

## **The English Language as a commodity in the tourism sector: A case study in the City of Vlora, Albania**

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### **Abstract**

In the Albanian tourism industry, communication in English is crucial for the provision of services to foreign tourists. Hotel staff are required to communicate on a daily basis with guests from various different linguacultural backgrounds, and this need is growing in significance as the numbers of tourists visiting Albania have grown in recent years. Nevertheless, very little is known about how Albanian hotel staff, particularly those working on hotel receptions, communicate with foreign guests in English.

In order to address this gap in our knowledge, a study was conducted in five hotels in the city of Vlorë in which front desk staff members were interviewed regarding their English language skills and the implications of their direct communication with foreign tourists.

The methodology of the study employed both quantitative and qualitative evaluations of the data which was collected through a questionnaire distributed among the staff of a series of hotels in the city of Vlorë. The results of the survey reveal important results regarding employees' command of English, the most frequently used language in the tourism sector, the cultural barriers and difficulties they encounter, while also identifying several linguistic deficiencies which should be addressed in the future.

**Key words:** *English, tourism, hospitality sector, language skills*