

## GENRE AND TASK BASED TEACHING IN A HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM TECHNICAL COURSE DURING THE PANDEMICS

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**Abstract:** This article aims at sharing our experience in English teaching at the integrated technical course in Hospitality and Tourism, at the Federal Center for Technological Education of Minas Gerais (CEFET- MG), during emergency remote teaching as a result of the covid-19 pandemic. The didactic sequence is presented in full, alongside, in general terms, the theoretical assumptions on which it was based. It involves teaching English through discursive genres and task-based approach, as well as through an ESP perspective, since the course was directly related to the student's area of professional interests and needs. Despite the difficulties regarding the chaotic context of the pandemics, the lack of equipment and/or internet access, the results obtained throughout the school year point to the student's engagement and interest, as well as to reflection on their own teaching process and learning.

**Keywords:** Hospitality and tourism technical course; ESP; Discursive genres; Task-based learning.

### APRENDIZAGEM BASEADA EM GÊNEROS E TAREFAS NO CURSO TÉCNICO EM HOSPEDAGEM INTEGRADO AO ENSINO MÉDIO

**Resumo:** Este artigo tem como objetivo compartilhar a experiência de duas docentes ao ensinar inglês a alunos do curso técnico integrado em Hospedagem, no Centro Federal de Educação Tecnológica de Minas Gerais (CEFET-MG), durante o ensino remoto emergencial, em decorrência da pandemia de covid-19. A sequência didática é apresentada na íntegra, bem como, em linhas gerais, os pressupostos teóricos nos quais ela foi pautada. Trata-se do ensino de línguas estrangeiras por meio de gêneros discursivos e com base em tarefas, além da perspectiva do "inglês para fins específicos", visto que o curso respondeu às demandas e interesses relacionados à futura área de atuação dos alunos. Apesar das dificuldades relativas ao contexto caótico da pandemia, da falta de equipamentos e/ou acesso à internet, os resultados obtidos ao longo do ano letivo apontam para o engajamento e interesse dos alunos, bem como para a reflexão sobre seu próprio processo de ensino e aprendizagem.

**Palavras-chave:** Técnico em Hospedagem; ESP; Gêneros discursivos; Aprendizagem baseada em tarefas.

## APRENDIZAJES BASADOS EN GÉNEROS Y TAREAS EN EL CURSO TÉCNICO EN HOSPITALIDAD INTEGRADO AL SECUNDARIO

**Resumen:** Este artículo tiene como objetivo compartir la experiencia de dos maestras al enseñar inglés a estudiantes del curso técnico integrado en Hospitalidad, en el Centro Federal de Educación Tecnológica de Minas Gerais (CEFET-MG), durante la enseñanza remota de emergencia, debido a la pandemia de covid-19. La secuencia didáctica se presenta en su totalidad, así como, en términos generales, los aportes teóricos en los que se basó. Corresponde a la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras a través de géneros discursivos y basada en tareas, además de la perspectiva del “inglés para fines específicos”, ya que el curso respondía a las demandas e intereses relacionados con el futuro ámbito de actuación de los estudiantes. A pesar de las dificultades relacionadas con el contexto caótico de la pandemia, la falta de equipos y/o acceso a internet, los resultados obtenidos a lo largo del año académico apuntan al compromiso e interés de los estudiantes, así como a la reflexión sobre su propio proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje.

**Palabras clave:** Técnico en Hospitalidad; ESP; géneros discursivos; Aprendizaje basado en tareas.

### INTRODUCTION

This article aims at introducing a didactic sequence applied with Hospitality and Tourism course students at Centro Federal de Educação Tecnológica de Minas Gerais (CEFET-MG) during the pandemic period between 2020 and 2021. The sequence is organized around the production of digital “travel guides” to cities in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Through a communicative and genre-based perspective, English language teaching programmes at CEFET-MG contemplate topics and genres that are specific to the student’s areas of studies, such as the work on the travel guide here presented, or on the tutorial, for instance, which are usually useful to technical courses, combined with the work on “general English”, in which students focus on language skills and produce regular academic genres, such as personal profiles, essays, oral presentations, etc.

From the first to the third grade of the Integrated Technical High School at CEFET-MG, one of the English language teaching programme's objectives is to move gradually from the student's own experiences to a more professional or market-oriented selection of genres. Therefore, while in the first year English classes feature genres that resonate with the student's lives, covering themes like travelling, urban life, personal identities and self-expression, in the second grade, students go through a more cultural or social-based selection of genres, such as news reports, book reviews, essays, etc. Finally, in the third grade, students practice skills and produce genres directly related to the job market, such as video-CVs, job interviews and the like.

In order to promote better interaction between teachers and students and facilitate teaching and learning, for the English lessons, the classes are divided into 2 groups, alphabetically. The two writers of this paper shared a group of 1<sup>st</sup> year students enrolled in the Hospitality and Tourism course and worked together on class preparation and tasks design. Both decided to align the genres to be taught in this year to students' future area of work aiming at improving engagement in the activities, especially due to the hard moment we all lived during the pandemics. The adaptations made by the professors are shown in the chart below the way it appeared in a handout provided to the students for the first class and brought again in more details at the beginning of the handouts for each bimester. The handouts were posted in the beginning of every term because we reckoned this was important for the students to know from start where we were heading to, as the task-based approach advocates. Since the proficiency level of most students was basic, the main instructions were written in their mother tongue, Portuguese, but all the study material (videos, websites, texts etc.) was presented in the target-language.

### Dear students, Welcome!

Este ano, temos como objetivo aprender/revisar aspectos da língua inglesa que lhes permitam melhor exercer trabalhos na área de Turismo e Hospedagem no futuro. Para tal, nossas aulas serão voltadas para a área e nossas tarefas bimestrais serão relativas à recepção e ao acompanhamento de turistas em visita a Minas Gerais:

Bimestre	Tarefas (gêneros textuais)
1º	<b>Perfil pessoal:</b> vamos apresentar-nos a um estrangeiro realizando intercambio no CEFET por meio de um e-mail.
2º	<b>Roteiro Turístico (<i>oral tour guide</i>):</b> faremos um vídeo sobre uma cidade mineira (localização, atrativos etc.).
3º	<b>Relato de experiência (<i>travel anecdote</i>):</b> vamos contar um "causo" de viagem para entreter e/ou alertar os turistas.
4º	<b>Apresentação oral:</b> na forma de um vídeo, incorporando as três tarefas anteriores: apresentação pessoal, apresentação de uma cidade e relato de uma experiência de viagem.

Let's get started, then! Vamos começar! ☺

**Table 1 - Welcoming Message**  
Source: student's handout prepared by the professors

For this paper, the didactic sequence<sup>1</sup> for the second bimester was chosen as a way to give readers a glimpse at how the lessons were conducted. It is important to highlight that the didactic sequence here presented took place in the first year of Hospitality and Tourism course and was adapted to remote learning due to the pandemics, in which students had 50-minute online classes once a week, followed by another 50-minute activity to be done autonomously and asynchronously, based on the publishing of guidelines prepared by the two professors on “SIGAA”, the educational platform used by federal institutions such as CEFET-MG.

This article is divided into three sections. We start by presenting a brief theoretical review. Next, we present the didactic sequence implemented. We end it by sharing our impressions on the results achieved, also on the drawbacks we faced regarding remote teaching and students' proficiency levels.

## 1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) point out, some principles of teaching and learning “languages for specific purposes” date back to Antiquity, when people learned Greek or Latin for practical reasons in trade or in administration. Regarding English for Specific Purposes (ESP), it saw great expansion during the 20<sup>th</sup> century within the Academic realm – being officially recognized as part of foreign language teaching/learning syllabus during the 60's. Also, with the massive growth of international business and globalization from the 80's and 90's on, a considerable amount of research and didactic materials have been published about “Business English” amongst other ESP areas.

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, it is understood as “A didactic sequence is a successive, interconnected set of learning activities, which are intended to create a final product that responds satisfactorily to the social and cultural practice giving it meaning.” Source: <https://www.upf.edu/en/web/ecodal/glosario-secuencia-didactica#:~:text=A%20didactic%20sequence%20is%20a,cultural%20practice%20giving%20it%20meanin%20g>.

Although ESP does not differ from “general English” when it comes to language learning theories, methodologies and linguistic contents, as Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters (1987) points out, its learner-centred approach with focus on autonomy, self-access and the pursuit of the student’s specific objectives has contributed to the development of strategies that have proved to be useful for both ESP and general English teachers, since they provide tools for a more rigorous analysis of students’ needs as well as for course design. A more detailed knowledge on reading strategies has also been an important contribution, as well as on the study of specific and practical genres, such as the tutorial, the business report, the job interview, the academic article, etc.

In this context, ESP has received a lot of attention from teachers, researchers and publishers and has been developing, since the 60’s, through five stages, as Hutchinson and Waters (1987) observed. The stages ranged from “grammar analysis” of texts of specific areas, to “discourse” and “target situation” analysis, to the pinpoint of specific abilities and strategies needed for the study of certain areas. In this context, the students’ needs, related to their academic or professional fields, are taken into account in course design or in the planning of lesson stages, activities and tasks.

More recently, Ramos (2004) has included a sixth stage in ESP developing inaugurated by the *genre approach* in the analysis of specific texts, which started in the 1990’s, after the works by Martin (1984), Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) were published. Aligned with the functional systemic linguistic perspective, Ramos (2004) presents a historical background of the theoretical debate on genre studies proposed by the three authors aforementioned, covering different aspects of their work with focus on the contributions they made regarding the complex description of genres, viewed as “goal-oriented social processes” (Martin, 1984), based on situational and cultural contexts; as “rhetorical” organizations consolidated within “discourse communities” practices (Askehave; Swales, 2001), whose purposes are determined by specific social-cultural contexts; or as “communicative events” with “multiple purposes” (Bhatia, 1993) that take place within a discourse community, but which do not exclude psychological or cognitive processes since they also imply individual choices and creativity.

According to Ramos (2004), the genre approach in the English language classroom has been growing strong due to the many resources it offers. On the one

hand, it contributes to the recognition of the different discourse types the students must comprehend or be able to produce in target situations. On the other hand, the study of texts and of language topics tends to be more contextualized, since concrete social contexts determine the communicative purpose(s) and the structure organization of each genre,

[...] understood here as a dynamic social process, with one or more communicative purposes, highly structured and conventionalized, recognized and mutually understood by the members of the community in which it routinely occurs. Furthermore, it is understood that it operates not only within a textual space, but also discursive, tactical (strategic) and socio-cultural space. (Ramos, 2004, p. 115).<sup>2</sup>

“Communicative purpose” and “discourse community” are key concepts in understanding each genre’s functioning, since they guide their practical applicability, contributing to inform their diverse textual structure – factors that must be considered within a language course (Ramos, 2004, p. 111). Nevertheless, while it is important to analyse and describe examples of the target-genre, the teacher must not adopt a prescriptive attitude, for each genre is flexible and implies creativity, as well as individual variation (RAMOS, 2004, p. 117).

Martin, Swales and Bhatia, followed by Marcuschi (2002) in Brazil, have published relevant research, always focusing on the description and definitions of genres. However, Ramos (2004) feels only a few authors have concentrated on their pedagogical implementation. In this light, Ramos (2004) offers some practical examples, considering the ESP context, which, according to the author, offers very productive grounds. The focus on genres makes it possible for the ESP teacher to have quick and efficient access to the identification of the linguistic, social and cultural components that the learners need to acquire in order to improve their performance in the target situations. It also contributes for a better understating of text structure, since the teacher and the students must comprehend the text’s purposes, contexts of production and reception, and the cultural background where it is situated. The author recommends that the teacher researches previously on the selected genre before

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<sup>2</sup> In Portuguese: “Aqui entendido como um processo social dinâmico, com um ou mais propósitos comunicativos, altamente estruturado e convencionalizado, reconhecido e mutuamente compreendido pelos membros da comunidade em que ele rotineiramente ocorre. Além disso, entende-se que ele opera não só dentro de um espaço textual, mas também discursivo, tático (estratégico) e sócio-cultural.” (RAMOS, 2004, p. 115).



bringing it to the classroom, so that a profound understanding of its means of circulation and the interests it serves is reached.

Drawing from the stage descriptions by Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993), and also from the more practical and pedagogical approach by Dolz & Schneuwly (1998), which also focuses on the sequential development of genre work within the classroom, Ramos (2004) has elected three fundamental phases for the implementation of the genre approach, specifically in ESP contexts: the *presentation*, the *detailing* and the *implementation* stages.

*The presentation stage*, in which cultural and social aspects of the target genre are introduced, has the objective of promoting awareness of its context, how and where it circulates, who uses it, under what circumstances and what interests, for what purposes, etc. The author mentions two key concepts that must be considered in this phase: conscientization and familiarization, which mean that the teacher should provide the students with examples not only of the target genre, but also of other genres so that they can be compared, observed, researched on their fundamental characteristics, such as purposes, participants, functions, possible interests, contexts, relations, contents, linguistic aspects, etc.

The second stage would include *detailing* processes, in which the teacher and the students closely observe linguistic and rhetorical aspects of the target genre, focusing on the development of the ability to identify and produce their own versions of the studied genre. Students are invited to look closely at its discourse functions and its grammatical and lexical components, as much as on its specific textual movements – the “description” stage, intercalated with the “recommendation” phase in a critical review, for instance, or the argumentative text movements, such as the “supporting”, the “refutation” or the “modalization” steps in an essay, for example, or even the “descriptive” stage mingled with the “touring” movements in a travel guide, in which linguistic structures like “giving directions” are used together with “adjectives” and other description language that, like in advertising, have the purpose of introducing the places as well as involving and persuading the audience to visit them.

The final stage is called application and it consists of the consolidation phase, in which the students dedicate themselves to producing the target genre in real-life situations, learning how to review their own productions and/or their peers’ and to

check on their own learning progress. In the case of this didactic sequence, a checklist was used in order to help students reflect upon their own work. They were asked through a Google Form:

<p><b>1. VIEWER/ADDRESSEE:</b> • Does your video consider potential visitors as foreigners? • Do you think it will capture their attention? • Does it create interest, curiosity etc. about the city presented?  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No   <input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p><b>2. LAYOUT - PARTS/MOVEMENTS:</b> Does your video contain information on: 1) geographic and historical features of the city/region; 2) typical food or/and where to eat; 3) cultural aspects such as local parties and festivities; 4) tourist attractions (where to go/what to do); 5) tips (curiosities, places to stay, etc.)?  <input type="checkbox"/> All of them   <input type="checkbox"/> Some of them   <input type="checkbox"/> None of them</p> <p><b>3. LINGUISTIC ASPECTS:</b> • Is your video outline clear and interesting? • Have you checked if there is any inadequacy in vocabulary? • Do you think any grammar aspects can be improved? • What about pronunciation, have you checked it? • Have you worked on fluency and intonation?  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No   <input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p>4. Justify your answers to the 3 questions above in a short paragraph.</p> <p>5. Write a short text about how it was for you to do this activity: 1) about writing and rewriting your script based on teacher's feedback (2 versions); 2) on what you have learned by doing it (about grammar, vocabulary, about how to present a city to tourists etc.)</p>
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**Table 2 - Google Forms Checklist**  
Source: student's material prepared by the professors

The stage-format of genre study allows the students to observe the different “layers” that involve genre use and also to start seeing it more critically, especially because purposes and intentions are not always explicit, as Askehave and Swales highlight:

We are no longer looking at a simple enumerable list or “set” of communicative purposes, but at a complexly layered one, wherein some purposes are not likely to be officially ‘acknowledged’ by the institution, even if they may be ‘recognised’ – particularly in off-record situations – by some of its expert members (Askehave; Swales, 2001, p. 199).

Besides the advantage of providing students contact with authentic material and authentic real life-situation, the genre approach promotes critical reflection and the



opportunity for a more contextualized practice. Due to its social use and content, genres also guarantee interaction, either by its dialogical structure or simply by the communicative event it creates, with its structure organized around participants or implied interlocutors. However, as Ramos (2004) pinpoints, the type and the means of interaction must be planned or considered by the teacher so that it can be enhanced during the course. Finally, a task-oriented course, divided into stages, also contributes to select language topics that most fit the genre requirements and the students' specific needs. Besides, bearing in mind students and teachers were facing an unprecedented and stressful situation, it helped them feel safer and focused, which some students mentioned was a great challenge when studying "alone".

Before presenting the didactic sequence itself in the next section, it seems important at this point to state what we mean by task. According to Willis and Willis (2007, p. 12), researchers and practitioners have different views on what a task is. "Some would call almost any classroom activity as a task." Even though definitions vary, it is common to find *meaning*, *outcome*, *goal*, *completion*, *real world* in them. As a way to help us "determine how task-like a given activity is", the authors suggest asking the questions below, highlighting that "the more confidently we can answer yes to each of these questions" the more related to a task it is:

1. Does the activity engage learner's interest?
  2. Is there a primary focus on meaning?
  3. Is there an outcome?
  4. Is success judged in terms of outcome?
  5. Is completion a priority?
  6. Does the activity relate to real world activity?
- (WILLIS; WILLIS, 2007, p. 13).

These questions or criteria show us guidelines for the design of activities which are task-like and related to the real use of language.

The facilitating tasks proposed in the didactic sequence to be presented below, which "involve building in priming and preparation" (WILLIS; WILLIS, 2007, p. 23), aimed at not only providing students with vocabulary and grammar regarding the target task, but also with tips on video recording, tourism market, tour guiding and the like. It therefore contains characteristics of the presentation phase pinpointed by Ramos (2004), since it covers cultural and social aspects of the target genre, sparking

reflection on the genre's context of production and use, as well as on its participants, main audiences, functions, as well as on its underlying commercial interests.

Having briefly mentioned some of the theoretical framework on which the didactic sequence prepared and delivered was based, in the next section, we will present the sequence itself.

## 2. DIDACTIC SEQUENCE: MAKING AN ORAL TOUR GUIDE

As for the second bimester, the one chosen for this paper, the didactic sequence proposed aimed at the production of an oral tour guide (video) introducing a city in Minas Gerais. It also focused on teaching linguistic features, as presented below, and on raising student's awareness on the cultural and historical potential of Minas Gerais. Besides, we dealt with aspects regarding video production. The bimester contained 8 (eight) weeks and it entailed 6 (six) facilitating tasks in total. One task was assigned per week. Besides the two last weeks were dedicated to: 1) self-evaluation based on the checklist presented above along with the preparation and the delivery of the final version of the video; 2) movie session with the videos made by the students and a feedback moment in which students could express themselves orally and/or through the chat (remote class via *Teams*).

The chart below summarizes the facilitating tasks which will be addressed in detail in this section.

Facilitating Tasks	Topics
Ice-breaker/ Activating previous knowledge	Opening Forum: What's your favorite place in Minas Gerais? Why?
Self-study on tourism 1	On two companies (Sandeman's New Europe and Lonely Planet)
Self-study on tourism 2	On the life and tasks of tour guides
Self-study on tourism 3	On tour guiding
Infographics (facilitating genre)	On the city chosen for the video
Extra	Some linguistic aspects: have, have got and there to be

**Table 3 - Oral Tour Guide Enabling Tasks**

Source: Prepared by the authors

It is important to mention that the choice of infographics as a facilitating genre was due to the fact that it could engage students in an overall study of the city which would guide the script for the video. Besides, it was feasible for students since it uses

images and does not require complex written production. It also provided an opportunity to compare genres as Ramos proposes in the *presentation* stage. The facilitating tasks, except for the ice breaker, could be done in pairs and/or trios, a decision made by the professors, not only because of difficulties related to remote teaching/learning and students' proficiency level, but also because by doing the tasks in pairs/trios, they could interact more, help each other and feel more comfortable with language learning.

For the opening forum, the professors provided an example answer in which they wrote about their favorite city, as the example below, in order to help students performing the task - writing a short text on their favorite city in Minas Gerais - and to introduce some linguistic aspects which would be learned and/or improved along the bimester. One of the purposes of this activity was to show them that all cities have interesting places and things to see and do, not only the most well-known touristic cities such as Ouro Preto, Mariana, Diamantina etc. in Minas Gerais. Also, the selection of places to visit did not have to be restricted to commercial standards or hierarchies that only privilege patrimonial sites, situated within economic or hegemonic centers.

*One of my favorite cities in São Paulo is Santo Antonio do Pinhal because it was the first place my husband and I visited together when we started dating 10 years ago. It is a cold city, up the mountains, next to Campos do Jordão. There are lots of attractions there such as good restaurants, beautiful cold waterfalls and cute gardens. We love Pico Agudo, from where watching the sunset is a wonderful experience, and Estação Eugênio Lefrèvre, from where we can see the Valley (Vale do Paraíba) down there. We used to go to this city for lunch and/or a nice afternoon when we lived in the region. Here are some pictures we took there this month (July 2021), on our way back to Belo Horizonte.*

**Table 4 – Example for the Forum Participation**  
Source: Prepared by the authors

The next task involved getting to know two well-known tourism companies and their services by visiting their websites and answering the questions proposed in the handout. The answers were discussed in the weekly online class. One of the aims with this task was to show students different kinds of products and services available in the tourism market, possibilities for their future in the area in Minas Gerais, which is a rich state in terms of natural, cultural and historical beauties.

The first company, Sandeman's, provides walking tours. The website and the questions proposed were:

<https://www.neweuropetours.eu/>  
<https://www.trekkssoft.com/en/success-stories/sandemans>

What kind of service does Sandeman's offer?  
In which cities can we find it?  
What called your attention about this company?  
Is there any company in Minas Gerais that offers the same type of service?

**Table 5 – Activity on Products and Services in the Tourism Market – Part 1**  
Source: Prepared and selected by the authors

The second company is Lonely Planet which offers a range of products and services regarding traveling, such as guides, books and reviews, for example, via a YouTube channel and its webpage. We selected samples to work on for close observation of language topics and rhetorical movements, such as described in the "detailed process" by Ramos (2004). As we mentioned earlier, in travel guides it is common to find "descriptive" stages mingled with the "touring" movements, in which linguistic structures like "giving directions" are used together with "adjectives" and other description language that, like in advertising, have the purpose of introducing the places as well as involving and persuading the audience to visit them.

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/>  
<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/about/story>  
<https://travelhappy.info/travel-books/the-lonely-planet-story-tony-and-maureen-wheeler-book-review/>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lonely\\_Planet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lonely_Planet)

How did Lonely Planet start over 40 years ago?  
What services does it offer nowadays?  
What called your attention about this company?  
Would you like to work for it? Why (not)?

**Table 6 – Activity on Products and Services in the Tourism Market – Part 2**  
Source: Prepared and selected by the authors

The next task entailed the life as a tour guide with all its positive and negative aspects. In pairs, the students had to write a short essay (about a page long) on the

work of a tour guide. The first step was watching the videos and taking notes of what called their attention. Here, we also highlighted linguistic aspects (eliciting examples from the video and writing on the virtual board during the class) such as the use of adjectives and expressions related to giving directions or guiding. We drew the student's attention to the way the tour guides started their video and how they ended it, calling attention to "negotiation" movements, such as involvement of the audience and persuasion.

Lesson 11 - A GOOD Tour Guide vs A GREAT Tour Guide:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZ\\_gclzvol0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZ_gclzvol0)

A day in the life of a tour guide: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLXNIBVPTNM>

**Table 7 – Activity "Life as a Tour Guide" – Part 1**  
Source: *Youtube*

The second step also involved watching one or more videos which show what a tour guide's day is like.

Canal do YouTube Discover Canada Tours - It's A Guide's Life – Seasons 1 and 2:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/Discovercanadatours>

**Table 8 – Activity "Life as a Tour Guide" – Part 2**  
Source: *Youtube channel Discover Canada Tours*

The third step focused on planning their writing, organizing the notes taken while watching the videos. The link below was provided as a source for them to learn how to plan their writing and the professors highlighted the importance of planning for effective writing. While choosing materials, especially the videos, and preparing the facilitating tasks, the teachers had in mind the fact that some of the students had a basic level of English. Students said that going over the tasks in pairs/trios helped them grasp the essential points of the videos and organize their writing. They also mentioned the material chosen was not that difficult, that the images and situations helped them infer meanings and understand what was necessary to perform the tasks. Besides, they mentioned the use of technological resources such as automatic subtitles and translators, which gave the professors a good opportunity to work on their pros and

cons in language learning with the students and give them some tips to improve their skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), for instance, writing plan; skimming and scanning; etc.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/skillswise/planning-your-writing/z46nqp3>

**Table 9 – Activity “Writing Plan”**  
Source: BBC site

The fourth facilitating task was about tour guiding and it aimed at improving students’ knowledge on vocabulary, expressions and grammar features regarding tourism. Its first step was to study the content available in the websites below, taking notes of new words and expressions, questions and curiosities to be shared in the synchronous moment of the week orally or with the use of the *Jamboard* and/or the *Teams* chat.

<https://www.englishclub.com/english-for-work/tour-guide-vocabulary.htm>  
<https://www.englishclub.com/english-for-work/tour-guide-answering-questions.htm>  
<https://www.englishclub.com/english-for-work/tour-guide-safety.htm>  
<https://www.englishclub.com/english-for-work/tour-guide-interest.htm>  
<https://www.englishclub.com/english-for-work/tour-guide-sample-speech.htm> .

**Table 10 – Activity “Improving Knowledge on Vocabulary, Expressions and Grammar Features Regarding Tourism”**  
Source: English Club Site

The second step was doing the exercises on the websites below, writing down doubts/questions that might arise and interesting findings. Students were told to pay close attention to the way sentences were built. During the synchronous, the teachers elicited from the students vocabulary, expressions and linguistic features studied, provided them with extra details on the topics and answered their questions.

<https://www.englishclub.com/english-for-work/tour-guide-vocabulary-quiz.htm>  
<https://www.englishformyjob.com/english-tourist-information1.html>  
<https://www.englishformyjob.com/english-tourist-information2.html>  
<https://www.englishformyjob.com/english-tourist-information3.html>

**Table 11 – Activity “Tourist Information”**  
Source: English Club site



The third step was watching the videos below paying special attention to pronunciation and intonation and useful words and expressions which might appear. During the synchronous class of the week students shared orally or with the use of the *Jamboard* and/or the *Teams* chat what they had learned with the videos. Besides they could share things they knew about the topics being discussed.

Visit Minas Gerais - 5 Tips for Visiting Minas Gerais, Brazil:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDzRQ39H-wo>

Historic Town of Ouro Preto (UNESCO/NHK):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WU9n61VYgEc>

Minas Gerais: the historical side – LATAM Airlines:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_6Q0M5TzLgc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6Q0M5TzLgc)

**Table 12 – Activity “Visiting Minas Gerais”**  
Source: *Youtube*

The final step, based on the previous ones, consisted of filling in the *KWL chart*<sup>3</sup> (a graphic organizer designed to activate prior knowledge, promote higher-order questioning, and engage students in metacognition, first created by Donna Ogle in 1986) below and posting it on the class’ *Jamboard* (online interactive board) used during all the synchronous weekly online meetings, as mentioned before, as a way to summarize their findings and also the points that came out during the classes, a learning tool they could always refer to when needed and used for recaps at the beginning of each online lesson along the bimester. The chart offers a kind of rubric in which the students can register and think about their own learning process.

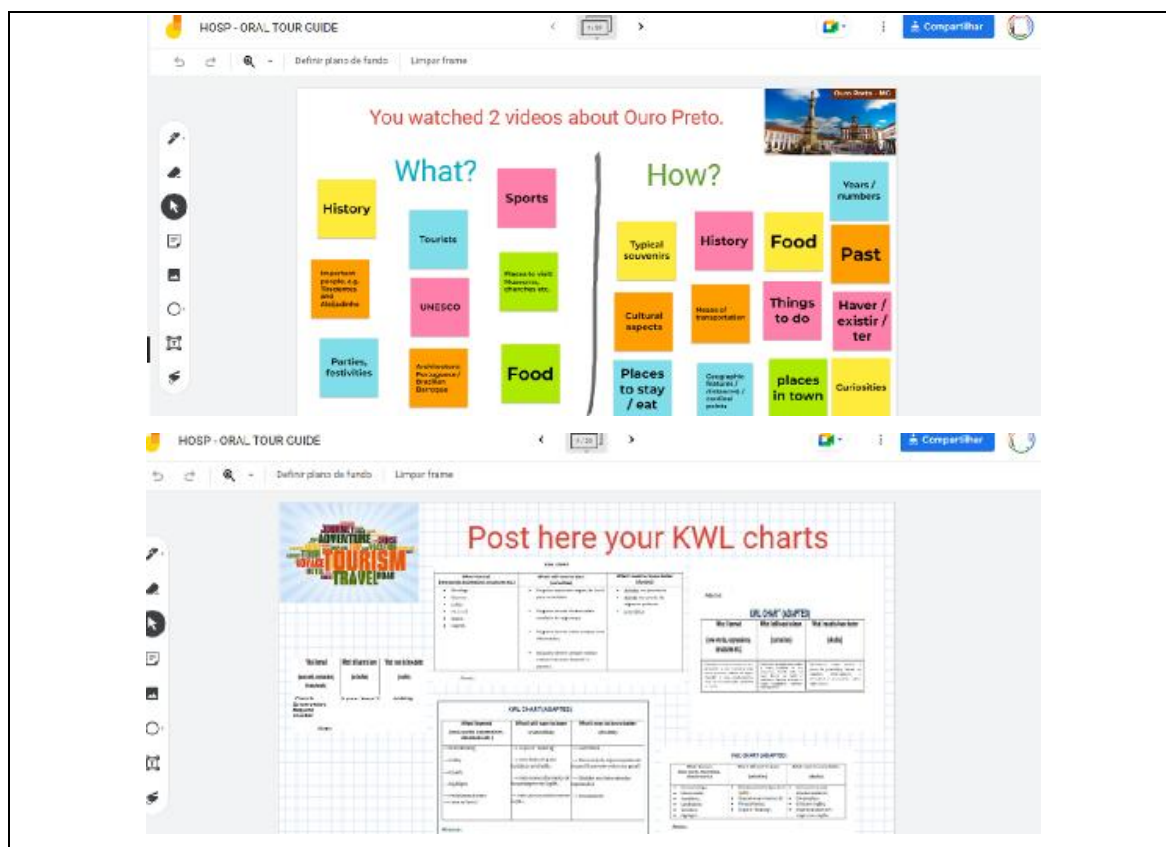
#### KWL CHART

What I learned (new words, expressions, structures etc.)	What I still want to learn (curiosities)	What I need to know better (doubts/questions)

<sup>3</sup> For more information on KWL chart: <https://www.teachthought.com/learning/what-is-a-kwl-chart/>

**Table 13 – KWL Chart**  
Source: prepared by the professors

Since the use of *Jamboard* was new to most students, this tutorial was recommended: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBLv1QvDkeo>. Besides, an important reminder was included at the end of the task: “*Remember: Practice makes perfect! ☺*”. Here are some of the collaborative work done during the online classes. The post-it notes and KWL chart shown below were inserted by the students during the synchronous classes in which the teachers made questions in order to check their previous knowledge on the topics and/or their asynchronous studies. The students had the opportunity to ask their questions and talk about what called their attention in the material proposed.

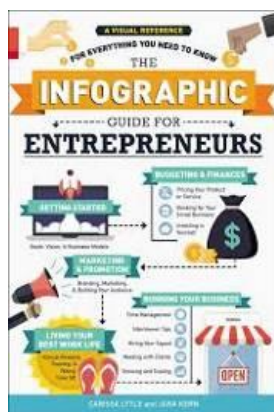


**Table 14 - Jamboard Sheets**  
Source: one of the professors' teaching resources

The fifth step regarded creating an infographic (facilitating genre chosen) on the city chosen for the oral tour guide on video. We started the lesson by asking the students to surf official sites on the city and get information such as: population, touristic attractions, typical dishes, celebrations and traditions, where to stay and to eat, best time of the year to visit, its history, geographic features (rivers, mountains etc.) and also aspects of cultural diversity.

Next, they had to create an infographic with the collected data. Due to lack of time, it was not possible to promote exposure to different infographics and reflect on the genre and its features thoroughly on the online lessons. Since creating infographics was something new to many of them, the material below was prepared and, after the asynchronous task was performed along the week, it was brought to discussion and reflection in the following online class, which took place on Fridays afternoons.

### O QUE É UM INFOGRÁFICO? COMO FAZER UM BOM INFOGRÁFICO?



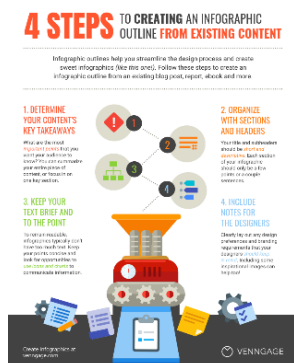
Source: <https://br.pinterest.com/pin/195695546294607247/>

According to Visme.co, infographics have skyrocketed in the last 5 years. They should be well-designed and easy to understand. Here are 9 attributes of effective infographic:

- ✓ Tell a good story (take readers by the hand)
- ✓ Take their eyes on a predefined journey
- ✓ Provide a new angle
- ✓ Have a practical value
- ✓ Be well-structured
- ✓ Send 1 key message
- ✓ Be visually appealing
- ✓ Be accurate & well-researched
- ✓ Make copy short & sweet

Source: <https://www.visme.co/videos/what-makes-a-good-infographic/>

Source: <https://venngage.com/blog/what-is-an-infographic/#5>



Há vários vídeos no YouTube a respeito. Foram selecionados dois que podem ser úteis para compreensão das características principais dos infográficos visando auxiliá-los com a realização da atividade solicitada.

**How to Create an Infographic - Part 1: What Makes a Good Infographic?**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLxQAa5Sras>

**How to Create an Infographic - Part 2: Types of Infographics**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_O5FxO\\_DRk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_O5FxO_DRk)

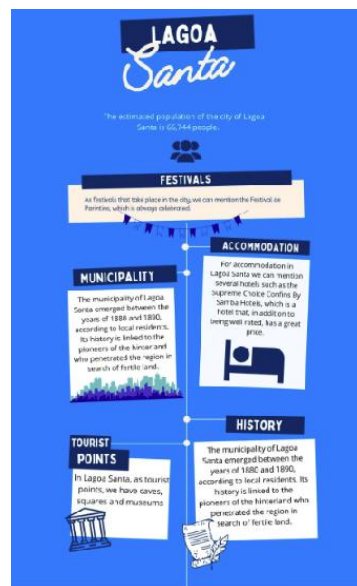
Este link também pode ser útil:

<https://brasilecola.uol.com.br/redacao/genero-textual-infografico.htm>

**Table 15 – Infographic Instructions**  
Source: indicated links/ teachers' selections

To get to know more about the attributes of a good infographic, students were advised to take a look at the websites used as references for the handout. Besides, some videos and other links were suggested.

Here are some of the infographics created by the students:



Source: Professors' personal files

The infographics were corrected by the teachers and feedback was given to each pair through *WhatsApp* and/or *Teams*.

Then, in the handout students could read a description of the *final production*, which is the core of the final “application” stage described by Ramos (2004):



Agora, é só partir para a **escrita e reescrita do SCRIPT** que norteará a gravação do vídeo. Faremos reuniões de *feedback* e planejamento com cada dupla/trio, trabalhando inclusive a pronúncia e a entonação. 😊

**Table 16** - Final Task Instructions

Here are some prints of the videos to illustrate the accomplishment of the final task.



Source: Professors' personal files

Regarding evaluation, it is important to highlight that at CEFET-MG, the first and the third bimesters are worth 20 points and the second and the fourth 30 points, summing up 100 points a year. As for the second bimester we are presenting in this paper, the evaluative tasks, mentioned in the didactic plan for the bimester<sup>4</sup>, were the following:

5. FORMAS DE AVALIAÇÃO DA APRENDIZAGEM	
<b>A nota do 2º bimestre será composta pelos seguintes elementos:</b>	
1. (INDIVIDUAL) Participação no Fórum "What's your favorite city in MG?" – 2,00	
2. (EMDUPLAS/TRIOS) Estudo dirigido sobre empresas de turismo - 4,00	
3. (EMDUPLAS/TRIOS) Infográfico sobre cidade sorteada – 4,00	
4. (EMDUPLAS/TRIOS) Versão inicial do Script do Oral Tour Guide – 3,00	
5. (EMDUPLAS/TRIOS) Versão final do Script do Oral Tour Guide – 5,00	
6. (INDIVIDUAL) Autoavaliação – 2,00	
7. (EMDUPLAS/TRIOS) Video Oral Tour Guide (1 a 2 minutos) – 10,00	
<b>Totalizando: 30,00</b>	

**Table 17:** Evaluative Tasks for the Second Bimester

Source: material prepared by the professors

<sup>4</sup> **PLANO DE TRABALHO PARA ERE – 1º ANO DE HOSPEDAGEM**, according to INSTRUÇÃO NORMATIVA Nº 01/2020, DE 07 DE AGOSTO DE 2020 do CEFET-MG, available for students via SIGAA.



It is important to mention that the extra task/activity below was proposed based on the professors' analysis of students' needs along the first bimester. Some of them were beginners and needed some help on basic vocabulary and grammar.

### TAREFA ASSÍNCRONA EXTRA: SOME LINGUISTIC ASPECTS

Para apresentar bem uma cidade (oral tour guide - vídeo), precisamos de frases como: há cachoeiras na cidade, há cinco igrejas, não há agências bancárias etc. Por isso, vale estudar/revisar como construir este tipo de frases em inglês.

Podemos usar o verbo **HAVE (GOT)**, por exemplo:

- Mariana has (got) many tourist attractions.
- Ouro Preto has (got) a lot of museums such as Museu da Inconfidência, Museu Aleijadinho and Museu do Ouro.
- Lavras Novas hasn't (got) banks / gas stations.

Porém, é comum usarmos **THERE TO BE**, no qual vamos focar este estudo.

#### 1) Leia a explicação:

We use *there is* and *there are* when we first refer to the **existence or presence** of someone or something:

***There's** a letter on your desk. Julia brought it from the mail room.*

***There are** three Japanese students in my class.*

*There is* and *there's* are both singular forms. We use *there's* more commonly in informal speaking:

***There is** a new cafe in the centre of town which sells Indonesian food.*

*She's very determined and **there's** no chance she will change her mind.*

*There are* is the plural form of *there is* and *there's*:

***There are** two new buildings next to the school. They are both science buildings.*

In speaking and in some informal writing, we use *there's* even when it refers to more than one. This use could be considered incorrect in formal writing or in an examination:

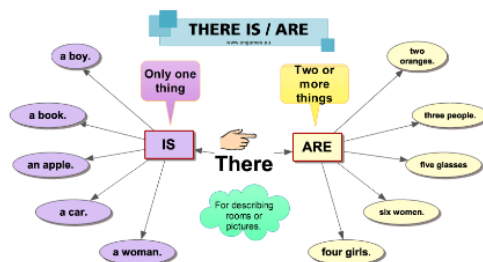
***There's** three other people who are still to come.*

***There's** lots of cars in the car park.*

#### 2) Assista ao vídeo abaixo:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKEt1xrDmg0>

#### 3) Observe o *Mind Map* abaixo, que resume o tema:



**Para praticar**, faça os exercícios nos sites abaixo e, anote as dúvidas, se houver.

[https://www.english-hilfen.de/en/exercises/various/there\\_is\\_there\\_are.htm](https://www.english-hilfen.de/en/exercises/various/there_is_there_are.htm)  
[https://www.english-hilfen.de/en/exercises/various/there\\_is\\_there\\_are3.htm](https://www.english-hilfen.de/en/exercises/various/there_is_there_are3.htm)  
<https://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=4913>  
<https://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=4627>

Devemos tomar cuidado para não confundir **existência/presença** com **posse**. Dê uma olhadinha no link abaixo:

<https://www.oteacher.com.br/quando-usar-have-ou-there-isare/>

**Agora, para aprimorar seu vocabulário sobre *places and people in town*, faça os exercícios abaixo e poste-os no SIGAA.**

**Table 18:** Support Exercises

Source: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/pt/gramatica/gramatica-britanica/there-is-there-s-and-there-are>; <http://www.engames.eu/easy-grammar/>; <https://www.english-hilfen>

The exercises proposed above are available at:  
<https://www.linguahouse.com/pt/esl-lesson-plans/general-english/cities-and-people>.  
 The student worksheet (colour) was downloaded and inserted on SIGAA as a part of the handout.

Before commenting on the results obtained and sharing some of our impressions during the classes, it is necessary to highlight that this didactic sequence was delivered during the lockdown and that the students had had just one face to face lesson in March 2020 before classes were cancelled to be resumed 3 months later. It

was a moment of psychological, physical and financial difficulties for all involved, students and professors. It is also important to mention the students had no access to the textbook adopted at that time and some of them had problems regarding technology such as poor internet connection and/or lack of devices which made it difficult, for instance, to take part in the online synchronous. Fortunately, CEFET-MG had some programs to help students in vulnerable situations with equipment and/or access to the internet aiming at promoting teacher-student interaction and at minimizing the education deficits. *WhatsApp* and *Teams* groups and messages were tools used to keep in contact, to promote learning asynchronously since some of them could not be online weekly because they shared the computer with other family members and/or their internet package was not enough for all the online classes, among other reasons.

As Motoki and others (2021) point out, the context of the pandemics brought great challenges for teachers and students, especially because of the lack of direct contact during the lessons and the difficulties to adjust to digital technology. One important solution, in our case, was the organization of study guidelines, with clear steps and objectives so that the students could continue learning and develop autonomy during the emergency period.

Another difficulty was the generalized use of the *Google Translator* tool when building the infographics and the video scripts. We had to dedicate time during the lessons to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this tool in order to teach them how to use it in a way that did not hinder their learning development, their writing skills, nor their ability to revise their own texts. However, we realized that the awareness regarding the downsides to artificial intelligence requires a long-term debate at school.

### 3. SOME RESULTS AND IMPRESSIONS

Despite the obstacles, the students were highly motivated to work on genres which were specific to their areas of study. The videos were very creative and even though some of them were afraid to speak in English, they did a great job facing their fears and difficulties. For reasons regarding privacy, the videos were not published on social media. They were shared by *Google Drive* and exhibited in an online class. Students shared that they liked the experience of getting to know more of their home

state and said the tips learned during the lessons would be useful in the future when receiving Brazilian tourists, not only foreigners. It was also pointed that their English improved and that they could learn the English they need in their future area – Tourism.

From the comments posted on our “course evaluation” section on SIGAA, they felt “contemplated” and “heard”. They were also happy to work in groups and to interact online in the context of social isolation during the pandemics. In spite of access difficulties, the students also praised the changes in online classes, compared to the face-to-face lessons they were used to in Middle School, such as the incorporation of digital tools, such as *Google Drive*, *Padlet* and *Jamboard*, and of authentic material to the classroom. However, in our course evaluation, there were also some comments on the difficulties to deal with digital literacy and to elaborate complex products such as the tour video or the infographic.

On the whole, the students could experience project work and could get immersed in the analysis of professional material related to their field. They could learn by practice that in order to succeed in their professional lives, it is necessary to research on the market to understand its diversity of tastes, profiles and interests. It is also necessary to engage on collaborative work and to master discourses and genres in order to participate more actively and critically in their social circles. These aspects were visible in their own productions and on the self-evaluations they handed over by the end of the term.

Finally, the stage-format of genre study helped the students have a clear view of their learning progress, from the starting objectives to the acquired skills in the development of the final productions. Besides, the handouts, providing them clear steps in order to accomplish the final task, made it possible for them to know beforehand where we were heading to, one of the core assets of the task-based learning. Highlighting the objectives and the steps proved to be very useful and fruitful, especially in the chaos we went through during the pandemics.

In short, teaching and learning during the pandemics was a great challenge to all of us, students and teachers. Together we strove to find ways to keep teaching and learning. Thus, it is important to mention that we did our best with the resources we had, in accordance with the educational documents issued by the Federal Government and our institution. Sometimes it worked well, others not so well. We had to plan and replan and above all to be kind, understanding and flexible to face it all. We also took more time than usual to diagnose the student’s needs due difficulties of

communication. Looking back as we did while writing this paper, we could see how much we learned and changed with this experience. Besides, it was made clearer to us the importance of 1) paying close attention to the context (social, historical, ideological etc.) in which we teach; 2) not taking students' needs and desires within this context for granted; 3) counting on our peers; among others. Finally, having a colleague to count on and to share was fundamental and made our stepping into the unknown during the pandemics much lighter and easier.

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