People just want to use the language to do what they need to do. English language learning is not about the right of certain native-speaking cultures to own the language. It is about communication in today's global community where English is the accepted language of academics, politics, industry, travel, and commerce. (Smith, J., 2015)

We are living in an era where English is slowly being more used by foreigners than native-speakers regarding business, teaching, and day-to-day communication – that is to say, an era when English monolinguals no longer have an advantage.

Monolingualism is "the state of understanding or having the knowledge to speak or write in one language", according to Collins English Dictionary. In other words, a person that is only fluent in one language – their mother tongue. For this report's purposes, my focus shall be on English monolinguals.

As seen in previous subsections, English has risen as a global language, being spoken by millions of foreigners - more than natives, nowadays – and it looks like those English monolinguals have, in most cases, lost their most valuable advantage: their own mother tongue, as the quote above highlights. *Everyone speaks English* is a sentence that you hear a lot these days, and in which most recruiters believe[48]. Anyway, today, English is a must-have skill in order to get a job.

We must bear in mind the growing need to have English courses at our disposal – courses that are suitable for everyone, that have the right people teaching foreigners how to speak English. The hiring search for English-speaking teachers has therefore grown.

When English as a second language started to become popular, the search for English native-speaking teachers found its peak – especially among American and British, as most people wanted to learn the foreign language with the "proper" accent. The idea of having a "proper" accent, which is linked to the American and British pronunciation, can be explained through the worldwide influence of American and British creative industries. If the world is consuming American and British television, then the

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[48] However, the accuracy of this belief is not correct as only 20% of the world knows English, according to Statista.com

world will see them as the two prime examples of the English language. This leads us back to the English teachers' problematic.

Native English-speaking teachers (commonly known as NEST) do have an advantage over non-native English-speaking teachers (known as NNEST). In many ads, you are probably going to find the following words: **Wanted: NATIVE English teacher[49]**. We see it in these small details how NEST have an advantage compared to NNEST. Andy Kirkpatrick speaks of this same matter, stating that what we see are prejudicing movements against non-native English professionals, when there are governments and official institutions demanding native speakers, regardless of their academic preparation, in comparison to non-native who can be well-trained for their role (Kirkpatrick, 2007, p.10).

Marek Kiczkowiak, winner of TeachingEnglish blog award, wrote about the need to change people's perceptions on native speakers being better English teachers than non-native. In 2014, more than 70% of jobs advertised on tefl.com – a job search engine for English teachers – are looking for NESTs – Marek Kiczkoviwak adds in this part, "yes, I have counted" (Kiczkowiak, 2014).

At Wall Street English, however, we find a mix of nationalities in the services department of the company. As said before, teachers come from backgrounds such as Canada, South Africa, Russia and Brazil, being both native English speakers and the other two non-native English speakers.

The company cares about showing how diversity can be a benefit to someone else's learning process. In addition, it can also be a business strategy – even if it is not an active one decided by the company, but slowly developed as a consequence of the world's changing aspects.

When asked about this issue, the Canadian teacher stated that having non-native English teachers can be good to students since they are in contact with different nationalities who are able to speak English, and that gives a positive image to the students.

Furthermore, when taking into consideration the reality of the center, where a large number of students are Brazilian, to have a Brazilian native as an English teacher

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[49] Emphasis added.

has a big impact on the way that the students feel motivated to learn the language. They have a good example, someone who gives them comfort and a sense of familiarity.

The teachers themselves do not discriminate on another's work as they believe their co-workers, native English speakers or not, are first and foremost academically and pedagogically prepared for the job.

Nevertheless, it can be seen how their cultural background also affects their work. As one of the teachers explained, the Portuguese teachers tended to go deeper into grammar rules while she, as an English native, focused more on helping students developing oral skills. The grammar would slowly be incorporated in their speech as they practiced over and over again.

In addition, students in general do not show any preferences regarding the teacher's nationality. The learning process is focused on how a person can communicate well in English, which does not include learning how to speak in a certain accent or having a certain pronunciation. Students are taught to speak well, regardless of the accent they have when speaking.

This issue is also examined in a brief research that will be presented in Chapter 6.

6. The balance of WSE as a school and as a business

To work at a WSE center means to be in contact with a broad public on a daily basis; the center's students, whose age range was between 14 and 60 years old, were also of various cultural backgrounds and had different motives to be at the center studying English.

This reality was therefore a theme I wanted to analyze in this report as it influences the entire existence of the company as a school and as a business. In order to understand better its reality, a survey and interviews were carried out through the internship period. The survey was used to understand better the profile of the students - age, nationality, employment status, and their reasons to study English - while the interviews' purpose was to know the staff's perspective.

The center staff was available to answer my questions, and I was given permission to use the online platform of the center (a Facebook group) to reach the center's students.

6.1. Survey "Wall Street English – Your Experience"

The essence that keeps any school running is undoubtedly the students. And, in the six months I spent as an intern at WSE, one of my biggest responsibilities was to deal with the students of the center. I was the first face they saw coming in, and the person they usually went to before anyone else.

For his reason, I considered relevant to include their perspective of the school/company. I had to know how they felt at a WSE center and what their reasons to study English were. Taking into consideration that the target public at WSE are adults, and not children, I decided to carry on a survey.

A survey is a research tool used as a data-collection approach. It is a quantitative method in which a researcher gives a set of predetermined questions to a specific group of people. Additionally, it is normally used to collect data from a large group of subjects,

in an easy and fast way.[50] The subjects of this survey were the active students of a WSE center located in Porto, which account for a community of approximately 300 students.

The survey – which was named Wall Street English – Your Experience – was published twice in the center's Facebook group, which means that around five hundred people could have answered it. However, the real number of answers was twenty-eight.

The survey was created with a set of thirteen questions that would take up to five minutes of the participant's time (see Appendix, pp.86-100). The online version of the survey was made through the website Survio[51], which was free and user-friendly. The survey was available for nearly two months.

Regarding the survey layout, I first started with the personal questions: Age, Gender, and Nationality. For Age, I divided it into five options, starting with the age of 14 since it is the minimum age to enroll at WSE.

For both Gender and Nationality, I left it as an open answer since, to be inclusive, the first should have the two traditional options plus an *Other*-option and this could bring some confusion to the older generations, and, the second one – Nationality – did not have that many options to use a long drop-down list.

It was also important to know how long the participants had been studying at WSE. And, naturally, there was a question reserved for their reasons to study English. Adults have different reasons from children. The options given were: Jobs, Studies, Future Opportunities, Leisure, Company Training, and an *Other*-option. This question was of utmost importance to the study, as it was directly linked to the company's mission.

Another part of the survey was a group of six sentences from which the students should choose one of the following options: Strongly Agree/ Agree/ Neutral/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree. Five out of the six sentences had as focus the students' experience at WSE and their satisfaction level. Yet, the sixth sentence had to do with the English language itself and its role in the world nowadays. I phrased it like this: *I believe English is a vital tool in the world right now*. The reason why this sentence was included into the

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[50] Survey Research: A Quantitative Technique. (2012). In *Principles of sociological inquiry: Qualitative and quantitative methods v. 1.0* (Vol. 1). Saylor Academy.
[51] https://www.survio.com/pt/

survey was to know the respondent's position regarding the role of English in today's world.

The last part of the survey was an open answer question to which students could either answer in Portuguese or English. The question was about what WSE could change to improve its services. Although this question sounds like a satisfaction survey done by the company, I decided to add it so that I could see if the company was practicing what it intended as a mission. This last question is not to be analyzed in this report since its answers were meant to help the center to improve its services.

6.2. Analysis of the results

As mentioned above, out of the potential 300 active students, only a total of 28 answers were received, which is a very small number. Although this number is no enough to present conclusive and generalist theories, we believe it is enough to give a perspective of the center's reality.

Before starting the survey analysis, I would like to say that, with Survio, the results were automatically categorized, and the charts created, with the exception of the Gender and Nationality charts, which were created by me.
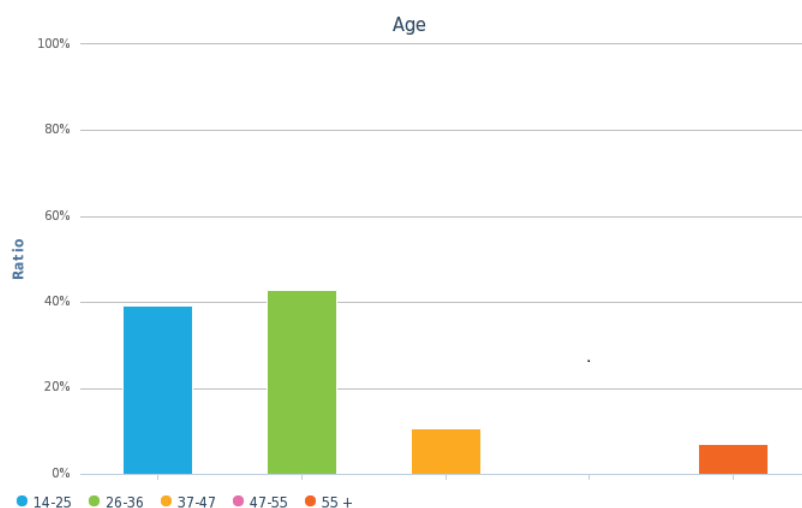

Figure 11 Age of the participants

WSE has a no-kids policy since the courses are developed for adult learners. That is why the youngest age accepted is fourteen. Even though there was a small number of participants, the chart above proves the center's reality: most students enrolled are young adults and adults between the ages of 26-36.
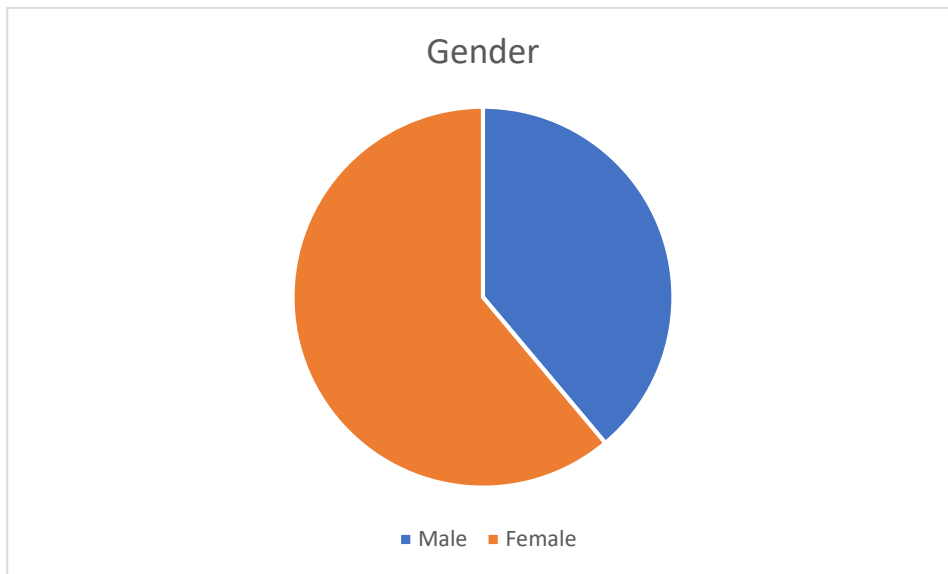

Figure 12 Survey – Gender of Participants

As I explained before, the gender-question had an open answer to leave out any kind of discomfort. As it can be seen, the majority of participants were female, although there is not a big difference between both genders. This does not differ from what could be seen during the six-month internship at the center. Although the number of women enrolled is higher than men, there is not a big difference in participation on a daily basis.
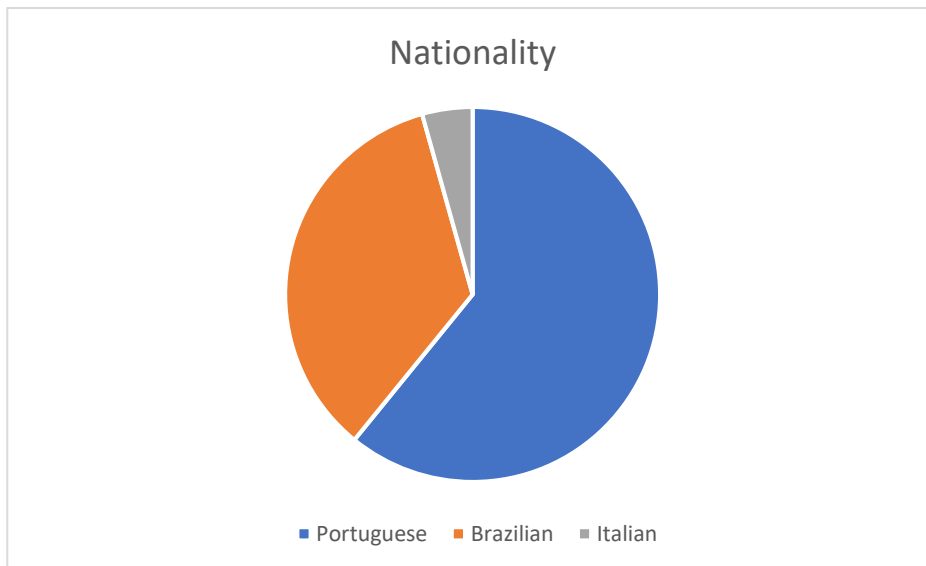
Figure 13 Survey – Nationality of Participants

The chart above represents a present profile of students at the WSE center. Although most participants were Portuguese, there is a significant high number of Brazilian students in the center as well. This reality can be connected to what is happening in Portugal lately: a huge migration from Brazil has entered the country looking for better life conditions and job due to the linguistic proximity. Yet, this community has found an unexpected language barrier. The Portuguese market is looking for and recruiting those who hav English skills.

One of my tasks as Customer Manager was to welcome new potential customers. I am not exaggerating when I say that most people I talked to were probably Brazilian, and not Portuguese, and I did hear some saying "I'm in the country for two weeks now", or "I just arrived, and I need English to get a job".
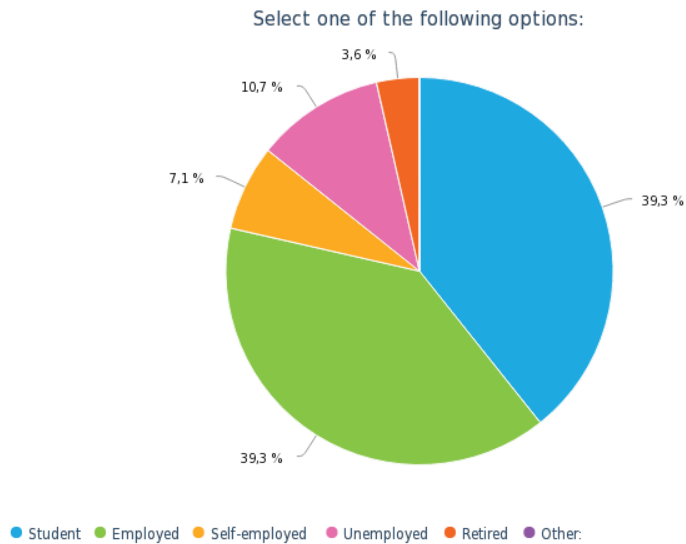
Select one of the following options:

Figure 14 Survey – Employment-status of the participants

As seen in the previous chapter, Wall Street English's target public is adults. With this question, I wanted to check if this was still true. As we can see in the chart, participants in this survey are mostly divided into employed adults (39.3%), and students (39.3%) – these students can be teenagers in high school or adults at university. 10.7% of the participants are currently unemployed. 7.1% are self-employed and 3.6% are retired. Most people studying at WSE have, therefore, very tough work/university schedules, and therefore this target public is still relying on the center to offer them more flexible learning hours.
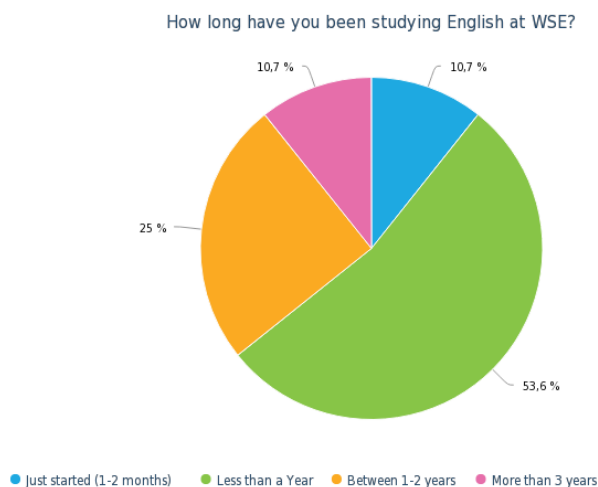

How long have you been studying English at WSE?

Figure 15 Survey – WSE course duration question

Knowing how long they had been studying at WSE is also important, as it tells me how well they know the center and how prepared they are to answer the following questions. As we can see, the participants are mostly students who are studying at WSE for less than a year (53.6%). However, the second largest slice consists of students who have been around for one or two years (25%). 10.7% of the participants are "old" students who have been around for more than three years, while another 10.7% are students who have just started (1-2 months).
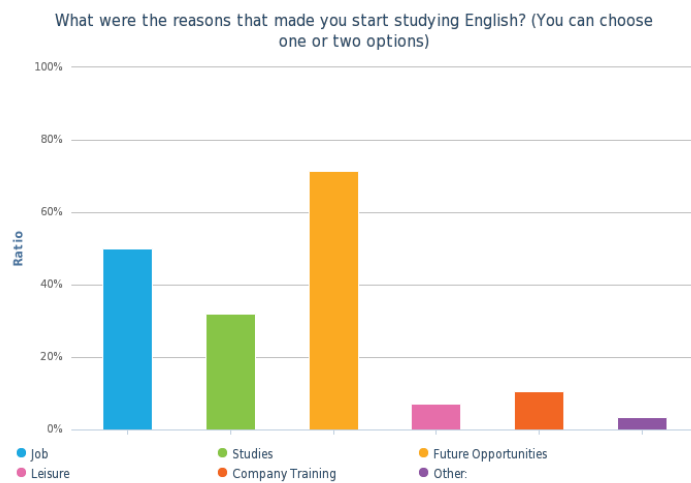
Figure 16 Survey – Reasons to study English of the participants

At WSE, students usually want/need to learn English for a reason. In this survey, I laid down six reasons, including an *Other*-option, that could match the students' necessities. The question allowed for more than one answer.

As we can see in the chart, around 70% need English for future opportunities, 50% need it for their current job, and around 30% for their studies. About 5% are doing it just for leisure while about 10% need it as a company training. In the *Other*-option, there were not any relevant answers.

The following set of six questions refers to statements with which the students could strongly agree / agree / stay neutral / disagree / strongly disagree. All those sentences had to do with the degree of satisfaction with the WSE's services except for the last one.

I feel comfortable and welcomed at Wall Street English.

14,3 %

53,6 %

32,1 %

● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree
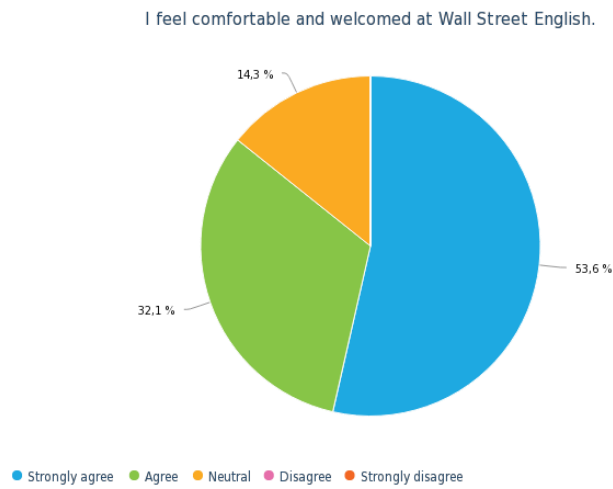
Figure 17 Survey – Satisfaction question 1

Feeling welcome and comfortable is of extreme importance to a services company such as WSE. As we can see from this small sample of students, 53.6 % of them strongly agree that they are well-received and feel comfortable at their WSE center while 32.1% chose to only agree. 14.3% decided to stay neutral. Indeed, a WSE team's priority is to make sure that not only the students feel comfortable, but also any potential client.

The group classes at Wall Street English are informative and dynamic.

10,7 %

25 %

64,3 %

● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree

Figure 18 Survey - Satisfaction question 2

Students' opinion regarding the classes – if these were dynamic and informative - was quite positive. No one disagreed with the sentence above, only 10.7% did not have an opinion on it, which can mean two things: they either did not want to comment on i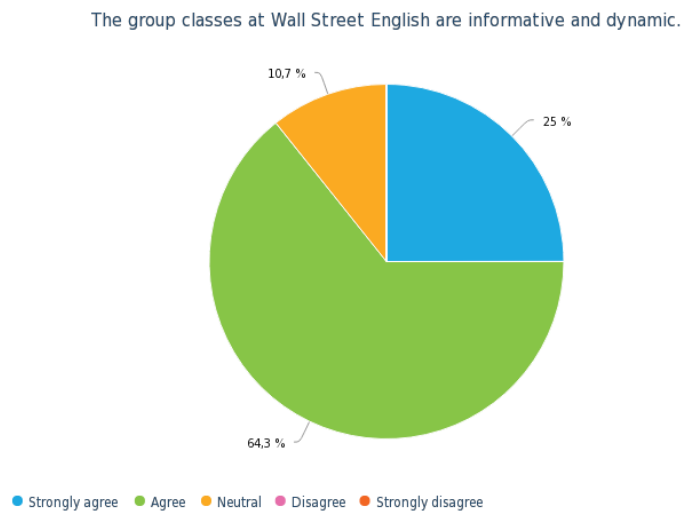t, or they only had time to go to the center and do encounters (evaluation class), having therefore no opinion over the group classes. 64.3% agreed with the sentence while 25% strongly agreed.

Learning English has helped me in my life (job opportunities, travelling, hobbies, etc.)

14,3 %

46,4 %

39,3 %

● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree
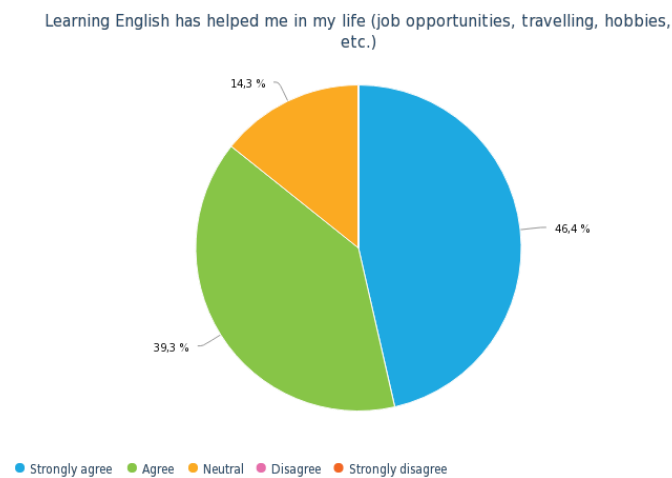
Figure 19 Survey – Satisfaction question 3

Learning English is an investment in people's lives. At least, that is what is sold at the beginning, when people first go to Wall Street English. That is why I added this sentence into the survey. As you can see in the chart, 46.4% of participants strongly agreed with the sentence, 39.3% agreed, and only 14.3% decided to stay neutral about it.

Wall Street English has classes adjusted to my working schedule.

3,6 %   7,1 %

35,7 %

53,6 %

● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree
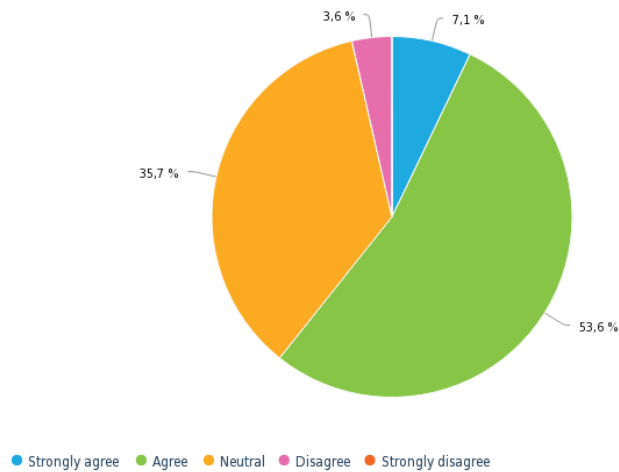
Figure 20 Survey – Satisfaction question 4

Having a flexible schedule is one of WSE selling points. The company seeks out to help its students find the time to learn English – an investment in their future that must show some results on a more weekly basis. As you can see in this chart, 53.6% of participants agree that WSE has classes adjusted to their schedule, while 35.7% preferred not to opine about it. 7.1% strongly agreed, while 3.6% disagreed.

So far, I'm very satisfied with my English skills.

7,1 %

17,9 %

75 %

● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree

Figure 21 Survey – Satisfaction question 5

82.1% (75% of agree and 7.1% of strongly agree) confirm that, so far, they are very satisfied with their English skills. 17.9% decided to stay neutral, and we can only speculate why: maybe they did not evolve as they wished, maybe it is too soon to tell for them.

I believe English is a vital tool in the world right now.

39,3 %

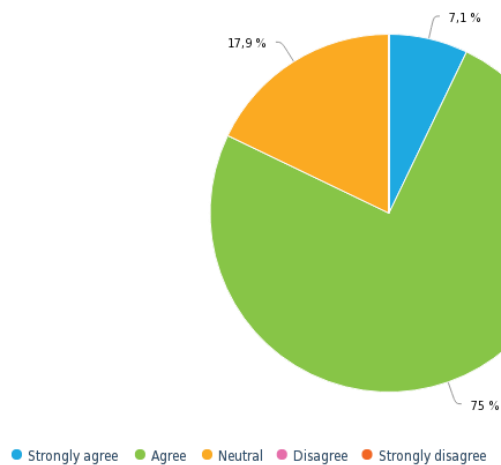60,7 %

● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly Disagree
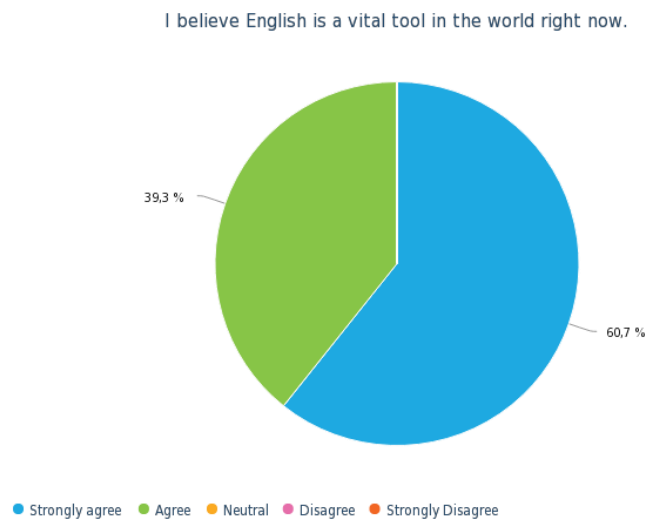
Figure 22 Survey – Satisfaction question 6

For the sentence, only two options were used by the respondents: agree or strongly agree. Above, we can see that 60.7% strongly agreed while 39.3% agreed that English is indeed a vital tool right now. Twenty-eight answers are enough in this case to prove the sentence's accuracy – no one disagreed or was neutral about this sentence, which proves that people are aware of the world's changing dynamics – when we see, read and hear English around us, it must mean something. These participants could see how English has risen to a very powerful tool to have in our skill-range, and that is why they decided to first learn/improve it.

6.3. Interview analysis

To collect data for this study, face-to-face interviews were used as a resourceful qualitative-methodology tool to collect data on how the company works. Throughout the six-month internship at a Wall Street English center, interviews were conducted, especially with the center's staff, which includes sales and services departments, as well as with one student.

Interviews are a method of data collection that usually involves two or more people swapping information through a series of questions and answers[52].

Conducting interviews gives us a quality time one-on-one with the *inquired* instead of having only a generated general result from a survey. This was the reason why I decided to use it as a complement to the survey. There are three types of interviews, according to Diogo Abreu: structured, semi-structured, and informal interviews (Abreu, D, 2006, p.A-76)[53].

For this study, I decided to make semi-structured interviews, because the primary aim of this research was to know what the interviewee thinks is important about the topic at hand[54], giving him or her the chance to add more questions to the inquiry while it is still happening.

During an interview, the interviewer can record, film and take notes. The interview can take place face-to-face, by phone or through mail (Abreu, D, 2006).

For this report's practical approach, three out of seven interviews were chosen to be analyzed: the one with the center director, one of the English teachers, and a student who has been studying at the WSE center for two years. The choice to analyze these three interviews only comes down to the fact that each represents an essential role in how a WSE center operates on a daily basis. These interviews represent the three vital parts of a WSE center: the sales department, the services department, and the client. This means

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[52] Interview Research: What Is It and When Should It Be Used? (2012). In *Principles of sociological inquiry: Qualitative and quantitative methods v. 1.0*. Saylor Academy.
[53] For the structured interviews, the interviewer already has a set of predetermined questions he or she wants to ask throughout the interview and is restricted to those questions. Informal interviews are described as a conversation carried out by the participants with no predetermined questions, only a thematic to discuss.
[54] Qualitative Interview Techniques and Considerations. (2012). In *Principles of sociological inquiry: Qualitative and quantitative methods v. 1.0* (Vol. 1). Saylor Academy.

that, these interviews would give us an overall insight of each interviewee on the WSE center. As we will see, for the director, who is also a sales consultant, it means a place to make business; for the teacher, it is her vocation to teach others a new kind of knowledge; and for the student, it is a school, i.e, a learning place.

All interviews were recorded, and they took place in the Wall Street English center, according to the interviewee's availability. The predetermined questions were laid out to the interviewee before the interview began, yet they were warned that other questions could be added.

For each interview, a set of questions was prepared regarding the person interviewed. That means that each individual, who had a different role in the center, would give me insight on different subjects, and therefore the questions asked were designed accordingly.

After writing out all three interviews, which can be found in Appendix (pp. 86-100), we can see that the main topic is the English language.

The first interview with one of the center's students (see Appendix, pp.86-100) took place in June 2018, began at 18:09 and finished at 18:12. The student was a young nineteen-year-old Brazilian girl who had been studying English for around two years – she started studying at the A1 level - and had just thought of renewing her contract with the center. The interview was carried out in Portuguese as she was still an A2 level student and did not feel comfortable speaking in English. Yet, throughout the interview, small cases of her trying to do so were spotted. As a first example, when asked "Para começar, qual foi a razão que te levou a estudar Inglês?"[55], she answered that she knew she needed English for college and later on, to become a "*flight attendant, so…*".

Indeed, the reasons to study English presented by the student in Interview 1 correspond to one of the company's missions: to help young people who are looking for English as a doorway to a future opportunity.

And they seek Wall Street English as a school for them. When questioned what her expectations regarding the school and the classes were, the student answered, "Quando eu fiquei sabendo do método deles, de ter professores de fora e isso, achei muito legal. E a dinâmica de estudar, de ter Multimédia, ter *conversation class*, ter gramática, e

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[55] In English, "To begin, which was the reason that led you to study English?"

tudo isso, achei que ia ser muito fixe."[56] And then, when asked about the reality of the school, the student only pointed a flaw: although she has been learning a lot, in some classes, like conversation classes, everything seems to be… "robotic", and she feels that she lacks the speaking part of the language in comparison to the others.

The last topic of our conversation was regarding the teachers and if she felt that she would learn English better if she was taught by native speakers. This question was asked since, as explained before, in this WSE center teachers were from four different nationalities, and only two were native speakers of English – Canadian and South African – while the others were not – Brazilian and Russian.

The student said no, and stated that anyone had the ability to teach a language. Yet, if we were to talk about accent, then it would probably be better to be taught by a native since she would feel that teachers in the center would correct things from each other: "Acho que tem muitas palavras que às vezes ela me corrige mas que uma me falou que era certo, e a outra falou que tipo, "ah fala assim que é melhor", então tem meio de contradição."[57]

Yet, her last input regarding this subject is that the accent does not influence learning a language, unless a student is looking for a specific kind of accent. If it is to learn the language itself, having a teacher who is native, or non-native does not influence the learning process.

When one of the teachers was interviewed for this report (see Appendix, pp. 86-100), in June 2018, some of the themes discussed in the first interview with the student were touched.

For instance, the teacher interviewed has been working at Wall Street English since December 2001, which gives her seventeen years of company knowledge. Not only has she been working with WSE for a long time, but she has worked in all centers of the

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[56] In English, "When I first learned about their method, having teachers from abroad and all, I found it really cool. And the dynamic of studying, to have Multimedia Lessons, to have *conversation class*, to have grammar, and all that, I thought it would be really cool."

[57] In English, "I think there are many words that sometimes she (one of the teachers) corrects me, but another one told me that was right, and the other would be like, "Ah speak like this, it's better", then there is some kind of contradiction."

North throughout the years. The interview with her was carried out in English as she is South African and that is her native language. It began at 16:12 and finished at 16:21.

The first topic discussed in this interview was regarding the teachers' nationalities. Unlike the reality of the student in the first interview, who only met a multicultural services department at WSE, this teacher stated that, in the beginning, the company indeed favored having native English-speaking teachers. She added, "Then, there was a crisis and we didn't have many natives. So, we had a mix. We had like two or three natives, and the other were Portuguese".

The second question, just like in the first interview, was about the influence of having native and non-native teachers on students. Unlike the student, who only stated that it influenced those who look for a certain accent, the teacher admitted that some people are not keen on having a non-native teacher.

She said,

> But people do have that idea –and it's very strongly… (pause) And nowadays it's coming back again: they want native teachers – even in my private lessons -, they want native teachers. They want people who are native so that they can have good pronunciation (they focus a lot on the pronunciation), they want to know expressions that only the natives use, … especially in business men in the business world.

When asked about the businessmen preference, she stated that it has to do with their connections in the business world as they invite a lot of foreigners into their houses. Yet, she goes back to the topic of native and non-native teachers, believing that being a native is not what makes a teacher. Furthermore, right now, she feels that having a mix (among teacher's nationalities) is good.

The student and the teacher share the opinion that an accent does not define how a person learns a language. Having natives like British and American teaching would be interesting – especially for those who want to learn the British or American English – yet, they both see that it is not relevant for the learning process.

As said previously, the student interviewed was a Brazilian young girl. When the teacher was asked about the students' descriptions (And about the students here at WSE? Have you noticed a difference from when you started till now? Like the age, the nationality, their goals…), she did talk about Brazilian people. "I think that one thing that is changing a lot is, is that we have a lot of Brazilian students now. But it has also to do with the migration level", she said. The teacher also referred the importance of having college students in the center and reinforced the idea that WSE is an English school for adult learners since its beginning. In addition to the students, the company's main public target are adults, and that has been the reality of the company since its origins. "Well, we are an adult-teaching course, so our students are mainly adults, and… working people. People that need English for their professional career. And this has been a mainstream necessity and it's a necessity that we comply with and it's common," the teacher said.

Another issue discussed with the teacher, and as well as with the center director in the third interview, was the multicultural team that this WSE center had. As discussed previously (chapter 5), the WSE team was composed of people from various nationalities. When asked if that kind of team had influence on the work, or if there were ever some kind of misunderstandings, she explained that she saw the multicultural team as a positive aspect of the work environment since "I come from a country where the more variety, the richer you are. So, I think that the more variety you have of different cultures, (…) you have different experiences, different working methodologies, and different ways of seeing things." She said that she has worked with many cultures such as Polish, Czech Republican, Irish and American, just to name a few examples, and never faced any major issues in the workplace because of cultural backgrounds.

Lastly, in the interview with the center director we can have a different perspective over this issue and others (see Appendix, pp.86-100). The interview took place in June 2018, beginning at 14:39 and ending at 14:51, and was carried out in Portuguese since she is Portuguese.

Unlike the teacher, who had never faced any intercultural issues at the workplace, the center director had a different point of view as she is the one that must manage such a team. Yet, she admits that it is quite difficult in any circumstances to manage a team, especially for someone like her who does not have a management background. However, having people from different nationalities "pode de certa forma prejudicar um bocadinho

porque principalmente para aquelas pessoas que não estão cá assim há tanto tempo"[58]. Concerning the different cultural backgrounds which, according to the former teacher, can lead to good, different ways of thinking and working, the center director stated that at first, they can harm the team's work as people come into work with different rhythms and ways of thinking and need to adapt to how the company works in this location. She gave the practical example of how Portuguese people are considered hard-working individuals at Wall Street English. Since they like to work there, and like the students, they do not mind putting extra time if necessary to help them out. Yet, she feels that some cultures simply have a very "work is work" culture, and that is it. The *go the extra mile*, like she puts it, is not in their work philosophy. Therefore, having to manage a team like this is difficult as she cannot order people to do more than their functions, when she believes that doing that extra is something that should come naturally.

Being an English school and having a team of diverse cultures, to use the English language as a working tool is something expectable. When asked if she believed it was a positive factor, the center director said, "Eu acho que o Inglês é sempre um factor positivo porque (…) *(sem ele)* não existia esta diversidade. (….) Consegues comunicar com toda a gente."[59] To speak in a different language is not an obstacle to communication for her. Indeed, what can be an obstacle is people's way of being, and the role of English has actually avoided any misleading ideas that we could have of others, and what others could have of us (Portuguese people).

The following subject discussed with the center director, who has been working at WSE for seven years now, had to do with the importance given to the English language. Does she believe that the necessity to learn English will increase with time? Her answer to this is "yes", English will be a priority in people's list of skills to have. Any other language, according to her, could be considered the world's language, and she goes further to give the example of Mandarin: "(…) mandarim é uma língua que está em muito desenvolvimento. (…) Não sei é se é a segunda ou a terceira língua mais falado no mundo, mas a verdade é que eles têm consciência de que não é uma língua fácil para toda a gente.

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[58] In English, "can in a way affect (the teamwork) because mainly those people have not been here a long time,"

[59] In English, "I think English is always a positive factor because (…) *(without it)* this diversity wouldn't exist. (…) You can communicate with everyone."

(…) Os centros de Wall Street English estão a crescer e a abrir cada vez mais na China porque eles sabem que precisam disso para poder comunicar com o exterior." [60]

The last subject spoken with her was regarding the company's performance as a multinational corporation. She explained that, although there is a general regulation, there are differences even inside one country since each WSE center has a different geographical position. She said, "o que faz a empresa são as pessoas que trabalham nela"[61].

Lastly, the three interviews did not match in all topics as each had to be taken with a personal touch regarding who the interviewee was. Yet, when together, we can see how these three interviews shed light over a whole: how a WSE center is.

Below I will now analyze both the survey and the interview results, so that the WSE profile and the role of English today can be clearer.

6.4. Analysis of the Results

Both quantitative and qualitive methodologies, that is, the survey carried out among the WSE students and the interviews with a student and the staff, have shed light on issues such as the importance of English, the public target of WSE, or the interculturality of a work team, discussed throughout the report.

The survey was created for the students only, while the interviews analyzed were of two members of the WSE staff – a teacher and the center director – and a student in order to have a whole perspective of how the center works.

After analyzing both the survey and the interviews' results, we can come to some conclusions.

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[60] In English, "Mandarin is a language that is in development (…) I don't know if it is the second or third most spoken language in the world, but the truth is that they know that it is not an easy language for everyone. (…) WSE centers are opening even more in China because they knew they need it to communicate with the outside."

[61] In English, "What makes the company are the people who work in it"

Wall Street English is a company which sells English to those in need to learn it. Its target public is adult learners who, first, are lacking English skills and need it for reasons such as work opportunities, studies or complementary company training, and, second, do not have an easy schedule to get engaged in fixed traditional classes.

The aim of the survey was therefore to match the company's model to its reality: are the students in the center adults? Are they working or still in college? Why did they look for English in the first place? What do they think of the English language?

The main findings of the survey are that the students from Wall Street English are mostly young adults, or adults, who are either studying or employed. There is a small fraction, which participated in the survey, that is self-employed and another which is unemployed. They have been studying English for about a year or more, and their reasons to first start learning it are based upon their future or current needs: academic or job purposes. A small number looked for an English course just for leisure purposes.

This analysis also helps reinforce that the necessity to learn English is linked to it being used as a working tool, even in countries that do not have it as an official language. We can take the example of the Brazilian immigrants who came to Portugal believing they would find a job here without a language barrier, yet faced a different reality and are now studying English.

When asked about the characteristics of WSE students, the South African teacher interviewed gave a similar answer to the results of the survey. These are indeed the common traits of most WSE students. In addition, the interview with the student also confirmed these data: she is a young adult who is learning English in order to have better future work opportunities.

Taking their answers to this survey into consideration, specifically those regarding the WSE's service, it can be concluded that the students are fairly satisfied – they feel welcome at the center, believe they have improved their English, that the classes are informative and dynamic, and that the school has a schedule adjusted to their needs. They also strongly agree that the English language is a vital tool in the world right now. People are not blindly following what could be taken in as a fashion-statement – "English is everywhere" - but are indeed feeling the reality of it in their lives. When asked about the English position in the world presently, the center director affirmed that English is a

fundamental tool and to be able to speak it is always positive since, with it, we can have diversity.

Regarding the native and non-native English teachers' issue, what could be concluded at this point is that the mix of cultures in the services department can be a good influence on the students' learning process, yet there is not enough information to draw a clear conclusion on this matter.

English is a vital tool right now, and we can see it in what society is looking for – an investment in their language skills.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this report, which is a follow-up on the internship taken at the multinational company Wall Street English, a list of objectives was created.

As a conclusive step for the masters in *Intercultural Studies for Business*, this report presents insights on topics for which I had been academically prepared before facing a multicultural job environment.

Throughout the chapters of this report, a link between a theory-based background and the internship that took place at a center of Wall Street English in Porto was also made.

In the second chapter, we can see the importance and power given to the English language nowadays. It was first presented as one of the consequences of globalization but has now reached a status that no other language had had before: it is believed to be a global language. Indeed, it has become a fundamental communication tool in intercultural encounters.

Given the context of people's need to learn English as a second language, a multinational company such as Wall Street English found its mission and target public. Presented in chapter three, Wall Street English is a multinational company whose core mission is to be an English school for adult learners. It does not follow a traditional learning strategy – as in having a number of fixed classes per week with a teacher -, as it offers both group classes and online lessons to the students.

The internship carried out in Wall Street English was described in chapter four. The functions of a Customer Manager were presented in detail as well as my contribution to the center - the Game Week activity. It was possible to see that there was openness and acceptance by the WSE team and therefore my internship was carried out successfully.

Chapter five presents how becoming part of an intercultural team was an opportunity to explore a new field. Dealing with different cultures in the work environment does not seem to have any larger consequences than if we were only dealing with one culture. The bigger issue at hand was the linguistic barriers. Yet, in this case, the solution was found in the English language. Following this, the issue of native English speaker teachers versus non-native English speaker teachers was also a subject discussed in this report. Since English became an important language to master, preference has been showed to the native English speakers. Yet, at Wall Street English, the reality of today does not match with that issue. Having a mix of native and non-native helps motivating students to learn how to speak English without giving special attention to any particular accent.

Lastly, it was important to see present facts regarding the importance of English in the global word. Chapter six presents the research methodologies used for that purpose: a survey carried out among WSE students and semi-structured interviews to the center's staff. The two research methodologies helped concluding that Wall Street English's core mission is indeed accomplished and showed how the English language has become a positive, fundamental skill. Additionally, acting in an intercultural workplace where intercultural communication is required in order to achieve the daily tasks of a team is a strong example of how English can help overcome linguistic barriers and make communication between different cultures a possibility.

All in all, the internship at Wall Street English was the perfect link between the academic knowledge acquired during the first year of this Master's and the contemporary reality of multinational companies and the importance given to the English language. On a personal note, it helped me grow as a professional and gave me the perfect example of what to expect in the global market.

Appendix

1. *Wall Street English – Your Experience* survey

Wall Street English – Your Experience

Hello,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey.

In order to finish my Masters in Intercultural Studies for Business at ISCAP, I've been taking my internship at Wall Street English. This survey is a tool that I will use for my internship report. As you will see, it is anonymous.

This survey was made specifically for students at Wall Street English, aiming to help me understand better why you are learning English and how satisfied you are right now with the school and your new language skills.

Age (circle the option)

14-25

26-36

37-47

48-55

55+

Gender:

_____

Nationality:

_____

Select one of the following options:

Student   Employed   Self-Employed   Unemployed   Other:_____

Answer the following questions

1.How long have you been studying English?

Just started (1-2 months)

Less than a Year

Between 1-2 years

More than 3 years

2.What were the reasons that made you start studying English? (You can choose one or two options)

Job

Studies

Future Opportunities

Leisure

Company Training

Other: _____

For the following statements, please answer with full honesty.

I feel comfortable and welcomed at Wall Street English.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

The group classes at Wall Street English are informative and dynamic.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

Learning English has helped me out in various situations (job opportunities, travelling, hobbies, etc.)

Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

Wall Street English has classes adjusted to my working schedule.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

So far, I'm very satisfied with my English skills.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

I believe English is a vital tool in the world right now.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

4. Do you think there is something Wall Street English could change to improve its services? If yes, please elaborate. (you can answer in Portuguese as well)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Transcription Interview 1 – WSE student

Interviewee: Student at Wall Street English

Interviewer: author

Date: 19-06-2018

Start of interview: 18:09

End of interview: 18:12

Duration of interview: 3 minutes and 35 seconds

Interviewer: Portanto, (student's name), para começar, qual foi a razão que te levou a estudar Inglês?

Interviewee: Pronto, a razão foi, primeiro, pelo facto de entrar na universidade, que eu sabia que ia precisar muito e, depois, porque mais para frente eu queria trabalhar como hospedeira de bordo… *flight attendant, so…*

Interviewer: Estavas à procura de oportunidades de emprego no futuro?

Interviewee: Sim.

Interviewer: Quando vieste primeiro ao Wall Street English, qual era a expectativa que tu tinhas em relação à escola, em relação às aulas e aos professores?

Interviewee: Quando eu fiquei sabendo do método deles, de ter professores de fora e isso, achei muito legal. E a dinâmica de estudar, de ter multimédia, ter *conversation class*, ter gramática, e tudo isso, achei que ia ser muito fixe, e … pronto, é isso.

Interviewer: E a realidade? Depois de teres começado a ter aula com professoras?

Interviewee: Ainda acho muito bom, do tipo, consegue-se aprender muito… consegue, hum, obter muita informação, vocabulário e tudo, mas eu acho que ainda peca um pouco na parte de falar, do *speak*, porque por mais que a gente tenha *conversation class*, normalmente as aulas são muito… Do tipo, você tem uma folha e tem mais ou menos o que você tem de falar, tipo "What's your name?", "My name is…". Muito… Não sei… é

muito… sistemática, é muito robotizado, do tipo, acho que falta alguma coisa na parte do *speak*, porque a maioria das pessoas que converso aqui sempre falam "Ah, já estando falando Inglês?" , e eu tou, "é, tou…", entende? Na parte do falar ainda tem de melhorar alguma coisa, mas não sei o quê.

Interviewer: Mas achas que isso tem a ver com o sistema de aprendizagem ou com as pessoas que ensinam?

Interviewee: Hum, eu acho que é mais o sistema porque as professoras seguem já um… um roteiro mais ou menos, então. Acho que é o sistema mesmo que tem de mudar.

Interviewer: Por fim, achas que, se estás a aprender inglês, e estás mais ou menos a meio, achas que até agora terias tido uma melhor aprendizagem se fosses ensinada por alguém nativo, ou se não…?

Interviewee: Hum, acho que… que não. Acho que outras pessoas também de outros lugares também têm capacidade para dar aula, do tipo, a gente até consegue entender melhor. Mas em relação à acentuação, acho que talvez com um nativo era melhor… não sei porque… dentro disso de, "ah, a professora brasileira, a professora canadiense e isso", acho que tem muitas palavras que às vezes ela me corrige mas que uma me falou que era certo, e a outra falou que tipo, "ah fala assim que é melhor.", então tem meio de contradição.

Interviewer: Se todos os professores fossem somente Americanos e Britânicos, achas que ia ser melhor, ia ser pior?

Interviewee: Não sei, acho que se você quisesse "ah, não, quero aprender o Inglês britânico" e tivesse um professor britânico, acho que seria fixe. Mas para aprender o Inglês em si, acho que não é muito por aí.

3. Transcription – Interview 2: WSE teacher

Interviewer: Diana Fernandes

Interviewee: Ana Pereira

Occupation: English Teacher at Wall Street English

Date: 15-06-2018

Start of interview: 16:12

End of interview: 16:21

Duration of interview: 9 minutes and 11 seconds

Interviewer: I want to ask you how long have you been working at WSE?

Interviewee: I started working at WSE on 2nd December, 2001. So, this year, seventeen years.

Interviewer: How many centers have you been?

Interviewee: I've worked in all the centers of the North. I started in Boavista - Bom Sucesso, which was called Boavista originally, then I went to work in Marquês. I worked in Gondomar, I worked in Aveiro, and I worked in Braga.

Interviewer: And throughout these seventeen years what have you noticed the most, changing in the company regarding the staff? For instance, the teachers. Did they have the idea that the teachers had to be native?

Interviewee: Yes. Initially, when I first started working, all the teachers were native. Then there was a crisis and we didn't have many natives. So, we had a mix. We had like two or three natives, and the other were Portuguese.

Interviewer: You think that it influenced?

Interviewee: I think some people… It didn't influence – but I think some people do prefer to have native English teachers, to be honest. Although I think it's a bit ridiculous, but… (pause) I think you have an excellent teacher – is she native or non-native -, she's going

to prepare you and she's going to help you in your learning course. But people do have that idea –and it's very strongly… (pause) And nowadays it's coming back again: they want native teachers – even in my private lessons -, they want native teachers. They want people who are native so that they can have good pronunciation (they focus a lot on the pronunciation), they want to know expressions that only the natives use, … especially in business men in the business world.

Interviewer: Yes? Because… ?

Interviewee: Because they travel a lot, and they invite a lot of foreigner clients to their houses to have dinner, and stuff like that, and that's what they want. But I don't think that makes a teacher. Because I know some native teachers who don't know how to be teachers.

Interviewer: And right now…

Interviewee Right now, I think it's okay the mix. They are okay with the mix.

Interviewer: You don't think students get surprise by having a mix (of native and non-native)?

Interviewee: Sometimes they are surprise by having a non-native, but generally they are okay with it. You do have ones that prefer, and they state their preference for native teachers, but in general they are okay with it, with the mix. I think if we only had Portuguese speaking teachers… (pause), maybe, they wouldn't – until they knew the teacher, they wouldn't like it so much. It depends on the academic preparation the person has.

Interviewer: Basically. And about the students here at WSE? Have you noticed a difference from when you started till now? Like the age, the nationality, their goals…

Interviewee: Well, we are an adult-teaching course, so our students are mainly adults, and… working people. People that need English for their professional career. And this has been a mainstream necessity and it's a necessity that we comply with and it's common. I think that one thing that is changing a lot is, is that we have a lot of Brazilian students now. But it has also to do with the migration level. We are accepting – we are having more emigrants in Portugal, and therefore… (pause) our number of students are more emigrant than native Portuguese, but in general they are… They are people that are

working, or have started working, or have had some years of career. Uuuh, the dominant class are those. Then we have the university students. They also have a big weight. We've always had a lot of university students because they need English in their courses, or people who are working and need English for their busin-, their work, their jobs. Then, you have some people – older people – who have English as a … personal fulfilment, it's a hobby. And they have English… ah…. to travel. Those ones are more interested in developing the communicative part of the English language. Sometimes, writing, but not so much the writing or the reading.

Interviewer: Okay, and about the staff? We have a lot of cultures, nationalities here, right?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you think that influences how everyone works? Like, what do you expect from it? Are there misunderstandings because of it?

Interviewee: I think… Personally, I think the more… I come from a country where the more variety, the richer you are. So, I think that the more variety you have of different cultures, the… the… you have different experiences, different working methodologies, and different ways of seeing things. And the complement of that is… hum… it's very good because you learn, and you grow. Sometimes there can be misunderstandings because there's a communication barrier, that sometimes it's not… But in general, we've never had problems because of culture. We have people that sometimes – because of their culture, think different, or think that sometimes the way we do things is a bit different, but it's not a major… it's not big the difference that it could create a clash. So, no. Never had problems.

Interviewer: Never?

Interviewee: No. I've worked with people from Poland, I've worked with people from, Czech Republic, I've worked with people from Russia, I've worked with Americans, well, Canadians, Irish, British…

Interviewer: Have you worked with Americans here in WSE? Is there like a difference, like… A lot of people look for the American accent.

Interviewee: The students tend to like the American accent, but it's not… They don't… they don't devalue the other… No. They find it funny. Imagine (a teacher's name). Did you meet him? He was an American teacher. And in Matosinhos, he was the American, I was the South African, and (another's teacher's name) is Portuguese, but she has a British accent, like crazy. And they were like, "Oh, he's American. It's really cool", but they also were like "Oh, I miss classes with you because I like your accent", so…

Interviewer: They just want to know how to pronounce…

Interviewee: Yeah, pronunciation. And sometimes it's a misconception. I tell them, they are okay with it. I think it's more about the content of the teacher than the accent, to be honest. Personally… I don't think so, I know so. It's the quality of a teacher. If the teacher knows how to deliver a class, how she structures class' dynamics, how she manages the speaking time of students in class, how she motivates people, uh… affects more the class, their performance, and them liking it or not, than the accent per se.

Interviewer: Okay. Thank you for your time.

4.Transcription 3: WSE director

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Interviewer: Diana Fernandes

Interviewee: Ângela Simões

Occupation: Center Director at Wall Street English

Date: 28-06-2018

Start of interview: 14:39

End of interview: 14:51

Duration of interview: 11 minutes and 44 seconds

Place of interview: Wall Street English center

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Interviewer: Então, quais são as características de uma boa vendedora para ti?

Interviewee: É assim, eu acho que uma boa vendedora tem que …. ser capaz de criar empatia. Tem de ter uma personalidade forte para se poder… hum… Ah… Uma vendedora tem de ser uma influenciadora, digamos assim, porque tu chegas à procura de alguma coisa, mas eu tenho de ser capaz de te convencer que o que eu tenho para te dar é o melhor, não é? Portanto, tens de ser capaz de criar uma ligação com a pessoa, tens de ser capaz de ter uma personalidade forte e assertiva para conseguires... Ah… Okay, é isto que eu tenho, é isto que tu queres comprar, portanto temos aqui a possibilidade de fazer negócio. É uma pessoa que tem de saber trabalhar em equipa, porque apesar de a maior parte dos vendedores trabalharem sozinhos, aqui no WSE isso não funciona assim. Tens de saber de trabalhar muito bem em equipa porque, na verdade, estamos todos dependentes uns dos outros, sejas professor , sejas colegas, portanto, acho que… (pausa) Ambição, acho que acima de tudo tem de ter o gosto de trabalhar por objectivos e, e, e ficar motivada pela possibilidade de ganhar mais. Acho que esses são os pontos principais: a empatia, a personalidade forte e assertiva, ah, hum, a ambição, o gosto por trabalhar em equipa. Será mais pro aí.

Interviewer: E na parte da equipa… Tens de gerir uma equipa aqui.

Interviewee: Sim.

Interviewer: Temos várias personalidades, temos várias nacionalidades e culturas diferentes. Achas que é difícil de gerir?

Interviewee: (ri-se) Acho.

Interviewer: Porquê? Porque não?

Interviewee: Acho que… O gerir uma equipa só por si já não é propriamente fácil e... Ah… principalmente para uma pessoa como eu que não veio propriamente de um background de gestão, okay? O facto de termos pessoas de nacionalidades diferentes… hum… pode de certa forma prejudicar um bocadinho porque principalmente para aquelas pessoas que não estão cá assim há tanto tempo, ahh... As pessoas chegam cá e estão todas a um determinado ritmo de trabalho, a uma determinada forma de trabalho, e de ver as coisas, e nós somos diferentes. Como nós temos aqui de momento… Nós temos uma Sul Africana, uma Canadiana, uma Brasileira, uma Russa… O resto são Portugueses. Mas a verdade é que tanto, por exemplo, a Africana… a Sul Africana como a Canadiana são pessoas que estão em Portugal há muitos anos, portanto entraram no mercado de trabalho português, portanto, desde sempre que se foram habituando a isso. Depois, estas pessoas mais novas que é onde notamos mais diferença, por exemplo, no caso da Brasileira e da Russa, que são pessoas que estão cá há menos tempo, aí nota-se *muita* diferença em termos de trabalho. Ahh… São pessoas têm… (pausa) Têm formas de trabalhar diferente, portanto seja a nível de… Ah… Já existem aquelas diferenças a nível pessoal, porque tens aquelas pessoas que estão habituadas a trabalhar em equipa, outras mais sozinhas. Ah…, tens mais pessoas que… (pausa) Uma das principais coisas que salta à vista é, por exemplo, aqui em Portugal são muito dadas, não é, tipo…. Pelo menos, eu falo aqui pela experiência que tenho da Wall Street. As pessoas gostam de trabalhar aqui e… e… apesar de às vezes até, pronto, se sentirem um bocado frustradas com os alunos e assim, são incapazes de, de dizer que não a alguma coisa. Ficam aquele bocadinho extra se for preciso para o ajudar. Têm gosto em fazer isso. E o que eu noto muita diferença é que…as pessoas estrangeiras são muito mais, "trabalho é trabalho", é naquele horário e acabou. Não têm aquela coisa de dar aquela ajuda extra. (pausa) E depois as expetactivas, não é?, do que realmente as pessoas têm que fazer, não têm que fazer porque tu podes passar… Okay, estas são as tuas funções, é isto que nós esperamos de ti, mas a verdade é que há coisa que… são naturais, não é? E isso nota-se uma grande diferença entre os que são Portugueses – se calhar um bocadinho também mal, pronto, pode ser, porque se calhar o Português está sempre habituado a trabalhar mais, horas extras, e dá sempre mais do que é preciso. E eu noto muito essa diferença nas pessoas que vêm de fora. Não estão tão habituadas, ou para eles não faz parte de, de, de…

Interviewer: Da ficha deles?

Interviewee: Da filosofia de trabalho deles, ah, dar aquele extrazinho. *Go the extra mile*, como nós costumamos dizer. Hum, e acaba por ser difícil de gerir isso no sentido em que eu não posso obrigar as pessoas a fazer isso porque realmente não faz parte… Eu não tenho na função da pessoa do tipo, "tens de fazer isto", faz parte um bocadinho do bom senso. E, e para uma pessoa que está cá há pouco tempo não é *fácil* incutir isso, e, e, e tipo, olha, de repente tens de mudar aquilo tudo o que tu conheces para agora é isto que nós esperamos de ti.

Interviewer: Sim. E pegando aí na equipa, sendo pessoas de várias culturas, e tendo a língua materna diferente para todos, temos de encontrar uma língua em comum para o trabalho.

Interviewee: Exatamente.

Interviewer: E no Wall Street English, obviamente vai ser o Inglês. Sentes que há muita dificuldade em comunicar às vezes por ser o Inglês a língua de trabalho?

Interviewee: Não, não…

Interviewer: É um factor positivo?

Interviewee: Eu acho que o Inglês é sempre um factor positivo porque permite, realmente por exemplo, se isso não existe, nós não tínhamos esta "multiculturidade". Esta palavra agora nem sei se existe, okay? (ri-se) Mas não existia esta diversidade. Hum, por um lado, isso, isso é bom porque tens pessoas…. Consegues comunicar com toda a gente, e não acho que o facto de nós comunicarmos numa língua diferente seja *de todo* um impeditivo, ou um obstáculo na comunicação que existe com as pessoas. Em termos de obstáculo, o que existe é mesmo a forma de estar, a forma de pensar, … o, o, aquilo a que as pessoas estão habituadas. O Inglês veio facilitar as coisas e é aquilo que permite se calhar mudar um bocadinho, dar a conhecer a nossa cultura, e a forma de trabalho dos Portugueses, e vice-versa, não é, deles que vêm para cá, huuum, por isso... acho que não, o Inglês não é de todo… Quanto muito, e quanto muito não, é sem dúvida uma coisa muito positiva.

Interviewer: Então como base de comunicação é uma língua que sentes que facilita? Quando há uma equipa, por exemplo, aqui, todos sabem um bom nível de Inglês, facilita?

Interviewee: Sim, sim, facilita. E, e, e, e, e não podia doutra forma. E já esquecendo o facto de, de estarmos numa escola de Inglês. Acho que hoje em dia qualquer empresa, ahh, com esta mobilidade que existe, por exemplo, principalmente entre a Europa, se não existisse uma língua que fosse falada em todo o lado, isto não existiria. Nós estaríamos sempre fechados no nosso cantinho. Não conseguiríamos estar abertos ao mundo como estamos neste momento.

Interviewer: E pegando no Inglês. O Inglês hoje em dia, como falamos ainda agora, é basicamente uma ferramenta essencial.

Interviewee: Exactamente.

Interviewer: Qual é a tua opinião sobre isso? Achas que vai mudar?

Interviewee: Eu acho que não.

Interviewer: Achas que vai aumentar a necessidade?

Interviewee: Acho que vai aumentar a necessidade. Acho que, que… e acho que em Portugal ainda se nota porque, pronto, a ideia geral é que o Português tem alguma facilidade em aprender línguas, e é esperado que um Português saiba falar bem Inglês, não é? Acho que é uma ideia generalizada. Nós temos facilidades em aprender línguas. E se calhar não temos acesso ao melhor método, ou se calhar não temos a possibilidade de

dar continuidade como gostaríamos. Mas acho que, ah, mudar isso não vai mudar, até porque … as outras línguas que poderiam ser consideradas a língua do mundo são mais difíceis de aprender. E vemos… Nós temos o nosso exemplo na China. A china… mandarim é uma língua que está em muito desenvolvimento. É… Não sei é se é a segunda ou a terceira língua mais falado no mundo, mas a verdade é que eles têm consciência de que não é uma língua fácil para toda a gente. Eles próprios… Os centros de Wall Street English estão a crescer e a abrir cada vez mais na China porque eles sabem que precisam disso para poder comunicar com o exterior. Por isso, acho que vai aumentar, mesmo a nível empresarial e tudo, nós vemos cada vez mais, até nas faculdades, começam a pedir níveis mais altos e certificações, portanto não acredito que isso vá mudar. Quanto muito, a exigência vai ser maior, e nós portugueses, acho que somos, somos, hum, tidos num grau um bocadinho mais alto por causa da facilidade que nós temos, sim.

Interviewer: E achas que o facto de ser tanto o Inglês, ter uma procura tão grande, que vai fechar portas a outras línguas, para as pessoas quererem aprender outras línguas?

Interviewee: Não, eu acho que, que fechar, isso nunca fecha. Eu acho que, pronto, o Inglês é sempre a prioridade, ou deverá ser, ah, ainda que algumas pessoas achem que não. (ri-se) Porque têm sempre a ideia que há outras línguas que são mais importantes, sobretudo porque não são capazes de, ou tiveram algum problema com o ensino do Inglês, mas eu acho que… Tu tens dois tipos de pessoas: que aprendem o Inglês por e que aprendem o Inglês por gosto. Hum, e tu tens sempre pessoas que vão querer aprender outras línguas pelos mesmo motivos. Por obrigação, porque precisam do trabalho, porque têm familiares fora, porque vão emigrar… E depois tens outras pessoas que sempre gostarem de aprender línguas e o Inglês e outras é mais uma.

Interviewer: E agora fugindo um bocado a esse assunto, e virando mais para a empresa, o Wall Street English é uma empresa multinacional que está em imensos países. Temos aqui o Portugal, certo?

Interviewee: Portugal, Espanha e Angola pertencem todos ao mesmo, ao Master, exatamente

Interviewer: Sentes que há uma diferença entre, por exemplo, se calhar a maneira como funciona o Wall Street aqui em Portugal e se calhar noutros países? Por opiniões que já ouviste, por coisas que já viste…

Interviewee: É assim, eu acho que, que, cada país, cada centro funciona um bocadinho de forma diferente porque o que faz a empresa são as pessoas que trabalham nela, portanto. Acaba sempre…. Claro que sempre existe um regulamento geral e existe uma série de regras que têm de ser aplicadas em todo o lado, mas que, lá está, aquilo que estávamos a falar em relação a termos a trabalhar de outras nacionalidades: eles trabalham de forma diferente, por isso é normal que as coisas funcionem diferente noutros países. Ah, claro que lá está, isto pertence… O Wall Street é uma marca que existe e tem uma série de, de, de regras que têm de seguidas, mas depois cada país dá o seu cunho, a sua forma de ver, a sua forma de estar e responder às necessidades das pessoas do país onde

estão a trabalhar. Isso nota-se, não é? Nós estamos no Bom Sucesso, mas se formos para um centro em Lisboa, há coisas que funcionam de forma diferente, porque as pessoas são diferentes. Portanto, eu acho que isso é uma questão de…. Sim, há um regulamento geral.

Uma base.

Interviewee: Uma base, mas depois as pessoas vão ajustando consoante – espero eu (rise) – as necessidades das pessoas que eles têm.

Interviewer: Isso é um ponto a favor da empresa, que é, nós temos esta base, mas depois a tua necessidade é diferente da dele, portanto nós vamos adaptar-nos.

Interviewee: Sim, eu acho que… isso tem de ser igual em todo o lado e em todas as empresas porque, apesar de existirem… Porque, neste caso, estamos a falar de um serviço que trabalha com pessoas. Nós lidamos com pessoas todos os dias. Não é uma coisa mecânica, não é uma linha de produção em que, oh pá, aquilo tem de ser feito e vai ser feito igual aqui como vai ser feito na China. Ah, portanto, a partir do momento em que trabalhamos com pessoas e lidamos com pessoas, as coisas têm de funcionar diferente porque as pessoas não são iguais em todo o lado.

Interviewer: Obrigada.

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