Proposing the Integration of Scrum and ESP for EFL Tourism Students: Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach

Rocío Gragera

rocio.gragera@ulpgc.es

Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain

Isabel Soto Déniz (iD)

isabel.soto@ulpgc.es

Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain

ABSTRACT

This study explores the integration of Scrum methodology into English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction for Tourism students to address absenteeism, disengagement, and academic underperformance at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Spain). Combining Scrum's iterative, team-based framework with ESP principles, the research aimed to enhance student engagement, language proficiency, teamwork, and self-management. Conducted over 11 weeks with second-year Tourism students, the project used real-world tasks, such as customer service interactions and conflict resolution, structured into collaborative sprints with regular feedback and reflection. The results revealed improvements in student motivation, language skills and teamwork abilities. Challenges included occasional issues with task distribution and workload management. Overall, the study demonstrates that integrating Scrum with ESP creates a dynamic and effective learning environment, aligning language instruction with professional needs while promoting active participation and skill development.

Keywords: *Scrum methodology; collaborative learning; English for Specific Purposes; agile learning; tourism education.*
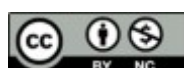
I. INTRODUCTION

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is an indispensable component of the curriculum for Tourism students, where effective communication in English is vital to their professional success. Proficiency in English is not only required for interacting with international clients but also for navigating complex professional environments that demand strong interpersonal and cultural competence. However, despite its importance, EFL courses at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria's Tourism Faculty (Spain), where this study has been conducted, often face significant challenges, most notably absenteeism and academic underachievement. Many students struggle to see the relevance of English language instruction in relation to their future career needs. This gap between the curriculum and real-world application frequently results in disengagement, which contributes to poor academic performance and high dropout rates.

To address these issues, this paper explores how the integration of Scrum, an agile project management framework developed by Jeff Sutherland and Ken Schwaber, can reinforce EFL instruction. Originally designed to streamline the management of complex software development projects, Scrum emphasizes iterative cycles, known as sprints, which are aimed at producing tangible results within short time frames. Key principles of Scrum, such as collaboration, accountability, and continuous feedback, lend themselves well to educational contexts, particularly in courses designed to meet the specific needs of students, such as English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

In Tourism education, the use of ESP provides a focused, context-specific approach to language teaching, as it enables students to acquire language skills that directly correlate with their future professional roles in customer service, hospitality management, and professional communication. The combination of ESP and Scrum methodology creates a dynamic and interactive learning environment where students can actively apply their English skills in scenarios directly linked to their career paths. The theoretical foundation suggests a pathway for enhancing both student engagement and language

acquisition through the integration of these two approaches. The result is a framework that equips students with the practical communication skills required to excel in the tourism industry.

This paper will explore the rationale behind combining Scrum methodology with ESP principles, highlighting how such an integration can address persistent challenges in tourism-related EFL courses. Additionally, it discusses the potential benefits of EduScrum, the educational adaptation of Scrum, which has been specifically tailored to promote active learning and foster deeper engagement in collaborative projects (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2017; Serrador & Pinto, 2015).

II. OBJECTIVES

II.1. General objectives

The primary objective of this research is to propose and evaluate the feasibility of integrating English for Specific Purposes (ESP) principles within a Scrum-based instructional methodology. The ultimate goal is to ensure that Tourism students, who require not only general English proficiency but also specific language skills relevant to their professional contexts, receive a tailored, practical education, necessary to succeed in their future careers.

This proposed framework aims to offer solutions to two major challenges in EFL instruction for Tourism students: absenteeism and disengagement. The course will be structured around collaborative sprints, each focusing on specific tasks directly related to tourism. By integrating Scrum, students will engage in active, team-based learning, which promotes a deeper understanding of the material and encourages greater participation. Furthermore, the iterative nature of Scrum aligns with the demands of modern learning environments, where adaptability, teamwork, and reflection are critical for academic success.

II.2. Specific objectives

Promoting Collaboration and Teamwork: Scrum places a strong emphasis on collaborative, team-based learning. By incorporating Scrum into an ESP course, students will engage in group tasks that simulate real-world tourism scenarios, such as handling customer complaints or managing tour groups. This collaborative approach distributes responsibility among team members, fostering a sense of accountability while enhancing communication and problem-solving skills.

Improving Time Management and Efficiency: Scrum's structure allows students to work in short, focused sprints. Each sprint is designed to help students focus on manageable, short-term goals, which in turn enhances their time management skills. By aligning with Sutherland's principle of 'achieving twice the work in half the time,' this methodology teaches students how to prioritize tasks and manage their workload efficiently, key skills that are critical in both academic and professional settings.

Developing Practical Language Skills: The ESP framework ensures that the language tasks are directly aligned with the practical needs of the tourism industry. Students will develop specific competencies, such as drafting formal emails, interacting with customers in English, and managing conflict resolution in tourist scenarios. This focus on real-world language use equips students with the tools they need to succeed in their professional careers.

Enhancing Student Self-Management and Reflection: The iterative cycles of Scrum encourage students to reflect on their learning and progress at the end of each sprint. Reflection is a key component of Scrum's principle of continuous improvement, which enables students to adapt and refine their approaches based on feedback. By encouraging self-assessment and reflection, students will develop greater autonomy and a more proactive approach to their learning.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical foundation of this study rests on two key frameworks: Scrum methodology and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Both have unique but complementary characteristics that, when integrated, provide a structured and collaborative learning environment tailored to the needs of Tourism students.

III.1. Social Constructivism, Scaffolding and Active Learning

Social constructivism, based on Vygotsky's theories, underscores the critical role of social interaction and collaboration in the learning process. Vygotsky (1978) argued that knowledge is constructed through social engagement and cultural influences, with learning driving development. This perspective contrasts with Piaget's view that development precedes learning (Amine & Asl, 2015), highlighting the dynamic interplay between social context and cognitive growth.

At the heart of Vygotsky's theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which represents the gap between what learners can achieve independently and what they can accomplish with guidance from teachers or peers (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018). Social interaction within the ZPD fosters intellectual growth, helping learners reach their full potential (Churcher et al., 2014). This principle resonates with Scrum's collaborative framework, where students build knowledge through shared experiences and dialogue, enabling iterative learning and continuous improvement.

Further emphasizing the role of cultural and social contexts, social constructivism highlights that students learn most effectively with scaffolding—temporary, structured support that is gradually withdrawn as they gain competence (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018). Cooperative learning complements this approach by encouraging collaboration and the sharing of perspectives among students, which supports deeper internalization of knowledge (Amineh & Asl, 2015). These principles align seamlessly with Scrum's iterative approach, where group collaboration and instructor facilitation are vital for sustained progress.

Language, as emphasized by Vygotsky, is a pivotal tool in learning, serving as a bridge between thought and consciousness. Classroom dialogue and discussion foster critical thinking and help students construct personal meaning (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Additionally, diversity and cultural influences shape students' learning experiences and understanding. Teachers play a crucial role in embracing this diversity, fostering meaningful dialogue about curriculum content and students' varied backgrounds. Effective communication and shared understanding among participants are fundamental to successful learning in a social constructivist environment (Churcher et al., 2014).

Key strategies derived from social constructivism, such as scaffolding, are central to this study. Scaffolding involves providing temporary, tailored support to help students complete tasks beyond their current abilities, gradually reducing assistance as they develop competence (Bruner, 1988). Within Scrum, scaffolding manifests through the instructor's role as a facilitator, guiding students through increasingly complex tasks while promoting autonomy and self-regulation.

Bruner's cognitive theory complements social constructivism by emphasizing discovery learning and iterative, feedback-driven processes. His concept of the spiral curriculum, which revisits foundational concepts at progressively deeper levels, aligns closely with Scrum's iterative sprints. This approach enables students to gradually build and refine their understanding over time (Bruner, 1988). As noted by Nur Arsyad et al., (2024), Bruner's theory is particularly impactful in elementary education, where scaffolding and discovery learning actively engage students and connect abstract ideas to real-world contexts. These strategies not only deepen understanding but also equip learners with critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for addressing future challenges.

III.2. Scrum methodology

Scrum, developed by Jeff Sutherland and Ken Schwaber to manage complex software projects, has evolved into a versatile framework applied across various fields, including education. Its focus on iterative work cycles (sprints), continuous feedback, and team

collaboration makes it an effective approach for promoting active learning (Sutherland, 2014). In educational contexts, Scrum enables students to engage in iterative learning processes, reflect on their performance, receive feedback, and continuously improve.

In these settings, Scrum roles like Scrum Master and Product Owner are adapted to foster accountability and collaboration. The instructor typically assumes the role of Product Owner, establishing learning objectives and guiding students, while students share responsibility for their progress, encouraging self-regulation and teamwork (Vila-Grau & Capuz-Rizo, 2021). This collaborative model aligns with social constructivist principles, where knowledge is constructed through interaction and shared experiences, as emphasized by Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Scrum's iterative structure is particularly effective for Tourism students learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Dividing course content into manageable sprints allows students to concentrate on specific language tasks relevant to their future professional roles, such as handling customer complaints, managing bookings, and navigating cultural interactions in tourism. This method reduces cognitive overload and supports incremental skill development, with each sprint building on the achievements of the previous one (Voštinár, 2024).

Additionally, Scrum's principles of transparency, inspection, and adaptation ensure that students stay engaged and accountable. Regular sprint reviews and retrospectives provide opportunities for reflection and refinement, helping students cultivate crucial soft skills such as teamwork, communication, and leadership, which are essential for both academic success and professional growth (Delhij et al., 2015).

III.3. The Role of Agile Methodologies in Education

Agile methodologies, particularly Scrum, have gained prominence in education as a flexible framework that enhances engagement, learning outcomes, and behavioral interventions (Serrador & Pinto, 2015). Agile Teaching/Learning Methodology (ATML), derived from the Agile Methodology introduced in 2002, applies these principles to education by emphasizing flexibility, collaboration, and the integration of professional

knowledge with digital and soft skills. Initially associated with computer science, ATML has expanded into interdisciplinary fields like bioeconomy and healthcare, promoting adaptability and creativity to address complex challenges (Gorczyca et al., 2024).

The iterative and collaborative nature of agile teaching aligns closely with Problem-Based Learning (PBL). Research demonstrates that PBL fosters practical knowledge, teamwork, and critical thinking by engaging students in real-world scenarios. For instance, a third-year information systems module in South Africa successfully integrated PBL with agile practices, providing students with hands-on experience and eliciting positive feedback. This iterative approach has proven to be more compatible with agile methodologies like Scrum than traditional waterfall methods (Marnewick, 2023).

Agile project management in education also reflects the principles of active learning and self-regulated education emphasized in ATML (Yang et al., 2019). Through structured yet flexible project units, students manage tasks, track progress, and participate in feedback sessions. Teachers guide this process by addressing challenges and evaluating team performance, ensuring gradual skill development. This method enhances intrinsic motivation, critical thinking, and collaborative learning while fostering adaptability to evolving requirements (Yang et al., 2019).

Beyond education, agile methodologies have been adapted to address behavioral challenges, such as conduct disorder. Affecting approximately 5% of children, this condition involves persistent violations of social norms and poses risks such as school drop-out and incarceration. Digital tools developed using agile methodologies address these challenges by providing real-time, evidence-based guidance. For example, a time-out app created with an agile scrum framework simplifies protocols and enhances effectiveness, demonstrating the adaptability of Scrum principles beyond software development, offering user-focused solutions for behavioral interventions (Hodson et al., 2024).

The agile scrum approach exemplifies the versatility of iterative methodologies across educational, behavioral, and professional domains. By integrating feedback loops,

collaborative learning, and problem-solving frameworks, agile methods enhance student engagement, skill development, and practical outcomes. These approaches prepare students for dynamic professional environments while addressing real-world challenges through innovative, adaptable solutions (Yang et al., 2019; Hodson et al., 2024).

III.4. The Integration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) with Agile Learning

ESP, as defined by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), is a learner-centered approach that focuses on equipping students with the specific language skills required for success in their professional or academic fields. Unlike general EFL courses, which address broad language topics, ESP tailors its content to meet the unique needs of students. For Tourism students, this includes developing communication skills for customer service, hospitality management, and other professional contexts.

The integration of ESP with Scrum methodology creates an effective framework for practical, real-world skill application. In an ESP course for Tourism students, language tasks are directly aligned with their professional needs, such as negotiating with clients, managing bookings, and resolving customer complaints in English (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). This alignment allows instructors to design targeted learning objectives that make the learning process more engaging and relevant to students' career paths.

Additionally, by structuring language tasks around real-world scenario in a low-risk setting, such as handling customer complaints or organizing tour activities, ESP combined with Scrum fosters meaningful, goal-oriented learning (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018). This practical focus enhances students' motivation and underscores the relevance of their language studies to their future careers. This hands-on approach strengthens language acquisition while boosting their confidence in professional communication.

Furthermore, Scrum's iterative process offers regular feedback, enabling students to refine their skills and achieve continuous improvement while taking an active role in their education. This approach encourages ownership of their learning, self-reflection, and peer collaboration, all of which are vital for success in the tourism industry. By

aligning language tasks with real-world scenarios, students see the practical relevance of their English studies, which leads to increased motivation and reduced absenteeism (Mahnic, 2012; Vila-Grau & Capuz-Rizo, 2021).

IV. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodology designed for integrating Scrum with English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in a Tourism-focused EFL course. The proposed course structure is built around Scrum's iterative, team-based approach, ensuring that students engage in practical, relevant language tasks while developing key professional skills. The methodology has been crafted to meet the specific language needs of Tourism students, emphasizing collaborative learning, time management, and continuous feedback.

IV.1. Subjects of study

The subjects of this study consist of a group of 96 second-year undergraduate students from the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria's Tourism Faculty in Spain, who have taken part in an ESP scrum-based project for a period of 11 weeks.

IV.2. Materials

This project and its consequent study have made use of accessible materials, mostly digital, namely Microsoft One Drive apps and the university's virtual campus (Moodle). A virtual survey was completed by 89 of the 96 participants. The use of these digital materials was possible thanks to the participants' personal means, to the university's free software, platforms and licenses and to the university's Language Laboratory, which provides the students with computers for tests and projects.

In addition, the university's Administrative and Support Personnel provided the students with desks and chairs to create the foundation of their stands, which they decorated with personal materials designed and created by each group. Moreover, we made use of the Faculty of Tourism's main hall in order to celebrate the final event of the project, a Tourism Fair.

IV.3. Procedure

IV.3.1. Course Structure: Organizing Learning into Sprints

The course will be organized into two-week sprints, each focusing on a set of language tasks relevant to the tourism industry. These tasks are designed to mimic real-world scenarios, such as customer service interactions, handling complaints, writing formal business emails, and conducting tourist information sessions. By breaking the course into manageable sprints, students can focus on specific language skills without becoming overwhelmed by the volume of material. This structure also allows for regular feedback and reflection, which are key components of the Scrum methodology (Sutherland, 2014).

Each sprint will begin with a sprint planning session, during which the students, working in teams, will select tasks from a backlog of activities prepared by the instructor (Product Owner). These tasks will include a mix of oral, written, and interactive activities, all of which are designed to help students practice their language skills in a professional tourism context (Voštinár, 2024). Students will be encouraged to collaborate and divide tasks among themselves, fostering a sense of responsibility and teamwork.

Throughout each sprint, students will participate in daily Scrum meetings; brief, stand-up sessions where team members share their progress, discuss challenges, and plan their next steps. These daily meetings help keep students on track and ensure that they are actively engaged in their learning process (Delhij et al., 2015). The short, focused nature of these meetings also allows for continuous reflection and adjustment, helping students to stay aligned with their goals and make incremental improvements.

At the end of each sprint, students will present their work in a sprint review, where they will receive feedback from both their peers and the instructor. This feedback is critical for helping students identify areas for improvement and adjust their approach in future sprints. Following the sprint review, students will participate in a sprint retrospective, where they will reflect on what went well, what challenges they faced, and how they can improve in the future (Sutherland, 2014). This iterative process of reflection and adjustment is at the core of Scrum's principle of continuous improvement.

IV.3.1. Scrum Events in Education

The Scrum process in education revolves around several key events, including sprint planning, daily stand-ups, sprint reviews, and retrospectives (Delhij et al., 2015). In a Tourism-focused EFL course, these events help students stay on track while fostering collaboration and self-reflection.

Sprint Planning: During sprint planning, student teams, guided by the instructor (Product Owner), decide which language tasks from the backlog will be tackled during the upcoming sprint. These tasks are aligned with real-world tourism scenarios, such as managing customer inquiries or resolving conflicts in a hospitality setting. Sprint planning ensures that students are not overwhelmed by the volume of material and can focus on achieving specific, manageable goals (Vila-Grau & Capuz-Rizo, 2021).

Daily Stand-Ups: Daily stand-ups are short, five-minute meetings where students share their progress, identify any challenges, and plan their next steps. This regular check-in process helps maintain transparency and ensures that the team remains aligned with its sprint goals. In an EFL context, these meetings provide opportunities for students to practice professional communication in English, further enhancing their language proficiency (Delhij et al., 2015).

Sprint Reviews: At the end of each sprint, students present their work in a sprint review, receiving feedback from their peers and the instructor. This feedback is critical for helping students identify areas for improvement, both in their language skills and their approach to teamwork. The review also allows students to demonstrate their progress in applying English to real-world tourism scenarios (Sutherland, 2014; Vila-Grau & Capuz-Rizo, 2021).

Sprint Retrospectives: Following the sprint review, students participate in a sprint retrospective, where they reflect on what went well, what challenges they faced, and how they can improve in future sprints. This reflection process fosters a growth mindset, encouraging students to view challenges as opportunities for improvement (Sutherland, 2014; Vila-Grau & Capuz-Rizo, 2021).

IV.3.3. Implementation of Scrum in ESP Projects

By following Scrum principles, students will not only improve their language skills but also develop important soft skills such as teamwork, communication, and time management. The iterative nature of Scrum ensures continuous improvement and provides students with regular feedback, making the learning process more dynamic and responsive to their needs. The aforementioned proposal integrates the Scrum methodology into an ESP-focused Tourism Fair project.

IV.3.4. Project Overview: Tourism Fair

The *Tourism Fair* is a practical project in which students work in teams to design and present tourism stands representing various countries with Anglo-Saxon heritage. The project focuses on developing spoken production and interaction skills, with students creating both physical and digital materials to showcase tourism aspects of their assigned countries. The project promotes the use of technical vocabulary, cooperative learning, and the practical application of language skills in real-world scenarios.

IV.3.5. Temporalization of the Teaching Proposal with Scrum Integration

Introduction and Project Kick-off (Week 1)

Objective: Introduce students to the project and the Scrum methodology. Define the scope of the project and assign countries to each team.

Scrum Elements:

Sprint Planning: Hold the first sprint planning session. Each team will break down the project into smaller tasks that align with Scrum's iterative approach.

Team Formation: Students will be divided into teams of 5-6 members, with roles assigned (Scrum Master, Product Owner, and Development Team).

Project Backlog: The Product Owner (teacher) will provide a backlog of tasks related to research, content creation, and stand design.

Sprint 1 (Weeks 2-3)

Objective: Research the assigned country and begin initial content creation. Focus on identifying key tourism features (landmarks, culture, history).

Scrum Elements:

Daily Stand-ups: Teams will hold 5-minute daily stand-ups to discuss progress, obstacles, and next steps.

Sprint Review: At the end of Week 3, teams will present their research findings and receive feedback from peers and the instructor. Feedback will focus on the relevance and accuracy of the information.

Sprint Retrospective: Teams will reflect on what went well during the research phase and what could be improved for the next sprint.

Sprint 2 (Weeks 4-5)

Objective: Develop the stand design, focusing on visual and interactive elements. Begin drafting a presentation script for the fair.

Scrum Elements:

Sprint Planning: Teams will select tasks related to stand design from the backlog. Tasks may include creating visuals, collecting materials, and brainstorming interactive activities.

Daily Stand-ups: Continued daily check-ins to ensure progress on the stand design and preparation for the presentation.

Sprint Review: Teams will showcase their initial stand designs and receive feedback. This review will emphasize creativity, teamwork, and the use of technical vocabulary.

Sprint Retrospective: Reflect on the design process and team dynamics, focusing on how the design and presentation aspects can be further improved.

Sprint 3 (Weeks 6-7)

Objective: Finalize the stand and practice the presentation. Rehearse responses to potential audience questions.

Scrum Elements:

Daily Stand-ups: Ensure that the stand is ready for the presentation. Teams will finalize visual and interactive elements.

Sprint Review: Conduct a full rehearsal of the stand presentation, including a Q&A session to simulate the actual fair. The instructor will provide feedback on fluency, pronunciation, and presentation skills.

Sprint Retrospective: Teams reflect on their readiness for the tourism fair, identify any last-minute improvements, and ensure that all tasks are completed.

The Tourism Fair (Week 8)

Objective: Present the tourism stands to classmates and invited guests (other students or faculty members). Each group will simulate a tourism fair, interacting with "visitors" and promoting their assigned country.

Scrum Elements:

Final Presentation and Assessment: The final sprint review will take place as teams present their stands and engage in spoken interaction with visitors. The assessment will focus on spoken production and interaction, including fluency, creativity, and teamwork.

Post-Fair Reflection and Evaluation (Week 9)

Objective: Reflect on the learning process and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Scrum methodology in the project.

Scrum Elements:

Sprint Retrospective: Teams will reflect on their performance during the fair and discuss what they learned from the project. They will also provide feedback on the Scrum process and how it helped or hindered their learning experience.

Final Assessment: The instructor will provide final grades based on the criteria listed above, along with feedback on language use and presentation skills.

IV.4. Data treatment

Students' feedback was collected through virtual surveys containing 20 statements with a Likert scale (Strongly agree to Strongly disagree) in order to measure the strengths and weaknesses of our intervention, as well as to what extent the initial objectives of the study had been achieved. These data were afterwards transferred to an Excel spreadsheet and were analyzed statistically to extract results and draw conclusions

IV.5. Challenges and limitations

The successful implementation of Scrum methodology relies heavily on technology access and digital literacy, particularly for tools such as virtual campuses and shared drives that streamline task organization and communication. While the university provided necessary platforms and physical resources, this study acknowledges that not all students possess equal levels of digital proficiency or access to reliable technology outside of the classroom. This discrepancy could hinder the effectiveness of Scrum processes, such as daily stand-ups or sprint planning. In cases where technology access is limited, alternative methods, such as paper-based task boards or in-person progress check-ins, can be employed to maintain the structure and goals of the Scrum methodology.

Lastly, this study encountered the limitation of student adaptation to new instructional methodologies. Some participants were initially resistant to the shift from traditional, teacher-centered instruction to a more student-driven, collaborative framework. The requirement to take ownership of their learning and contribute actively in teams represented a significant adjustment for these students. While the majority ultimately adapted to and appreciated the methodology, early resistance highlights the need for gradual implementation. Providing a thorough orientation to the principles and expectations of Scrum, as well as ongoing support during the initial stages, would help ease the transition and encourage full participation.

V. RESULTS

The analysis of the survey results reveals valuable insights into the perceptions of students regarding the Tourism Fair project. The survey consisted of 20 statements, each evaluated using a Likert scale with categories ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". The data collected from the 89 participants offers a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the course methodology, collaborative dynamics, and overall project structure.

V.1. Survey results

The first statement, "I believe that the activities carried out during the project were relevant to my professional future in tourism," received predominantly positive feedback, with 61 respondents expressing agreement (20 Strongly Agree and 41 Agree). This indicates that the majority of students found the activities highly relevant to their professional goals, although 20 participants remained neutral, and 8 provided negative responses.
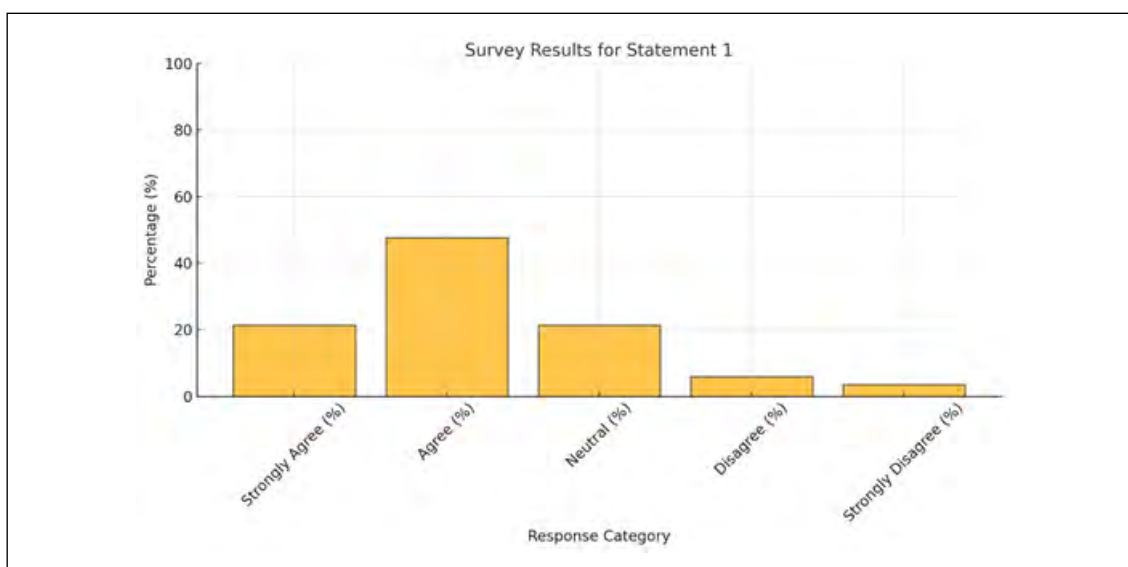
Figure 1. *Bar graph displaying the results for the relevance of the project activities for the students' professional future in tourism.*

Similarly, statement 2, "The tasks assigned at each stage were clearly linked to specific skills in the field of tourism," exhibited a strong trend of approval, with 63 positive

responses, 17 neutral, and a minimal 9 negative responses. This result suggests that the tasks were well-aligned with the intended professional skills, supporting the course's objectives effectively.
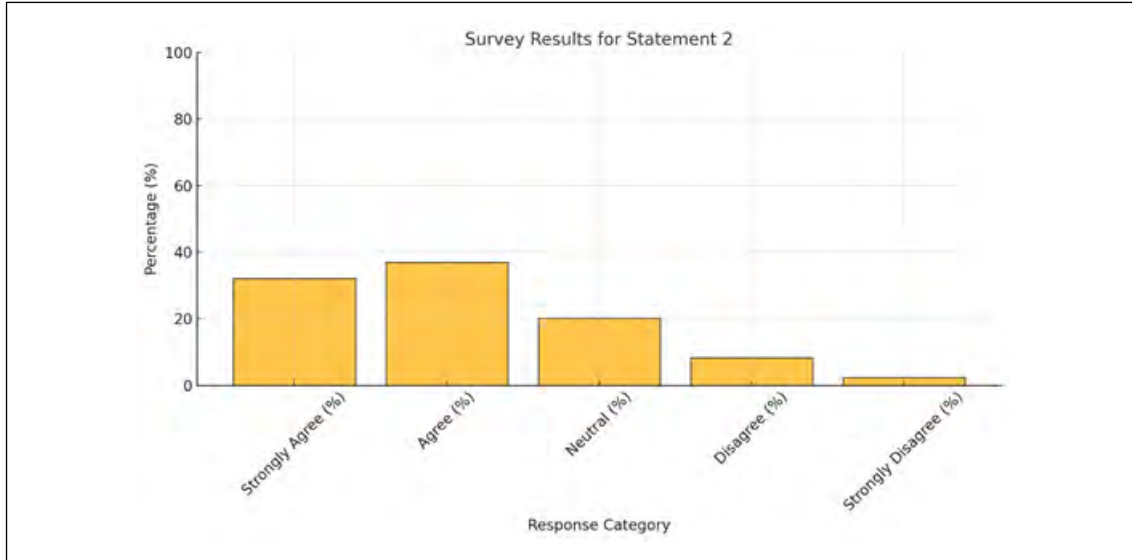
Figure 2. *Bar graph displaying the results about the connection between the tasks and specific skills of tourism.*

Statement 3, which addressed motivation with the claim *"I felt motivated to actively work within my team during each stage,"* reflected slightly more mixed results. While 48 students responded positively, 28 expressed neutrality, and 13 disagreed. The relatively high level of neutral responses suggests that not all students experienced consistent motivation throughout the project. Instead, they experienced a changing boost of motivation depending on the sprint. The balanced motivation of each member of the group needs to be taken into consideration by the Scrum Master.
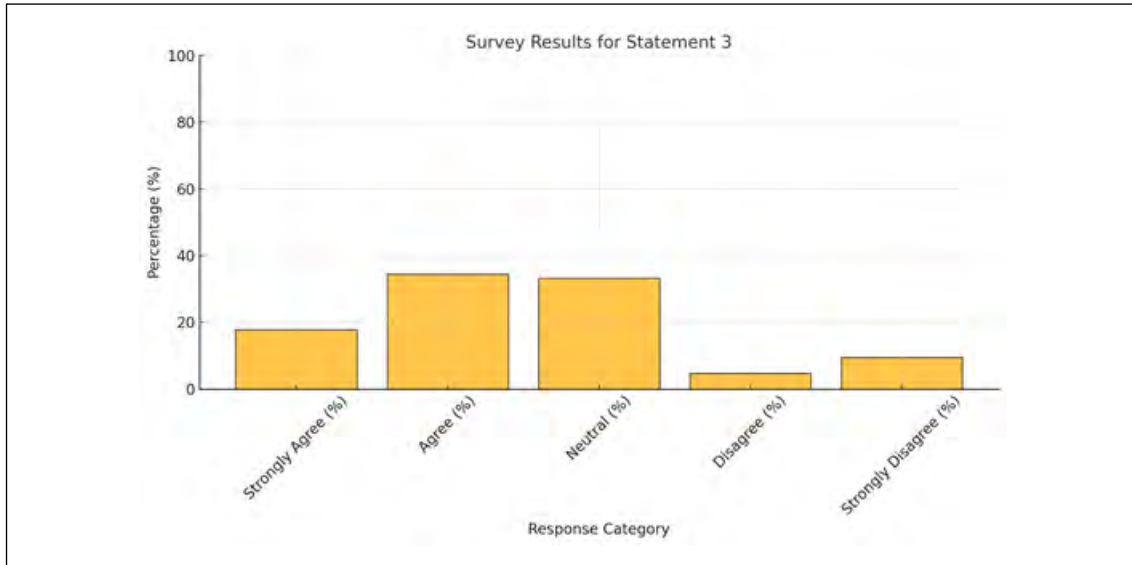
Figure 3. *Bar graph displaying the results of motivation throughout stages.*

In contrast, statement 4, "The methodology promoted collaborative work among team members," showed similar trends, with 44 positive responses, 21 neutral, and a notable 24 negative responses. These results highlight potential challenges in fostering effective collaboration within teams, as a significant portion of students did not perceive teamwork as successful or engaging.
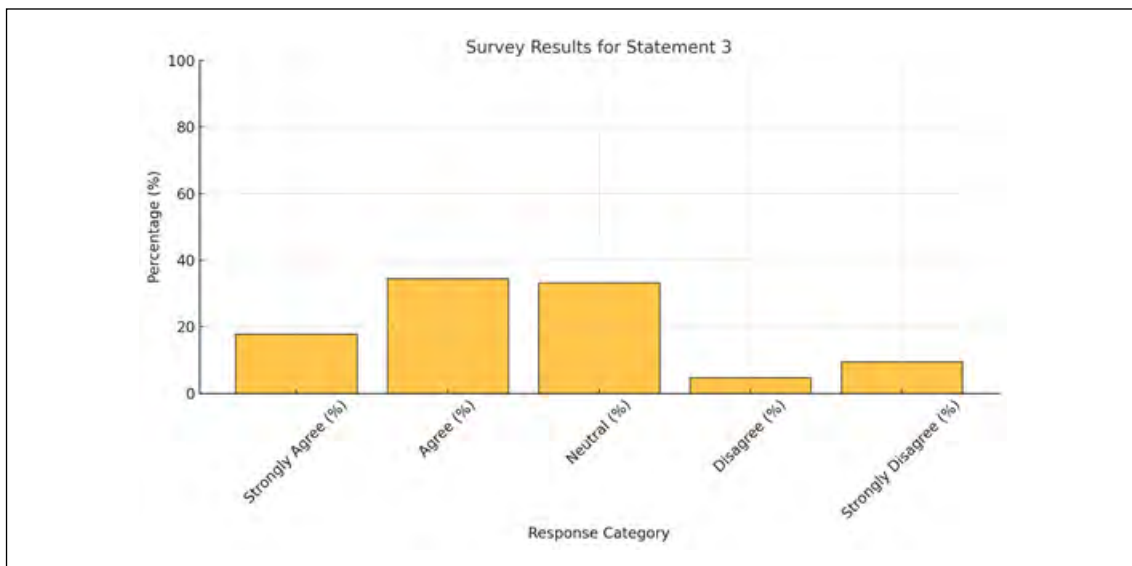

Figure 4. *Bar graph displaying the results of perception on collaborative work.*

When asked about the usefulness of review meetings for reflection, as in statement 5, the results were more divided. Out of 89 responses, 41 students responded positively,

while 25 expressed neutrality and another 23 disagreed. This division indicates that the review meetings were not universally perceived as helpful, suggesting a need to reassess their structure and purpose to make them more engaging and constructive.
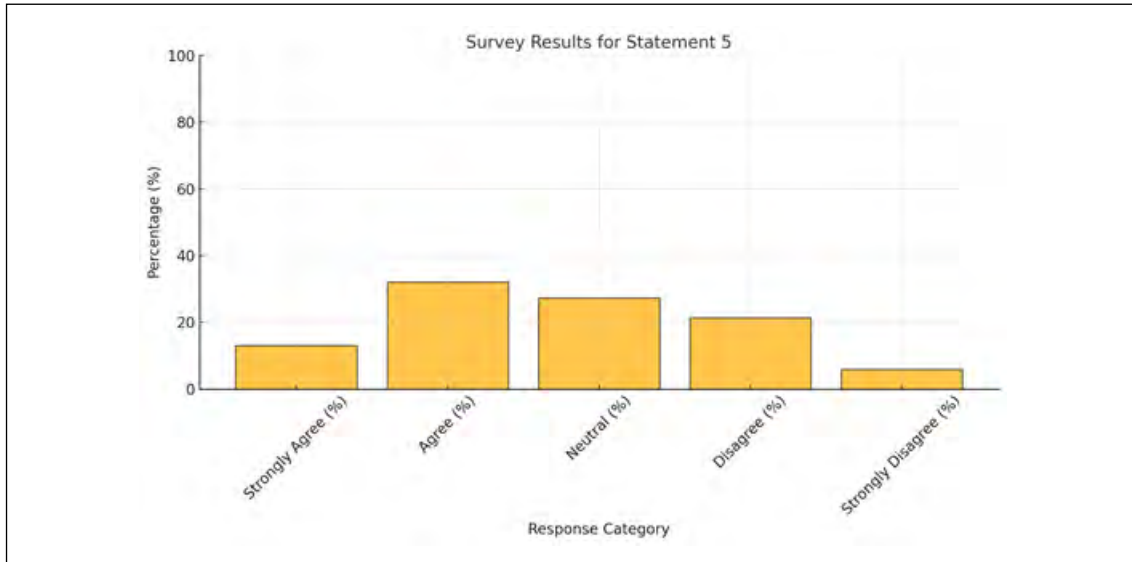
Figure 5. *Bar graph displaying the results of perception on review meetings.*

Conversely, statement 6, which focused on fairness in the distribution of tasks, received a more favorable response. A total of 54 students agreed that the tasks were distributed fairly, while 19 remained neutral, and 16 disagreed. This demonstrates that most students were satisfied with task distribution, though improvements could still be made to address the concerns of the minority.
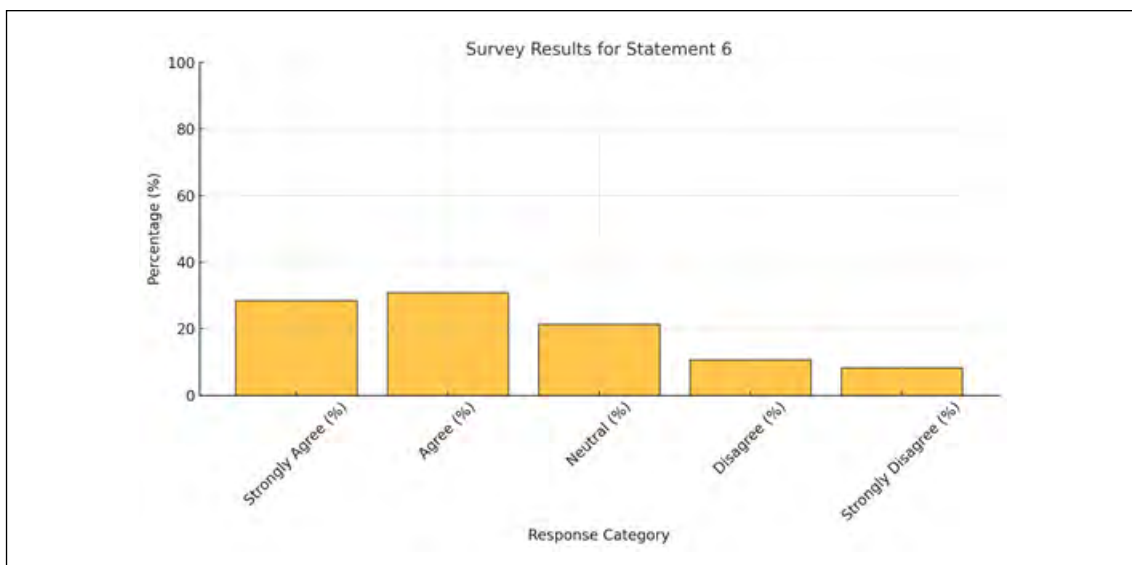
Figure 6. *Bar graph displaying the results of perception on tasks distribution.*

The sprint-based structure, as mentioned in statement 7, was generally well-received, with 45 positive responses. However, the high number of neutral responses (32) points to a level of indifference or uncertainty regarding this method's effectiveness in promoting active participation.
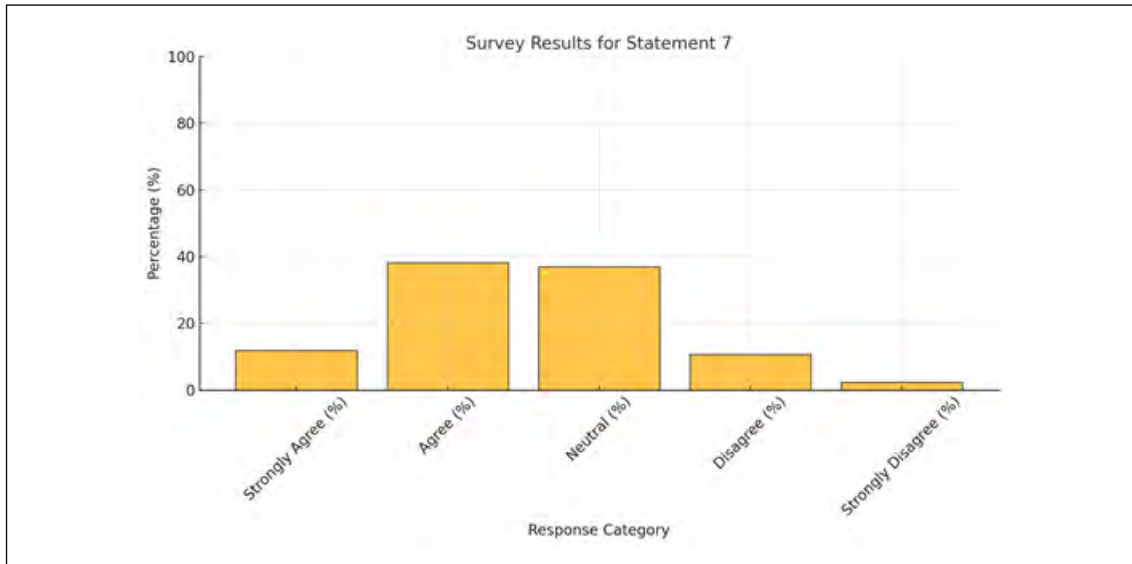

Figure 7. *Bar graph displaying the results of the connection between sprint-based structure and active participation.*

Statement 8, which addressed engagement through methodology, received positive feedback from 50 respondents, though 25 remained neutral and 14 disagreed. This indicates that while the methodology was engaging for most, there remains a subset of students who did not experience this benefit.
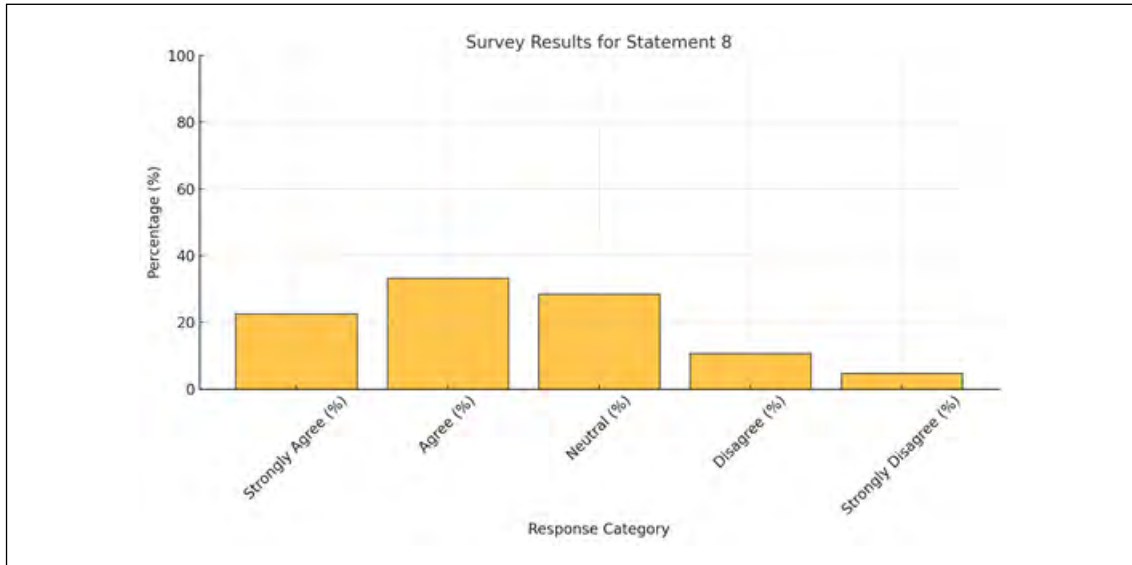
Figure 8. *Bar graph displaying the results of the connection between this methodology and the students' engagement.*

A similar pattern emerged in statement 9, where students were asked whether project dynamics reduced their sense of disconnection or disinterest. While 44 participants responded positively, 26 remained neutral, and 19 disagreed, reflecting a moderate level of success in this area.
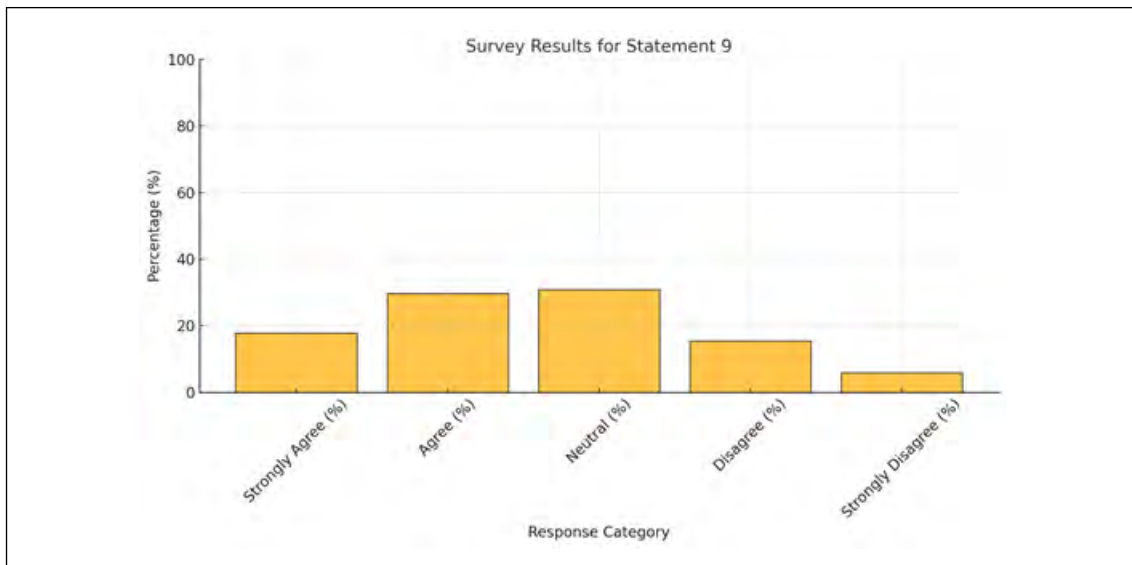

Figure 9. *Bar graph displaying the results of the connection between this project and interest in this subject.*

In statement 10, concerning attendance improvement due to the interactive course format, the feedback was again mixed. Thirty-nine students agreed that their

attendance improved, while 28 remained neutral and 22 disagreed. This highlights an opportunity to further explore and enhance the interactive components of the course to encourage greater attendance.
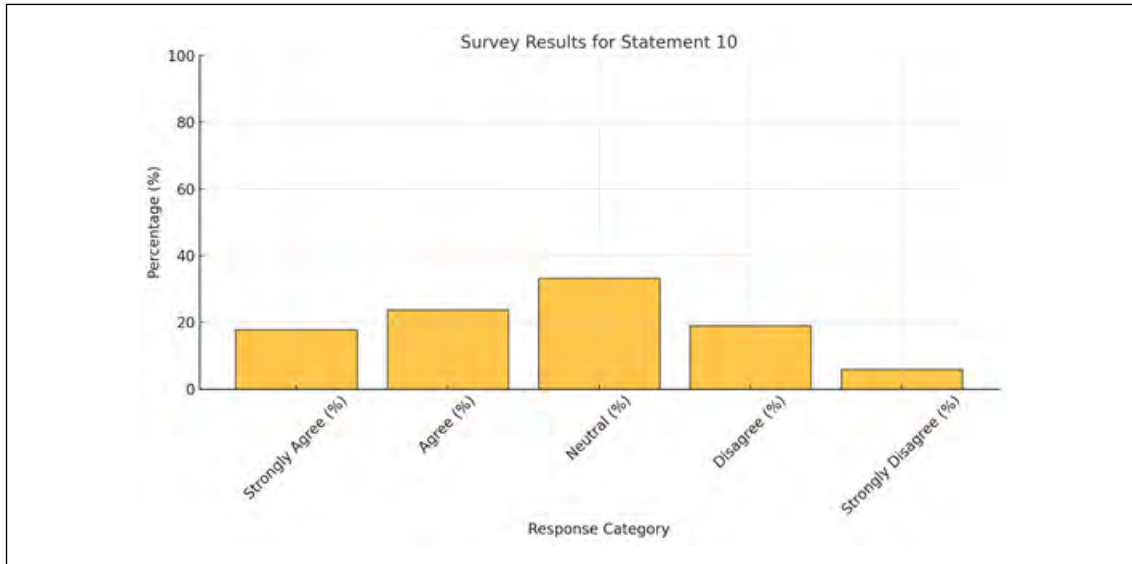

Figure 10. *Bar graph displaying the results of the connection between this format and class attendance.*

By contrast, statement 11, which focused on improving technical vocabulary related to tourism, showed overwhelmingly positive results, with 64 participants expressing agreement. This finding suggests that the project successfully contributed to the students' professional vocabulary development, which is essential for communicational proficiency in ESP.
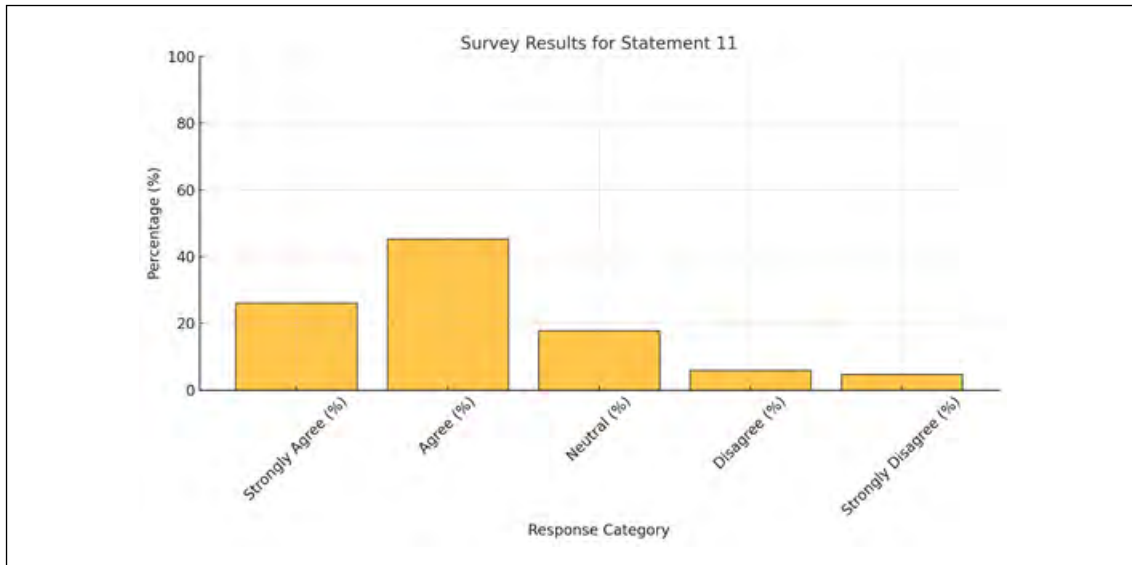
Figure 11. *Bar graph displaying the results of the connection between the proposed activities and the improvement of technical vocabulary related to tourism.*

Statement 12 addressed the improvement of communication skills in professional contexts, with 52 students agreeing that their skills had improved. While 25 participants expressed neutrality, only 12 disagreed, demonstrating that the course was generally effective in this regard.
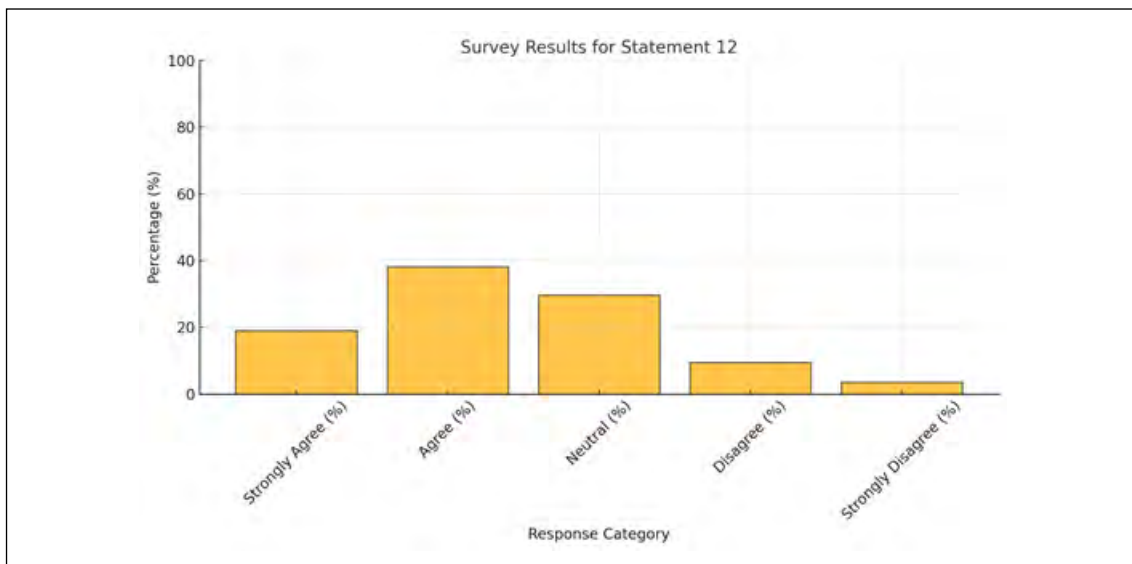

Figure 12. *Bar graph displaying the results of the perception on the improvement of communication skills in English in professional contexts related to tourism.*

The results of statement 13 further supported the course's practical relevance, as 56 students agreed that tasks prepared them for real-world situations like presentations

and customer service. Although there were 19 neutral responses and 14 disagreements, the overall trend remains positive.
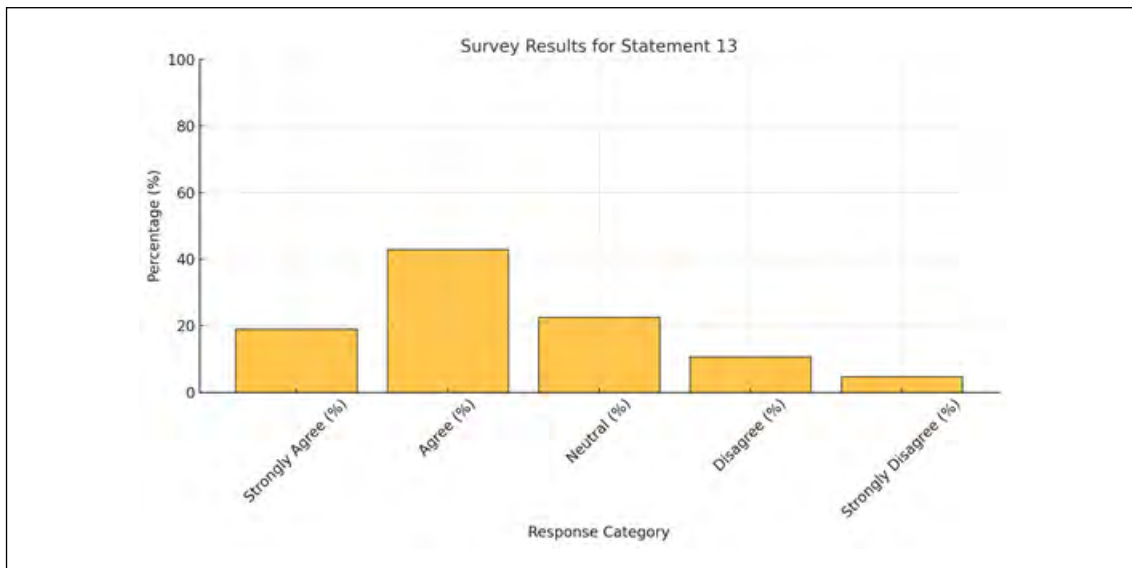

Figure 13. *Bar graph displaying the results of the connection between tasks and practical situations in the tourism field.*

The ability to solve tourism-related problems, as declared in statement 14, received mixed feedback. While 49 participants responded positively, 25 remained neutral, and 15 disagreed, indicating room for improvement in this aspect of the methodology.
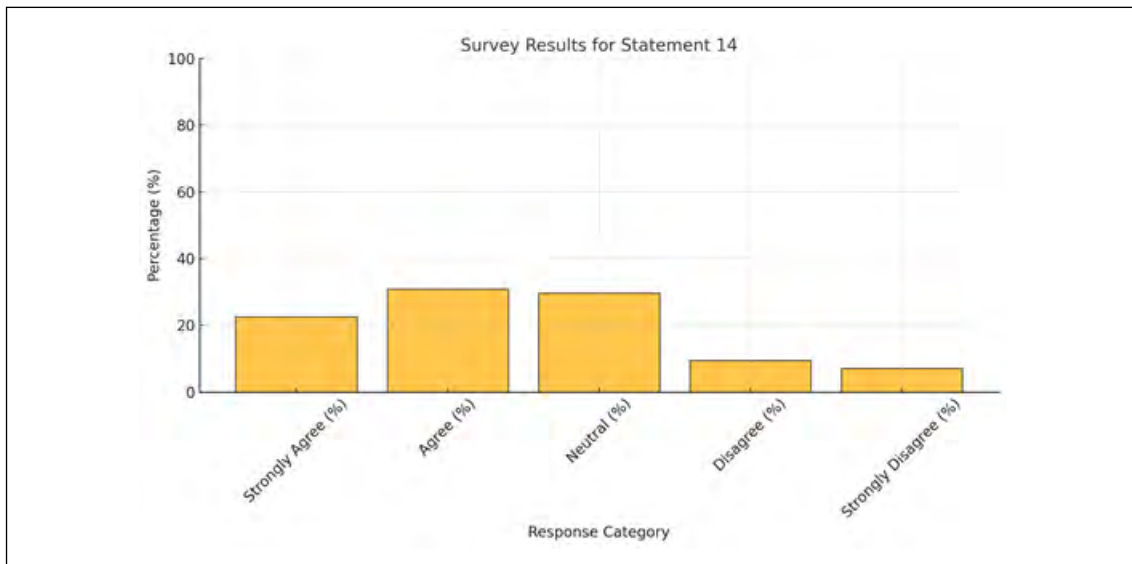

Figure 14. *Bar graph displaying the results of the connection between this methodology and the ability to solve tourism-related problems in English.*

Similarly, statement 15, which evaluated adaptability to changes during the project, showed moderate approval, with 46 students agreeing and 19 disagreeing. This result reflects some success in fostering adaptability but highlights the need for adjustments to ensure consistency.
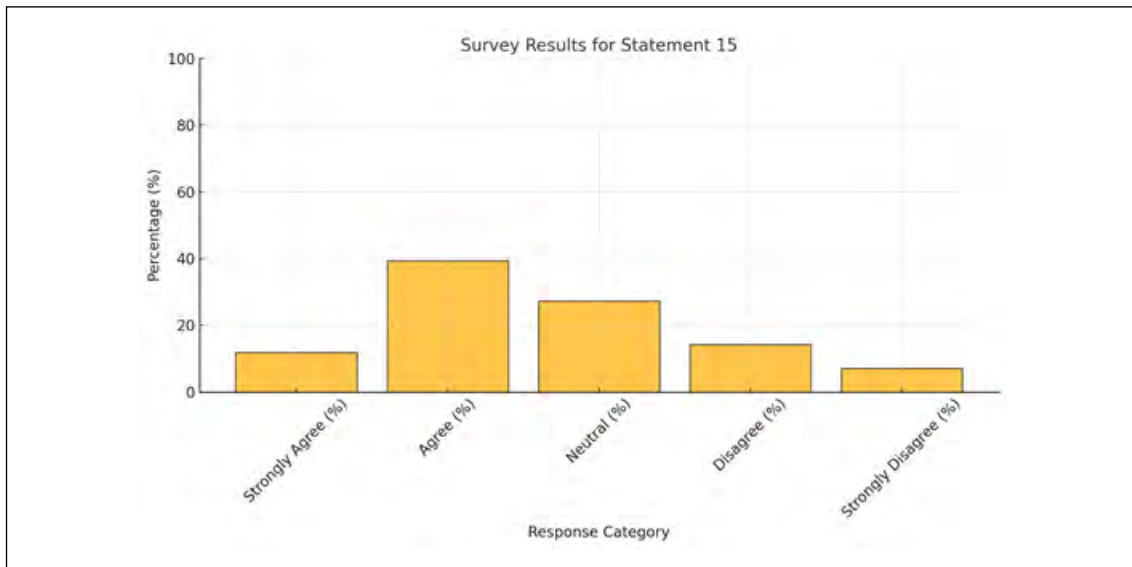

Figure 15. *Bar graph displaying the results of the connection between the iterative structure of Scrum and the ability to adapt to changes and challenges during the project.*

Regarding feedback meetings, statement 16 revealed that only 41 students found these meetings useful, while 30 remained neutral and 19 disagreed. These results suggest that feedback sessions could be more targeted and actionable to better meet students' needs.
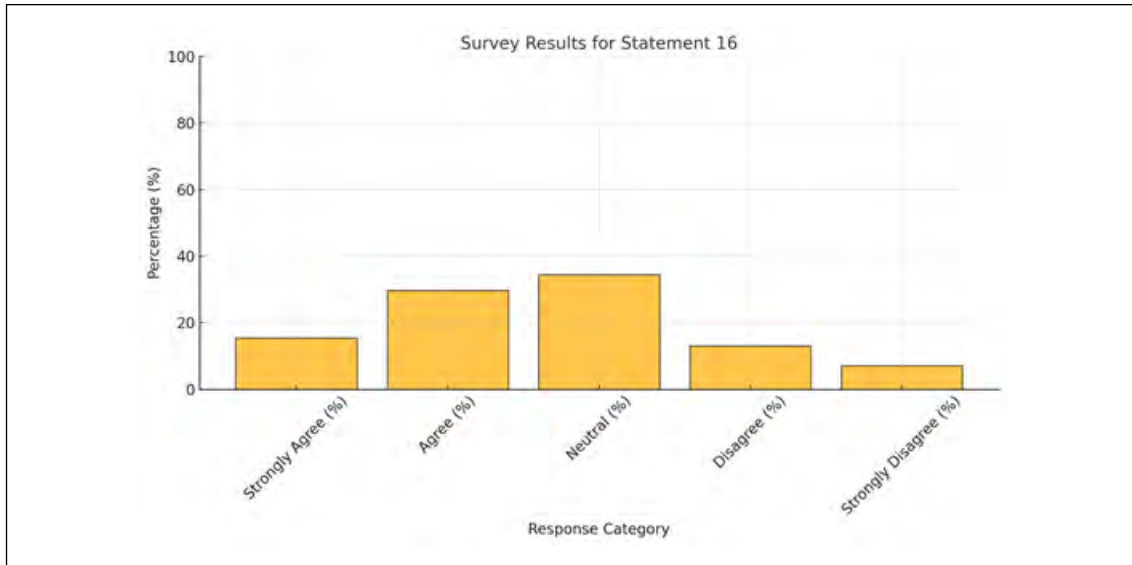
Figure 16. *Bar graph displaying the results of the perception on the retrospective meetings' utility for identifying strengths and weaknesses.*

Statement 17, which explored reflection on learning, showed similar trends. Forty-five participants responded positively, but 29 expressed neutrality, pointing to a need for clearer reflective practices.
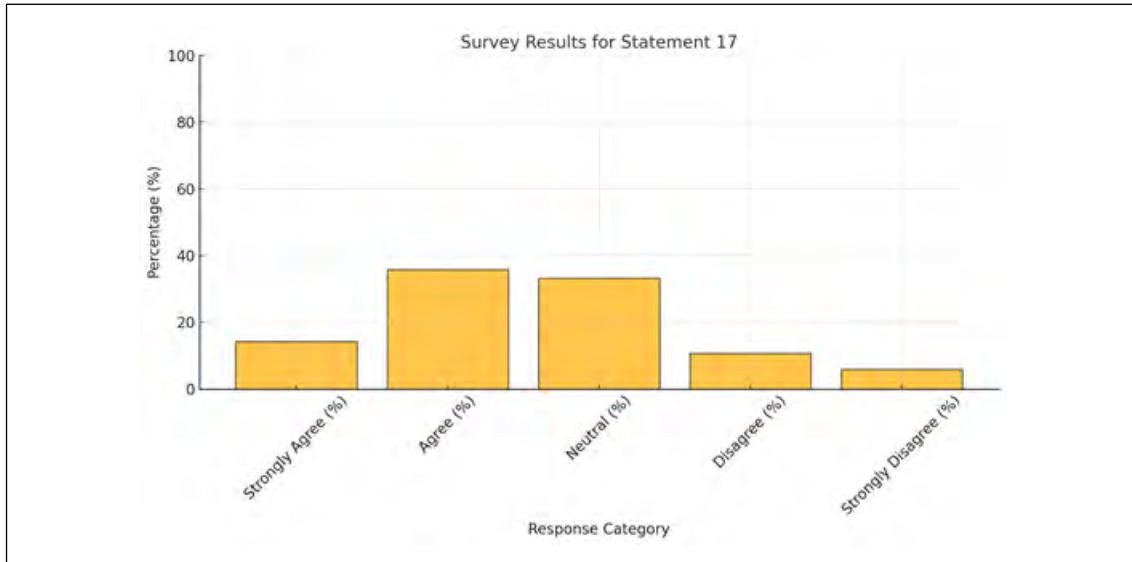

Figure 17. *Bar graph displaying the results of the perception on reflecting and learning.*

Satisfaction with project results, as addressed in statement 18, was moderately positive, with 47 students agreeing and 31 remaining neutral.
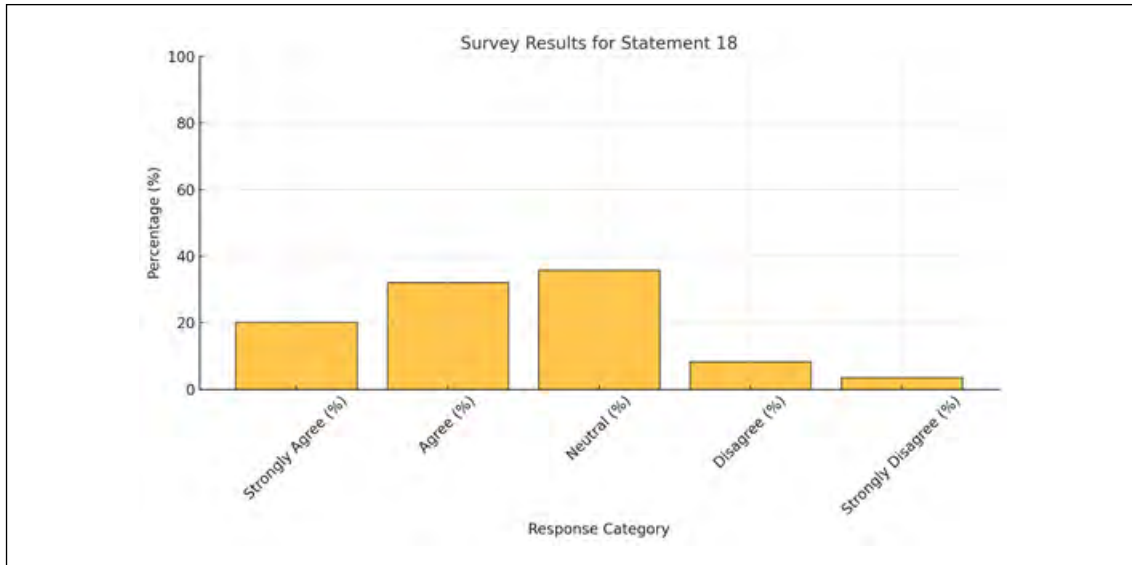
Figure 18. *Bar graph displaying the results of students' satisfaction.*

The recommendation of the methodology for future courses, as highlighted in statement 19, received strong support, with 55 positive responses. This indicates that a majority of students valued the approach and believed it could benefit others.
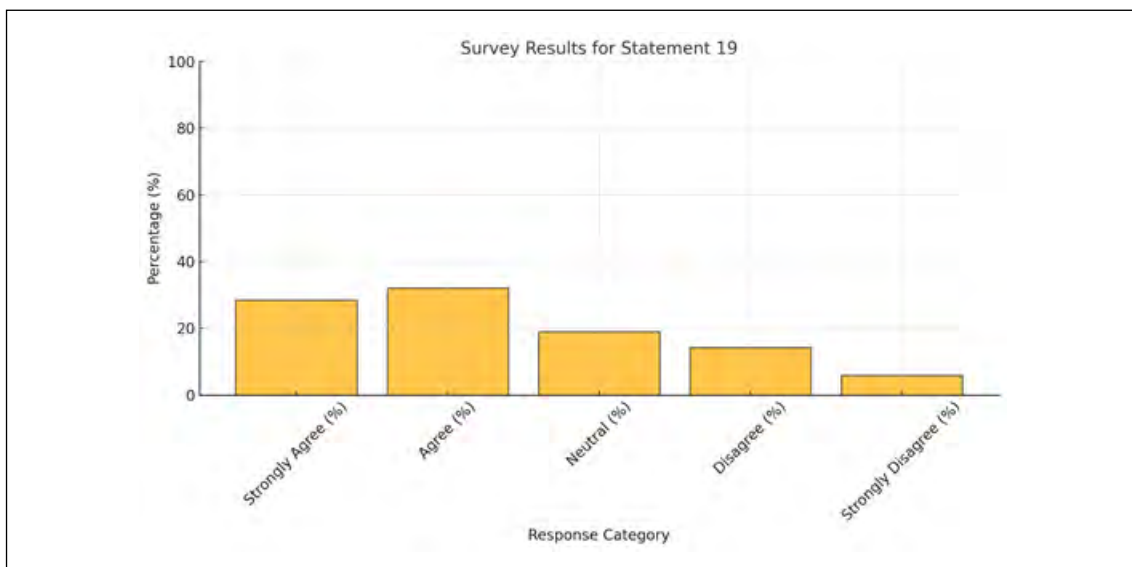

Figure 19. *Bar graph displaying the results of students' recommendation.*

Finally, statement 20, which assessed the overall improvement in professional preparation, demonstrated high levels of agreement, with 58 positive responses. This confirms that the project succeeded in enhancing students' professional readiness for the tourism field.
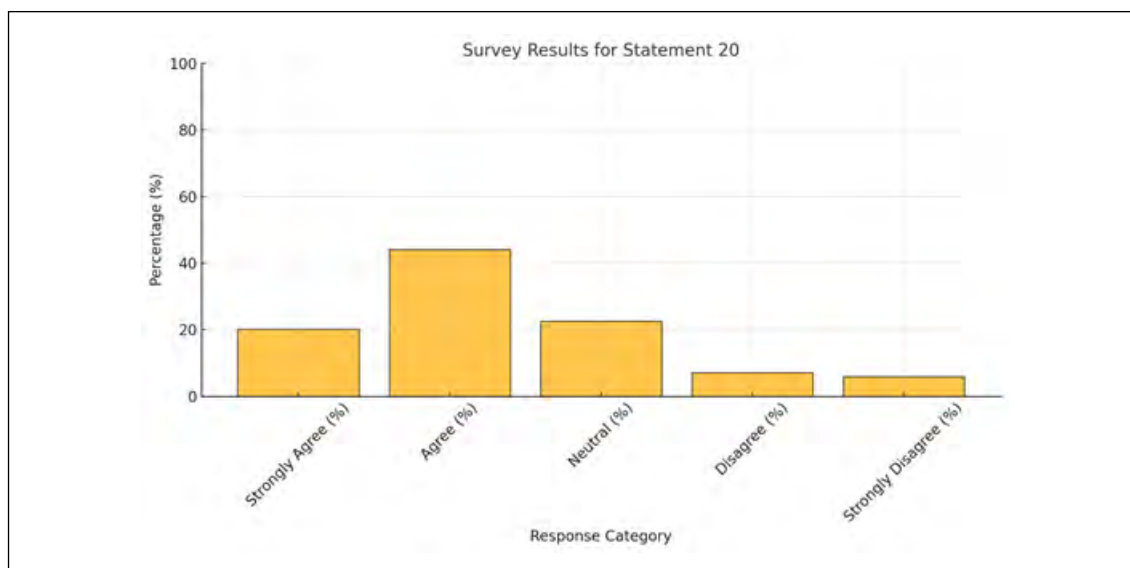
Figure 20. *Bar graph displaying the results on the students' perception of this experience's impact on their professional preparation for the tourism field.*

VI. DISCUSSION

The integration of Scrum methodology with English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the Tourism Fair project has proven successful in addressing critical challenges in EFL education, particularly for Tourism students who require a balance of language proficiency, professional competencies, and essential soft skills. The results highlight significant achievements in reducing absenteeism, improving language skills, fostering teamwork, increasing productivity, and promoting self-management, while also uncovering areas for improvement.

Absenteeism, a persistent issue in traditional EFL courses, was notably reduced as a result of the collaborative and interactive nature of the Scrum-based approach. According to the survey results, 43.8% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the project motivated them to attend and participate actively in class. Students attributed this improvement to the shared accountability within their teams, where their roles and contributions were critical to group success. The dynamic nature of the project, which involved real-world tasks and peer interaction, provided a stark contrast to the often disengaging lecture-based methods. This finding aligns with prior research

highlighting the role of collaborative and goal-oriented frameworks in reducing student disconnection and absenteeism (Vila-Grau & Capuz-Rizo, 2021; Voštinár, 2024).

In addition to improved attendance, the project demonstrated measurable success in enhancing language proficiency. A significant 58.4% of respondents reported that their English skills improved through participation in real-world scenarios such as role-playing customer interactions and addressing client complaints. The iterative nature of Scrum, which emphasizes regular feedback and reflective learning, played a central role in this improvement. For example, 46.1% of students agreed that sprint reviews and retrospectives helped them refine their language use and build confidence. The focus on technical vocabulary was equally effective, with 71.9% of students agreeing that the tasks enhanced their understanding of tourism-related terminology. The combination of structured feedback and practical tasks ensured that students developed communication skills applicable to real-life contexts, underscoring the alignment between Scrum and ESP.

Teamwork and collaboration, essential skills for the tourism industry, were also key strengths of the project. Survey responses revealed that 49.4% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the project improved their ability to work effectively in teams. By assigning roles such as Scrum Master or Product Owner, the methodology provided opportunities to develop leadership, problem-solving, and time management skills. Students appreciated the collaborative environment, with 49.4% expressing comfort working within teams and acknowledging that peer interaction enhanced both their teamwork and language practice. However, a minority of students (18.0%) highlighted concerns about unequal task distribution, suggesting that some group members contributed less than others. This feedback indicates a need for instructors to closely monitor team dynamics and implement measures, such as peer evaluations, to ensure fair participation.

Efficiency and productivity were also improved through the Scrum framework, which breaks tasks into short, manageable sprints. Students reported that the sprint structure helped them organize their workload more effectively, with 50.6% agreeing that the

division of tasks into clear stages made the project feel achievable. Retrospective meetings were particularly valuable, as 46.1% of students noted that these sessions helped them identify areas for improvement and apply these insights in subsequent sprints. The iterative approach not only maintained focus but also encouraged continuous adjustment and reflection, reflecting Scrum's core principle of maximizing efficiency through adaptive learning.

The methodology also promoted greater student autonomy and self-management, skills that are vital for success in both academic and professional settings. The results indicate that 51.7% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the project encouraged them to take ownership of their learning. By requiring students to manage tasks, collaborate with peers, and reflect on their progress, Scrum fostered a sense of responsibility and independence. However, 21.3% of respondents reported feeling overwhelmed by the workload at times, suggesting that clearer guidance on time management strategies or adjustments to task complexity may be necessary in future iterations of the project.

While the survey results demonstrate the overall success of the Scrum-ESP integration, certain challenges remain. For instance, review meetings and feedback sessions were not always perceived as useful. Although 46.1% of students found these meetings helpful for reflection, a considerable number expressed neutrality or disagreement. This result highlights the need to reassess the structure and purpose of feedback sessions to ensure they are actionable and engaging for all participants. Similarly, while teamwork and collaboration were largely successful, issues of unequal task distribution underscore the importance of monitoring group dynamics more closely to maintain fairness and accountability.

In general, the project's outcomes reflect the transformative potential of combining Scrum methodology with ESP to address key challenges in EFL Tourism education. The reduction in absenteeism, improvement in language proficiency, enhancement of teamwork skills, and development of self-management abilities demonstrate the value of this student-centered, iterative approach. However, the findings also point to areas

for improvement, particularly in balancing workloads, refining reflective practices, and addressing team dynamics. By addressing these challenges, future implementations of this methodology can further optimize its impact, ensuring that students are better prepared for professional roles in the tourism industry.

VII. CONCLUSION

The implementation of Scrum methodology integrated with English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction for Tourism students has successfully addressed key challenges outlined in this study, directly linking the results to the general and specific objectives of the research. By promoting an interactive, collaborative, and iterative learning environment, this approach has demonstrated tangible improvements in reducing absenteeism, enhancing language proficiency, fostering teamwork, and developing self-management skills among students, while also highlighting areas for further refinement.

The primary general objective of this study was to develop a methodology that improves student engagement and language proficiency in EFL courses for Tourism students. The results show that Scrum's iterative and team-based framework provided significant gains in both areas. One of the specific objectives focused on reducing absenteeism, a major issue in traditional, lecture-based instruction. The survey results revealed that 43.8% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the project motivated them to attend classes regularly and participate actively. This finding demonstrates that the collaborative structure of Scrum, which emphasizes shared accountability within teams, fostered a stronger sense of commitment among students. The project dynamics and real-world tasks, such as handling client scenarios or preparing for presentations, made the course content more relevant to students' future professional goals, further reducing disconnection and disinterest in the subject matter.

Another key specific objective was to enhance students' language proficiency, particularly in tourism-related contexts. The study confirmed that 58.4% of students

felt their English skills improved significantly, especially in speaking and listening. By engaging in practical tasks, such as role-playing customer interactions and resolving tourism-related challenges, students were able to apply their language skills in real-world scenarios. The iterative nature of Scrum, including regular sprint reviews and feedback sessions, contributed to this success, with 46.1% of respondents highlighting the value of continuous feedback in refining their communication abilities. Furthermore, 71.9% of students agreed that the project helped them develop a stronger technical vocabulary relevant to tourism, aligning the outcomes with ESP's focus on profession-specific language development (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). This result validates the integration of ESP and Scrum as a highly effective framework for achieving practical language learning objectives.

The study also met its specific objective of improving teamwork and collaboration among Tourism students. Given the collaborative demands of the tourism industry, fostering these soft skills is critical for professional readiness. The results indicate that 49.4% of participants recognized improvements in their teamwork abilities, with Scrum roles such as Scrum Master and Product Owner providing opportunities to practice leadership, problem-solving, and time management. The collaborative nature of the methodology allowed students to build confidence through peer interaction, with 49.4% expressing satisfaction with the team-based dynamic. However, the study also revealed a challenge: 18.0% of students reported unequal task distribution within teams, signaling the need for instructors to introduce mechanisms such as peer evaluations to ensure fairness and accountability.

The fourth specific objective aimed to enhance student autonomy and self-management through Scrum's structured yet flexible approach. The results confirm that 51.7% of students believed the project encouraged them to take ownership of their learning, manage their time effectively, and reflect on their progress. Students reported increased confidence in planning tasks and completing responsibilities independently, a critical skill for success in both academic and professional settings. This shift toward student-centered learning represents a departure from traditional teacher-led

instruction, empowering students to become active participants in their education. Nonetheless, 21.3% of respondents expressed feelings of being overwhelmed by the workload, suggesting that additional time management guidance or adjustments to task complexity may be required in future iterations.

Scrum's emphasis on iterative progress and continuous reflection also addressed the study's objective of increasing efficiency and productivity in the learning process. By organizing tasks into short, manageable sprints, students were able to approach their workload in a more structured and achievable manner. 50.6% of participants reported that the sprint structure helped them stay organized and focused, while 46.1% found retrospective meetings useful for identifying areas for improvement and streamlining their efforts in subsequent sprints. This cycle of reflection and improvement mirrors Scrum's core principles and provides a foundation for sustained academic success.

While the study demonstrated clear success in meeting its objectives, it also highlighted areas that require attention to maximize the effectiveness of the methodology. For instance, feedback meetings, while valuable for many, were not universally perceived as useful, with some students expressing neutrality or disagreement regarding their utility. Additionally, issues of team imbalance and workload management suggest the need for closer monitoring and intervention from instructors to ensure that all students benefit equally from the collaborative framework. Future iterations of the course should aim to refine these components to further optimize the learning experience.

In conclusion, the integration of Scrum methodology with ESP instruction successfully achieved the study's objectives of reducing absenteeism, enhancing language proficiency, fostering teamwork, and promoting self-management among Tourism students. By aligning real-world tasks with structured, collaborative learning processes, this approach not only improved students' engagement and language skills but also equipped them with the soft skills necessary for success in their professional careers. While challenges such as workload management and team dynamics remain, the overall results validate the effectiveness of this innovative methodology. Moving

forward, continued refinement and empirical validation of the approach will ensure its sustainability and broader applicability in EFL and professional education contexts.

REFERENCES

Amineh, R. J., & Davatgari Asl, H. (2015). Review of constructivism and social constructivism. *Journal of Social Sciences, Literature and Languages, 1(*1), 9–16.

Bruner, J. S. (1988). Learning and the social environment. Harvard University Press.

Churcher, K. M. A., Downs, E., & Tewksbury, D. (2014). "Friending" Vygotsky: A social constructivist pedagogy of knowledge building through classroom social media use. *The Journal of Effective Teaching, 14*(1), 33–50.

Delhij, A., Van Solingen, R., & Wijnen, F. (2015). *EduScrum guide*. EduScrum.

Dudley-Evans, T., & St. John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A multidisciplinary approach.* Cambridge University Press.

Gonulal, T., & Loewen, S. (2018). Scaffolding technique. In J. I. Liontas (Ed.), *The TESOL encyclopedia of English language teaching* (1st ed.). Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0180

Gorczyca, A., Klimek-Kopyra, A., Kiełbasa, B., Pink, M., Redlichová, R., Wieczorek-Przybyło, M., Piecuch, K., Pereira, F., Raposo, A., Saude, S., Durão, A., Chaves, H., Barbosa, E., Rodrigues, A. I., Santamarta, J. C., Cruz-Pérez, N., & Rodríguez-Alcántara, J. S. (2024). *Agile teaching methodology* [Manual]. Universidad de La Laguna. https://doi.org/10.25145/b.2023.13

Hodson, N., Woods, P., Sobolev, M., & Giacco, D. (2024). A digital microintervention supporting evidence-based parenting skills: Development study using the agile scrum methodology. *JMIR Formative Research, 8,* e54892. https://doi.org/10.2196/54892

Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centered approach.* Cambridge University Press.

Mahnic, V. (2012). A capstone course on agile software development using Scrum. *IEEE Transactions on Education, 55*(1), 99–106.

Marnewick, C. (2023). Student experiences of project-based learning in agile project management education. *Project Leadership and Society, 4*, 100096. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.plas.2023.100096

Nur Arsyad, S., Tangkin, W. P., Sumartono, S., & Astuti, B. (2024). Implications of Bruner's cognitive theory on elementary school education in the 21st century. *Klasikal: Journal of Education, Language Teaching and Science, 6*(3), 697–704. https://doi.org/10.52208/klasikal.v6i3.1225

Schwaber, K., & Sutherland, J. (2017). The Scrum guide. Scrum.org.

Serrador, P., & Pinto, J. K. (2015). Does Agile work? A quantitative analysis of agile project success. *International Journal of Project Management, 33*(5), 1040–1051.

Sutherland, J. (2014). Scrum: The art of doing twice the work in half the time. Crown Business.

Vila-Grau, G., & Capuz-Rizo, S. F. (2021). La extensión de la agilidad al ámbito docente a través de Scrum y eduScrum. *Revista de Tecnología Educativa, 13*(2), 135–148.

Voštinár, A. (2024). Agile methods in higher education: Implementing Scrum in language learning. *Journal of Educational Innovations, 22*(3), 27–39.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Harvard University Press.

Yang, J., Zhang, X. L., & Su, P. (2019). Deep-learning-based agile teaching framework of software development courses in computer science education. *Procedia Computer Science, 154*, 137–145. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2019.06.022