

MASTER'S THESIS



Behind the walls of the Boutique Hotel Concept in Spain

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ABSTRACT

The hospitality sector is changing. In order to gain attention of the travelling community it is required innovation and improvement of the services. This thesis concentrates on the boutique hotels concept, but the special attention is put on the boutique hotel sector in Spain.

This master's thesis deals with the concept of boutique hotel as one of the innovations in the hospitality industry. There is a lack of scientific sources specifically describing the boutique hotel sector in Spain. Moreover, the knowledge about boutique hotels is perceived by the researcher as confusing, because theories are not coinciding, there are many arguments presented in theories discussing the basic features of boutique hotels. Moreover, there is a general confusion from the demand side, relating the boutique hotel name with boutique as a small shop.

The researcher intends to find pattern of the perception between the selected samples of participants that have a personal experience with the hospitality industry in Spain. Based on the studied issue in relation to the problems, the researcher created following research question: What elements characterise the Spanish boutique hotel segment based on the perceptions of tourists to experience of the Spanish hospitality market; with regard to quality of products and services, approach of employees, the hotel design, and experience?

The researcher starts with collection of secondary data, which have already been used for other purposes, including published text, internet articles, or case study materials within the particular framework of research topic. The researcher discusses and compares the theories with connection to the concept of boutique hotels and its specific features and aspect. Furthermore, there is a closer look on elements such as the importance of the customer experience, physical environment, and customer service quality. Also aims to look closer to the question of the important factor of hospitality establishment

The data collection is performed in two stages. The preliminary phase is represented by the content analysis that takes the form of the exploration of TripAdvisor reviews, discussing the experience with boutique hotels in Spain. Through the findings of the content interpretative analysis and presented theory framework, the researcher creates the outline for the interview and its consequent analysis. There are two Skype and six personal semi-structured interviews, conducted with potential visitors of boutique hotels as well as tourists with boutique hotel experience.

The main aim of the researcher is to provide the reader of the master's thesis with new knowledge and angles on the matter of the boutique hotel concept and bring the patterns of perceptions and understanding about this special and unique segment.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Great food, beautiful historical sites, stunning nature, and famous beaches are the recipe for an amazing holiday. Spain has evidently a lot to offer for many international travellers, as it is identified as one of the world's leading tourist destinations (Alonso-Almeida & Rodríguez-Antón, 2011). However, what if one of the attractions in the decision-making process to travel was a hotel itself?

As emphasized by Anhar (2001), travellers nowadays seek for more than a place to sleep. They have money to spend and they are looking to reward themselves (Freund de Klumbis, 2002). Recent trends in the hospitality industry indicate that tourists are not only satisfied with basic values of consistency and comfort provided by hospitality establishments (Jones, Day & Quadri-Felitti, 2009). The satisfaction can be achieved by hotels that provide visitors with an extra feel-good element and an offer of positive surprises (Anhar, 2001).

The concept of luxurious establishments, designed to provide exclusive experience and more than that, is categorized as boutique hotels (Victorino et al., 2005). Boutique hotels are hospitality establishments with specifically oriented customer attention, providing personalized service and pursuit of extraordinary feeling to their visitors, and design reflecting personality and style of the destination (Albazzaz et al., 2003; Jones et al, 2013). They frequently do not have more than 100 rooms and they are situated within exceptional buildings such as old palaces, reformed castles and convents or buildings with outstanding architectural aspects (Aggett, 2007; Llamal & Islamil, 2014).

The Spanish hospitality market exclusively belongs to big chain hotels (Ballesterro et al., 2007). However, according to Vila, Enz & Costa (2012), in the last couple of years Spain embarked on course of innovation in reply to the competitive changes in the hospitality industry. What makes Spain interesting for this research is the fact that independent luxurious rural and small town hotels are part of the new trends that nowadays records success (iHi, 2015, Vila et al., 2012). One of the forms of innovation in Spain is represented by boutique hotels as this sector has demonstrated a strong growth over the last few years in Europe (Freund de Klumbis, 2002; HN, 2011). Spanish hospitality industry is highly attended by tourists in general and simultaneously, Spain offers a variety of boutique hotels options for travellers in different destinations.

There is a variety of attractive and interesting hotels such as El Rey Moro Hotel in Seville with private patio and fountain (Elreymoro, 2015), Caro hotel in Valencia with preserved ruins in the interior (Caro, 2015) or Casa Fuster in Barcelona with a unique exterior design (Casafuster, 2015).

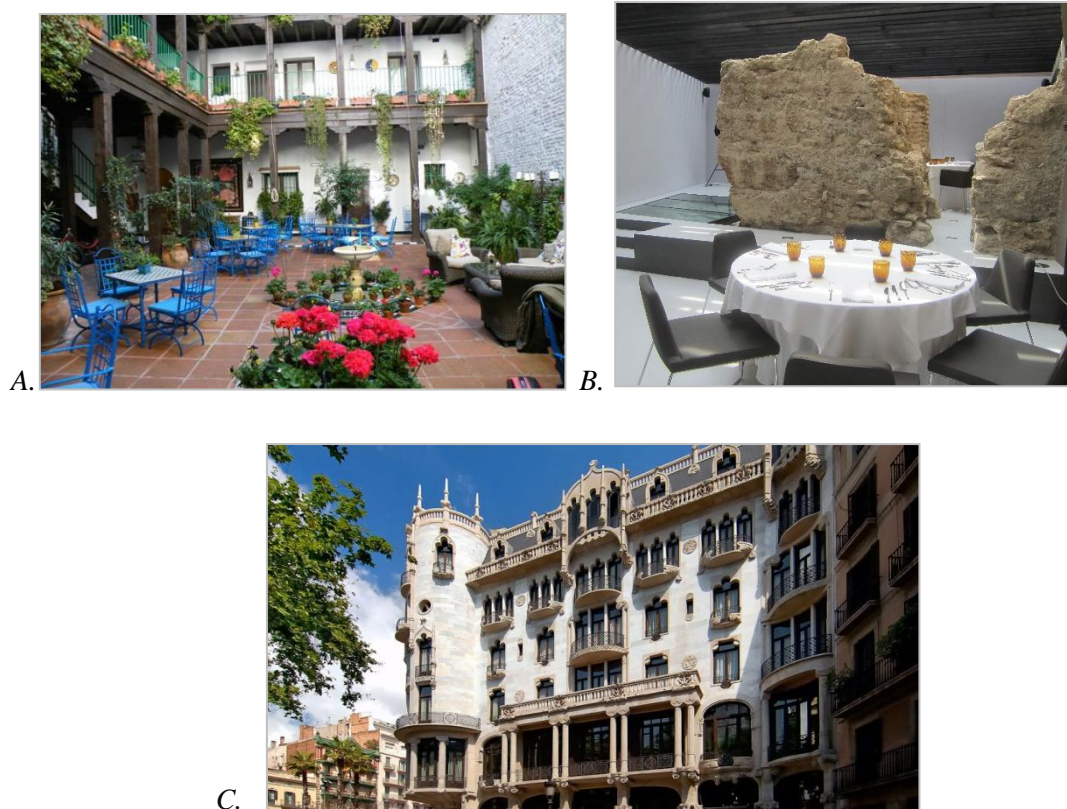


Figure 1: Examples of boutique hotels in Spain.

*A. El Rey Moro Hotel (Elreymoro, 2015); B. Caro hotel Resource: (Carohotel, 2015);
C. Casa Fuster (Casafuster, 2015)*

Nevertheless, the information about the boutique hotel segment in Spain is undeveloped. In the field of tourism, there is not a universal definition of a boutique hotel (Lim & Endeen, 2009), because each has its own value and special factors appealing to travellers. In addition, there are hotels named as boutique, however, they lack the basic meaning of the segment. Moreover, there are a limited number of articles particularly concentrated on boutique hotels in Spain. Subsequently, a missing unified definition caused that there is no official specifically oriented data on boutique hotels in Spain, which creates a need for a more thoughtful exploration. Therefore, all these notions make Spanish boutique segment an attractive area for research.

1.1 Problem formulation

The choice of Spain as a destination of boutique hotels is strongly supported by the researcher's personal working experience in one of the Spanish boutique hotels. The matter of boutique hotels in Spain is studied through the perceptions of tourists, who have experience in the hospitality industry in Spain as guests. Moreover, as stated before, there is limited research data available on boutique hotels (Sears, 2009), what indicates that the Spanish boutique hotel segment is underresearched as well. Even though, according to the research of PricewaterhouseCoopers (2014), Spanish boutique hotel sector is

one of the top ten in Europe. When getting to know the travellers, it is important to understand their personal travel views and knowledge.

Moreover, the theoretical basis discussing the concept of boutique hotels is not united, as there are different opinions about specific characteristics and concept can vary from one country to another. Therefore, it is not clearly determined how the boutique hotel concept should be presented and which hotels are falling into this category. Additionally, there are boutique hotel that are known as boutique hotels, even though that they are not officially using this label.

More precisely, this research aims to gain insights of travellers' perceptions of boutique hotels and explore what is their view about the stay in one of the boutique hotels in Spain. The research concentrates on elements such as the importance of customer experience, physical environment, and customer service quality. In order to narrow the broad area of boutique hotels to a more specific study, the research question is formulated as follows:

What elements characterise the Spanish boutique hotel segment based on the perceptions of tourists with experience of the Spanish hospitality market; with regard to quality of products and services, approach of employees, the hotel design, atmosphere and experience?

The researcher goes through different boutique hotel specifics such as employees-to-guest relation and etiquette and behaviour of employees, overall atmosphere, and experience with the aim to discuss what the tourists put the importance on. This master's thesis goes deeper into the views of travellers through the research methods of content analysis and interviews, and looks for the views, which they associate with boutique hotels in Spain. Furthermore, the research question aims to find out which characteristics of boutique hotels in the destinations of Spain appeal to travellers in particular. There are several categories mentioned in the research questions and therefore, it should be pointed out that the research concentrated more on combination of boutique hotel characteristics rather than the importance of individual features. Furthermore, the purpose of this research is also to fill in the parts of the missing knowledge about personalized employee-to-guest relation.

The answer to the research question can be complex and it differs from individual to individual, as every individual has a different view of experience. Therefore, the researcher applies data from various sources, in particular personal interviews and the review platform TripAdvisor. The researcher intends to find answers to the main research question by combining an in-depth analysis of tourism theories related to boutique hotels and by gathering new relevant data on the subject. The data gained from the analysis intends to reveal how the boutique hotel perception differs from the general meaning. The thesis is however not aiming to come up with a definite, final answer to for the research

question, but has the intention to provide a deeper insight into the boutique hotel segment in Spain and find patterns among travellers' perceptions on the provided hospitality services.

1.2 The research structure

This thesis is divided into 5 chapters. Following the introductory chapter is a methodology that aims to describe how the research is performed systematically. This part discusses the study area as well as the selection of the methods and procedures employed in the study. It describes in detail the sampling procedure for interviews, the collection of data, and data analysis. The third chapter is devoted to relevant literature with regard to boutique hotels, guest relation and business protocol and etiquette. The part also describes the concept of the experience economy. In this part of the thesis paper, theories are discussed, combined, and compared. The main objective of this chapter is to propose a theoretical framework for analysing the findings gained from the research. Theories are applied based on academic literature, articles and online sources.

The analysis chapter presents and analyses expectations and satisfaction with selected attributes of boutique hotels. The analysis takes the form of the exploration of TripAdvisor reviews and results of semi-structured interviews conducted with potential visitors of boutique hotels or tourists with boutique hotel experience. The next chapter presents evaluation of the qualitative research. The conclusions of the finding drawn from the analysis are presented in chapter five. Moreover, this part discusses recommendation from the research as well as research suggestions and other final comments regarding the research topic.

2 METHODOLOGY

The academic purpose of this thesis is to research views, insights from the travellers regarding the perceptions before travelling to boutique hotels or based on the experience in destinations of Spain. It is perceived that the aims of the research can be achieved in diverse ways depending on the researcher's choices about actions and on this knowledge and experience (Teichmann & Evans, 1999). Mruck & Breuer (2003) put importance on the explanation of the researcher's choices, because without such reflection, the outcomes are regarded as ultimate existing characteristics, regardless of their nature that originates in decisions made during the research process. The researcher also recognises the limitations of the master's thesis, and argues the choices she made to avoid them.

For that reason, the main aim of this chapter is to illustrate and discuss the comprehensive description of the research process from the point of the research question formulation through data collection, data analysis to the conclusion. Furthermore, this part concentrates on explanation of the influence of the constructivist paradigm on the research.

2.1 Philosophy of science

The research involves a complex process of thinking, studying, investigation, and analysis (Creswell, 2010). Nevertheless, it should be noted that these ideas and beliefs that inform and lead research actions are performed with logic behind. This is a consideration of branch of philosophy called the philosophy of science. According to Bryman (2012) philosophy of science is a fundamental basis for a scientific social research, which investigates research structures and methods of scientific knowledge from an analytical point of view. In other words, philosophy of science can be characterized as the study of elemental ideas and perspectives connected with reality, existence, and knowledge (Teichmann & Evans, 1999).

The choice of philosophical approach is an essential part of the research and the researcher is responsible for the choice. Hence, it is influenced by the paradigm she believes in, as well as on the nature of the problem statement. A paradigm is defined as "*set of beliefs that guides actions*" (Guba, 1990, p. 17). Creswell (2010, p. 6) characterizes paradigm as "*worldview*," that researcher bring to the study and which is based on socio-psychological backgrounds. Paradigm influences the way, how the research should be performed (Esterby-Smith et al., 2012).

In the framework of the research, a paradigm represents an outline for thinking about the research design analysis, and the researcher's personal involvement in the study (Esterby-Smith et al., 2012). The paradigm mindset has an impact on the way research is performed (Boeije, 2010).

This research follows the paradigm of social constructivism. Guba & Lincoln (1994, p. 111) define constructivism as an approach, which “*assume multiple, apprehendable and conflicting social realities.*” According to Boeije (2010), people active in the research process socially construct knowledge and that researchers should attempt to understand the complex world of lived experience from the way of seeing of those who live it. Constructivist approach is reflected throughout the whole research, because the knowledge of the research is constructed through social interaction between participants of the research and the research.

The main objective of this research is not to find to state a definite answer regarding the key elements that are perceived to be characteristic for boutique hotels according to the perception of their visitors, but look for multiple perspectives and find patterns among them. Additionally, the constructivist approach to the research can be explained with help of three perspectives regarding the nature of the social world: ontological, epistemological and methodological (Guba, 1990).

The first stand of **ontology** is defined by Esterby-Smith et al. (2012, p. 17) as “*nature of reality and existence.*” Constructivist paradigm recognizes the multiple perspectives regarding the researched focus (Jennings, 2005). Guba (1990) emphasizes that Realities exist in multiple mental constructions. The world is according to Ritchie et al. (2005), constructed, and constituted through experience. Guba (1990) underlines that each participant involved in the research (in particular the researcher, the online reviewers and the interview participants) have a different experience and point of view of the studied phenomena. In the context of this study, it means that individual travellers due to their preferences and knowledge approach the concept of expectations about boutique hotels in Spain in different ways.

It is possible to observe this for instance in formulation of the interview questions, where the researcher is not looking for one specific answer but she is concentrated on the interviewees’ perceptions and opinions. . It is possible to the ontology of constructivism observe in the interviewee’ answers considering the features of boutique hotels used in the interview analysis, which differ from one individual to another. Consequently, the analysis of the research do to concentrate on finding the answer, which is ultimate and can be apply to all interview participants, but looks for different angles of understanding the concept of boutique hotels. The researcher presents the finding of the thesis in the form of pattern of the meaning rather than one ultimate truth that can be regarded as definite (Creswell, 2010). Thus, under the constructivist approach the researcher considers the knowledge as subjective

The second perspective of **epistemology** stands for a way the researcher acquires the knowledge of reality (Wellington, 2015). Epistemology represents the notion of how the knowledge of individuals is constructed (Jennings, 2005). Moreover, it explains the method of how the gain the knowledge they have (Creswell, 2010). Boeije (2010) clarifies that people construct reality while interpreting the acts

of others and the world around. Litte (2008) underpins that the most basic fact of social life is the meaning of an action. He also explains that it is possible to gain insights of the human actions with hermeneutic principles. The aim of hermeneutics is to interpret and understand the meaning of social behaviour and settings (Wellington, 2015, Mertens, 2009). All meanings, including the meanings of the research findings are fundamentally interpretive (Esterby-Smith et al., 2012). The researcher, under constructivist paradigm, searches to obtain in-depth knowledge about the social world (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). It means that the researcher in this research tries to understand social situations of the travellers perceiving boutique hotels, as they experience and gain knowledge about them.

In this master's thesis, the researcher produces new angles to the perceptions of the boutique hotel concept through the interaction with research participants, as there are some of them with personal experience with boutique hotels and others, who were presented with the concept for the first time. As noted by Kvale (2007) they influence each other with their language and word choice and action. In case of this research, participants of the interviews come from different social backgrounds and countries of origin, what according to Fink (2000) influences their perceptions on the studied matter. Moreover, the researcher has its own knowledge and brings her own point of view to the research interaction. More precisely, the researcher's knowledge about boutique hotels is theoretical as well as practical from the internship experience in Spanish boutique hotel. It is perceived that practical bond to the topic enables the research to better understand the interviewee's view.

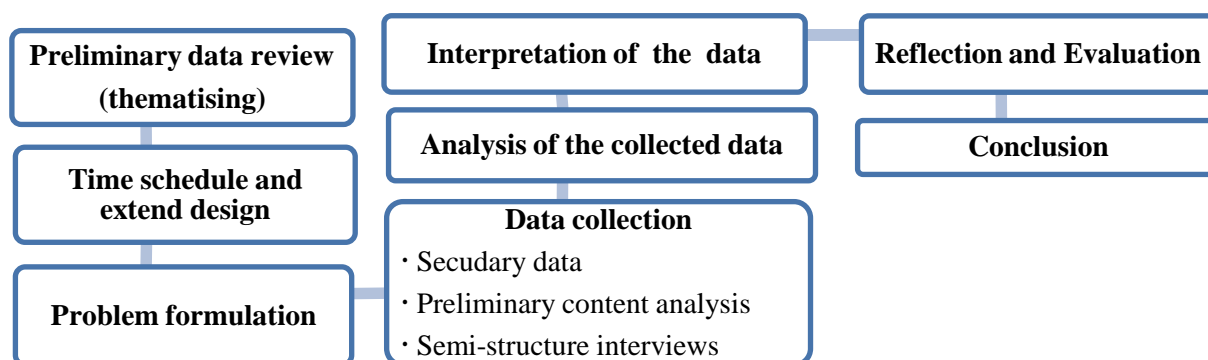
The third perspective is **methodology**. According to Creswell (2010), the stand of methodology refers to the process of research and study of its methods and procedures and their combination. It is determined that constructivist paradigm is predicated on qualitative research (Jennings, 2005). Methodological perspective represents a combination of different methods used in order to answer the researched question (Esterby-Smith et al., 2002). In this research, content analysis and semi-structured in-depth interviews are selected. One of the techniques of this research is interview based on interaction with international travellers. Since this research requires an interaction between researchers and interviewees, this relationship between them creates the understanding of the discussed problems.

Qualitative methodology offers travellers the opportunity to illustrate the subject of study primarily on their own conditions (Boeije, 2010). It means that travellers have the opportunity to present and elaborate their experience from the travels and perceptions in the manner they want, as there are no true or false answers. Following the points of Zhang & Wildemuth (2009), in this interpretative study, the researcher presents the collected data through interaction with the participants, with the influence of her point of view and knowledge and experience regarding boutique hotels in Spain. Bryman (2012) argues that knowledge in constructivism is persistent, because it is produced through social interaction and it is in a constant state of revision.

By implementing the content analysis and semi-structured interviews, the same area of the research study is examined from different angles (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The process of combining various research techniques is called triangulation. The researcher in this research uses the semi-structured interviews and content analysis to reduce bias and to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question from different perspectives.

2.2 Research design

Research design is an outline or proposal for the whole research procedure (Creswell, 2010). *Figure 2* shows the visualization of the plan for research processes. However, Kothari (2008) argues that in a qualitative research, different phases of process continuously overlap, and therefore it is not possible to display graphically the individual phases in an exact order in *Figure 2*. The section explains the sequence of the steps; however, the individual actions are explained in the following parts. For the thesis it means that the research do not follow all the phases step by step, but constantly revise processes and goes back and forth to make updates on the information. This rotary process is characterized as hermeneutic circle (Patton, 2005), and is explained in detail later in this section.



*Figure 2: Research design
(Created for this thesis)*

The thesis research starts with preliminary data collection. The researcher had the opportunity to gain personal knowledge and experience of the boutique hotel concept during the internship in the Hospes Palau de la Mar boutique hotel in Spain. Fink (2000) names this phase as thematising, which refers to the stage of research where the researcher looks for the answers of what is going to be studied and how. It means that this phase helped the researcher in the decision-making process of settling on the theme about boutique hotels for this thesis. At the same time, the topic of research is selected in accordance with Tourism programme, which the researcher studies. Following that, the researcher determines the estimated extend of the research and designs time schedule for individual phases, although it served more as a time guide.

During the next stage, the researcher preliminarily reviews literature as well as looked for more information about the boutique hotel segment in Spain on the internet, with aim to find a problem which can be researched and create the research question. Boeije (2010) notes, that clear problem statement directs the research and signalizes how the topic will be developed, including the processes of collecting and analysing data. In addition to that, Kothari (2009) emphasized that a research question should be as relevant and focused as possible. Therefore, the research is dedicated to specific kinds of hotels (boutique) and oriented on the Spain as a destination to narrow down the focus of the research. Moreover, the study specifically focuses on the travellers' opinions on specific elements, which motivate and attract them to make a visit.

The researcher starts with collection of secondary data, which have already been used for other purposes (Bryman, 2012; Patton, 2005), including published text, internet articles or case study materials within the particular framework of the research topic. Content interpretative analysis and interviews are methods selected for this research falling under the category of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Boeije (2010) emphasizes this part of data collection, due to its important function in the execution of the research. Following that, the researcher collects data from the online TripAdvisor reviews. This stage is taken as preliminary, for the reason that the collected information might be biased due to the anonymity of people who contribute to the online platform (Patton, 2005). Consequently, this data was used mainly as a supplement for the interview guide and further research methods. This research method is more elaborated in the next section. Afterwards the interview guide is designed and interviews as another research method are performed.

Later the research analyses and discusses the collected data by combing the interview answers with secondary data. Following that, the researcher interprets the findings. The research creates inductive results, which means that it generates patterns from the collected data instead of creating data from theories. More particularly, the researcher looks for patterns regarding elements for travel perceptions among the travellers the results of qualitative research are descriptive. By relating theories of Bryman (2012), it should be emphasized that the perception of boutique hotel segment is dependent on social actors, therefore cannot be uncovered, because it is constantly changing. As mentioned earlier, it is very important in the end as well as throughout the whole research process, to draw criticism, and review actions. Discovered patterns are summarized and concluded during the final stages of the research.

As mentioned, the sequence of the research steps has a base in the concept of hermeneutic circle, which stands for a process of reflecting upon a given situation in certain standpoint (Mertens, 2009). In other words, it is explained that the researcher can only have an understanding of details of the studied matter when knowing the entire context and context can be well understood only in understanding of details (Fischer, 2006). The researcher is gaining meaning in a particular time and

place (Patton, 2005). Holliday (2007) adds that constructive reality and social life are constantly argued and reconfirmed. Lavery (2008) points out that this circularity is influenced by the actions and decisions of the researcher. Upon start of the research, the researcher's input into the study is limited by pre-understandings of the boutique hotels theme. After engaging the new texts of secondary data collection, the researcher is gaining new knowledge about boutique hotel segment influenced by other authors and researchers. By collecting information through content analysis and interviews, the researcher keeps reflecting back throughout the paper in order to update each step of the process with emerging information (Patton, 2005).

2.3 Researcher

The involvement of the researcher in the thesis is undeniable (Boeije, 2010; Fink, 2000). For this reason, it is important to explain more concisely her background, and her viewpoints. The researcher with her knowledge of Spanish language, gained in Spanish bilingual high school, supports her interest in Spanish culture and tourism, and facilitates the data search in different languages. Moreover, it was influenced by diverse personal knowledge of tourism based on the researcher's university study background and personal interests in the field of the hospitality industry. The researcher visited a different location of Spain, and created a personal perception about tourism in this destination. According to Fink (2000), this subjective approach influenced by personal experience has an impact on the entire research process. Therefore, the researcher's personal knowledge about boutique hotels, continuously influences the findings and the whole output of the thesis (Kvale, 1996)

2.4 Qualitative research

In order to reach the goals of constructivist approach the researcher employs qualitative methods. This section is dedicated to the tools of qualitative methodology implemented in the process of collecting empirical data, including experience, ideas, beliefs and values; and their advantages and limitations. Jacob & Furgerson (2012, p. 1) states: *"the heart of qualitative research is the desire to expose the human part of a story."* The selection of the qualitative approach was based on the researcher's beliefs experience and perspectives as well as on the character of the research topic (Creswell, 2010).

The main characteristic of the qualitative study is the character of outcome in the form of words rather than numbers (Wellington, 2015, Creswell, 2010). The approach deals with representations, meanings, and observations of real-world settings. Therefore, the researcher collects data from interviews and experimental texts presented on the online review platform. This research aims to collect different experience and perceptions of the travellers related to the Spanish boutique hotel market. Another characteristic of qualitative methods is a smaller sample of participants (Curtis et al., 2000). The researcher concentrates on the quality of the methods, going deeper into the data extent from the individuals, rather than quantity of the participants.

2.4.1 Content analysis

The first selected qualitative method is a content analysis. Content analysis of online reviews represents preliminary data collection technique used in order to explore travellers' ideas and attitudes behind the experience with the boutique hotel segment in Spain. Grabner et al. (2012) characterises an analysis, where the main data is produced by emotions and opinions as sentiment analysis.

The social media website TripAdvisor is chosen as an information platform, for the reason of popularity among websites for travel-related reviews (Forbes, 2013). This website allows consumers of the hospitality industry to share their experience and rate it. The collected data in the form of the posted feedback on these review platforms are presented with subjectivity, influenced by personal knowledge and views (Fink, 2000), what correlates with the point of view of constructivism (Creswell, 2010). This provides valuable insight into the diverse points of view of the visitors of the boutique hotel segment in Spain.

As mentioned in previous sections, the researcher adopts hermeneutics, with intention to not only describe the data but also undoubtedly, find the meaning written between the lines (Wellington, 2015). The researcher identifies logical and meaningful themes in the area of interest by reducing the chosen review materials to a set of themes. Consequently, the researcher analyses all the positive and negative comments from the point of view of reviewers and looks for patterns among them, as suggested by Kasper & Vela (2012). In order to provide structure for sentiment analysis four categories are chosen: room, overall experience, employees and hotel design, which are elements influencing satisfaction of the hotel visitors. The main interest points in the reviews are elements directly related to visitors as a crucial motive of their stay.

One of the disadvantages of the online content analysis is the large number of reviews posted on TripAdvisor. Thus, the researcher decided on selecting reviews from the year 2015 in order to narrow down the selection and have current information about the boutique hotel segment in Spain. On the other hand, reviews are well organized, and it is easy for the researcher to look for the reviews according to the published year, a hotel, or other preferences. The researcher selects random hotels in Spain for the reason of a variety of answers and preventing from having reviews just from the best-rated hotels. The list of the hotels is provided in the *Appendix 3*.

The advantage of this method is easy access to information and big choice of reviews, by means of which the researcher the research is able to get an insight to understanding of the concept boutique hotel. The knowledge gained through the review analysis is used as a framework for the interview guide and overall improvement of the individual interviews. The identity of reviewers is unknown and the comments are anonymous, therefore their relevance for the research can be perceived as questionable and as another disadvantage of the analysis. It is not clear, who is behind the reviews and

if the people have real experience with boutique hotels. One of the TripAdvisor threats for research is that some of the reviews might be false, and created by people, who do not have real experience with hotels or reviews written by hotel personnel in order to improve their ratings. In other words, the data might be biased due to issues the anonymity of people who contribute to TripAdvisor reviews. Nonetheless, the content analysis uses this data as a preliminary research. Consequently, bigger emphasis is put on the interview analysis. However, to enhance the adequacy of the original reviews on TripAdvisor, the user-names of reviewers are shown in *Appendix 3*. Furthermore, compared to personal interviews it is not possible to interact with reviewers in the content analysis, and ask additional questions. The researcher thus deals with fixed data, which is available.

2.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

The interview is referring to face-to-face interactions, which are *“used to make sense of and understand on a daily basis the world in which we live”* (Jennings, 2005, p. 99). It is perceived, that the qualitative researcher gets closer to the travellers’ perspective by detailed interviewing (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In Creswell’s (2007) view, interviewing is the most widely used form of in-depth data collection in qualitative research. Interviews are more flexible in terms of following conversation without the limitations of a strict order of the questions (Bryman, 2012). Jennings (2005) emphasizes that qualitative interviews are shaped by a qualitative methodology, and subsequently by the constructivist paradigm. Through the interaction with the travellers, the researcher has the possibility to find the not-thought-of topics of research. However, one of the limitations, which, the researcher’s lack of experience in interviewing, might have a negative effect on the results.

There are eight semi-structured interviews applied in the research: two Skype interviews and six personal interviews. Eight interviews in person are performed. Skype interview is selected for this research as a supplemental choice to more conventional face-to-face interviews. Skype interview, as well as the interviews in person provides the opportunity of conducting individual audio or video recording. Carter (2011) points out that Skype interview is less expensive in terms of traveling costs and less time consuming for all the participants in comparison to regular face-to-face interviews in person. Moreover, the Skype interview is more manageable in terms of place and has advantage of flexibility in scheduling (Cater, 2011).

Although, Skype interviews through web camera allow the researcher to monitor instant reactions of the interviewees, it do not enable the research to observe properly the body language of the interviewees as usually only the upper body and face are visible. However, there is disadvantage discover during the Skype interview. As the interviewer cannot see in several cases the interviewees, it is difficult to estimate, whether the interviewee finished his answer and artificially interrupts the flow of the interview. Another negative aspect of the Skype interview is the dependability of the online informational software. Bad connection or technical difficulties might interrupt the flow of the

conversation. To avoid that, the researcher revised the used technologies before every interview to avoid unexpected inconvenience.

2.4.3 Interview cycle

The interviews compared to the content analysis require longer process of planning and performance. Firstly, for the illustration *Figure 3* shows the design of interview cycle of this research followed by its detailed description. This sub-section explains and discusses individual steps of the interviewing.

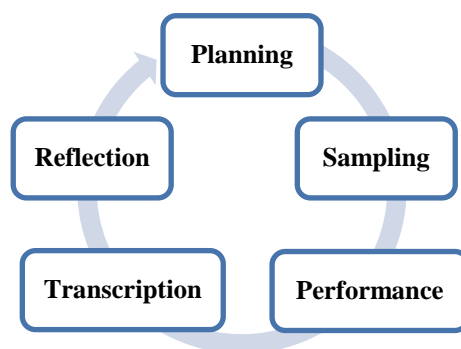


Figure 3: Interview cycle.
Created for this thesis, Resource: (Jennings, 2005; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012)

The first stage of the interview process is ***planning***. Planning includes the formulation of the interview questions, which are relevant to the topic of the thesis, and lead researcher to find answers for the research question. The structure of the interviews has its own rules. Following the suggestions of Crouch (2005), questions asked in interview are built on the relation between presented methods and theories. The first characteristic of this kind of interview is form of unstructured questions (Flick, 2009). The open-ended character allows the interview to be more flexible and to the researchers to have power to change directions of the interview flow (Kvale, 1996). In addition, semi-structured form of questions encourages interviewees to give longer elaborated answers (Fink, 2000). The questions are formulated in a short and simple way so that the participant understands and does not lose focus.

This stage further involves the arrangement of time and place, where the interviews will be performed. It is perceived as more relevant, to conduct the interviews in a comfortable setting, where the participants do not feel restricted to share perceptions (Creswell, 2010). In terms of Skype interview, it is set up a mutual date and time to call. Furthermore, the researcher decides to use the university quiet spaces as option for the personal interview venue. The researcher performs the Skype interview at home, because of the advantage of the silent background. Moreover, it is recommended to develop a short guiding script for the interviews (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). That includes short presentation about the researcher and the researched topic, the questions and at the end a reminder to ask for

comments and ask for interest in the results of the research. The researcher uses this short paper guide in every interview.

The interviews are performed individually, which means that there is only the researcher and one interviewee at the personal or virtual Skype meeting. As suggested by Punch (2005) the voice or video recordings are an appropriate form of recording data from the interview and a simple way, how to retain information for further research analysis. As recommended by Cater (2011), the researcher prepares a separate recorder as well as computer-based recording software in order to protect quality and data on more devices in a Skype conversation. The recordings of the interviews are later transferred on CD that is added into the thesis paper for the dependability of collected data.

Another important step of the interview process, which can be also perceived as a part of planning is *sampling* (Kvale, 1996; Marshall, 1996). It is noted that a qualitative research aims to generate huge amount of data on a specific topic from a small sample group (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Marshall (1996) underlines, that the flexible design allows the researcher to adapt the number of interview subjects during any stage. Curtis et al. (2000) highlights that qualitative sample should be reflecting different positions on the studied matter and should be relevant to the conceptual framework and the research. The sample of the interviewees consists of eight participants from different countries, age group, and backgrounds. Nevertheless, according to Curtis et al., (2000), all the participants should have features in common. The interviewees in this research are all internationally experienced travellers with previous experience with the hospitality establishments in Spain. The researcher chooses a variable sample of people. There are participants with personal boutique hotel experience as guests or employees, people who have experience with luxury establishments, however, have never been to one because they have not heard about them, and interviewees who know the concept, but have not visited them.

There can be limitations seen in a lack of the interviewees with several experiences with boutique hotel. Participants who stayed in several boutique hotels would give different points to the thesis and could elaborate on the comparison of different establishments. Nevertheless, it can be pointed out that there the sample is provided with variety of the participants and the researcher considers this sample enough representative for the further research.

In order to find participants for the interviews, the researcher created a descriptive website (see *Appendix 1*) explaining what the research is about and how individual interviewees can potentially contribute in the thesis. The researcher was looking for the potential interviewees through friend networks; post on social media and on online boutique hotel reviews platforms. They were approached through social media, by mail or in person.

In order to show the difference between content analysis and interviews, the researcher uses direct statements with the first names of participants in the structure of analysis, to show face-to-face connection during the interviews. In addition, the fact should be underlined that the researcher knows the real identity of the interviewees in contradiction to the content analysis, where the reviewers are anonymous. The occupation and age of the interviewees is diverse.

Figure 4 shows the basic information about participants, with emphasis on the differences between them.

<i>N^o</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
1.	Blazena Horvathová	46	Slovak	Business assistant
2.	Fabrizio Giuseppe Negretti	30	Italian	Student
3.	Giorgio Farina	24	Italian	Student
4.	Peter Kristof	20	Hungarian	Student
5.	Vivien Bodnár	22	Hungarian	Receptionist
6.	Iskren Vlaykov	28	Bulgarian	Student
7.	Sohaib Aslam	35	Pakistani	Engineer
8.	Shagufta Haanef	32	Pakistani	Student

*Figure 4: Participants of the interviews
Created for this thesis*

During the *performance* phase, the researcher takes in mind the suggested principles of guiding the in-depth interviews (Jennings, 2005). The interviewer is exceptionally allowed to interrupt the conversation, in the moment, when it loses the track and changes the whole aim of the conversation. As stated, only the voices of the interviews are recorded. It is also recommended to check non-verbal interactions and body language, and write it down, what can be useful for interpretation of the data. For that reason, a notebook is prepared for every interview.

Furthermore, in the process of leading interviews the researcher follows some of the ethical principles (Creswell, 2010). Before the process, the research participants are informed about the purpose of the investigation and the main features of the individual steps (Esterby-Smith et al., 2012). The researcher informs every participant that the conversations are recorded. Moreover, the interviewees are informed that the research paper is published on the school library domain and they are asked for their approval.

The research is performed while respecting the research participants, not disrupting their interest and dignity.

In the beginning, the researcher asks the opening question, inviting travellers to tell what knowledge about the boutique hotel segment they have in general, which commands them to talk freely and produce a more relaxed atmosphere. In order to build confidence, questions are asked from least difficult ones to those that are most difficult (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). The interviews are performed in two different languages (English, Slovak), as not all the participants speak English at conversational level.

The language skills of the researcher can be seen as the limitations. English is not the native language for the researcher; therefore, she may be restricted in expressing some of the questions. It is observed by the researcher that the interviewee performed in native language was more expressive and the gained information was more descriptive. Although interviewing in other languages can lead to misinterpretation of some of the questions, the researcher intends to translate the questions in the way they do not lose the particular meaning. However, all the interviewees of the research are perceived to have high level of English on communication level.

Following that, the researcher performs *transcription* of the interviews. The spotlight during the data processing is focused on the meaning of the information rather than the literal transcription; thus, some of the grammar mistakes, irrelevant expressions, and emotions are corrected, transformed, or left out. The researcher performs these steps with the objective of making the whole conversation more understandable, but attempting not to modify the main point and meanings of the answers. It needs to be underlined that even though the transcription process was done in a most comprehensive way, it is not possible to avoid small errors and misinterpretations (Kvale, 1994).

The last stage of the interview cycle is *reflection*. Reflexivity is the process by which the researcher revises the interview event and identifies weaknesses. The interview framework and direction can be quickly revised as new information emerges. Non-stringent structure of interviews allows the research to update information gaps in the questions after every interview and prepare a guide for the next interview. The researcher starts the planning phase again, uses already created structure while making adjustments with help of the notes made during the previous interviews until all of the participants are interviewed.

2.4.4 Analysis of data

After the first revision of data, the researcher starts the analysis by creating conceptual categories of topics. These topics are created in a way to correspond the relevant theories presented in the theory chapter. This phase is presented as open coding and enables the researcher to have the interviews more

organised and consequently simpler for the analysis process (Kothari, 2008). Following that, the transcriptions are reviewed again, the researcher organises the individual answers into the individual categories. In other words, the aim is to produce descriptive, multi-dimensional categories, which serve as a preliminary framework for analysis with the aim to produce research findings. The essential topics related to the objective of answering the research question are identified while irrelevant parts are omitted. Moreover, the researcher uses observation notes as a supplement to recordings and transcriptions.

As mentioned before, all of the interviews are performed and analysed by the same person. It has an impact on the interpretation of the collected information. It is emphasized by Jennings (2005), that the qualitative research is a product of the values of the researcher, and hence, is dependent on her. The empirical data is shaped due to the conceptual framework discussed in the theory chapter. It means that theories are implemented into the interpretation of the interview responses, compared and discussed. According to Fink (2000), the personal knowledge and experience of the researcher are the tools for interpreting the gained data (Fink, 2000). It means that the researcher's personal observations and knowledge of the boutique hotel segment in Spain influence the understanding and interpretation in the analysis process.

2.5 Criteria for assessing qualitative research

This section aims to show to identify the validity of the data in this research. In order to provide structure for this section the researcher follows the suggestions of Lincoln & Guba (1985) proposing four criteria of the research trustworthiness: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability*.

2.5.1 Credibility

Credibility is identified as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). Methodological triangulation in terms of the combination of content analysis and interview analysis is applied as technique in order to achieve the credibility (Stake, 2005). The data is collected through combination of multiple data sources. By that, the researcher analyses the diverse points of view about boutique hotels. Moreover, the gained information is mutually analysed and confronted, which provides this thesis with confidence in the credibility of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Furthermore, a theoretical triangulation is applied, which refers to the method of using more than one theoretical approach in interpreting data (Bryman, 2012). In particular, the researcher combines and discusses different theories connected to boutique hotel, experience and other relevant topics from various sources to improve the credibility of data. Additionally, the researcher has professional

experience in the field of boutique hotels. She has knowledge about the core issues of the boutique hotel segment, which according to Anney (2014) increases the credibility of the research.

2.5.2 Transferability

Transferability of the data stands for how well the research context fits other similar environments, for example to boutique hotels in other destination. The researcher thus provides descriptive data, which allows a comparison of this context to other possible contexts (Trimble et al., 2011). The researcher provides detailed data about the research topic, and the process of data collection (Anney, 2014). The researcher provides sufficient descriptive data about the process of research and background information about its participants.

2.5.3 Dependability

Dependability is the description of changes that occur during the course of research, and an understanding of how such changes affect the research or the study. It is moreover showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated (Trimble et al., 2011). According to Bryman (2012), it is not possible to achieve identical findings from the research, because in the researcher's perception, there are multiple realities and interpretations (Creswell, 2010).

Nevertheless, with the aim to improve dependability, the researcher ensures that all the research materials that are used for the analysis such as recordings on CD in *Appendix 5* and transcriptions are accessible to readers in *Appendix 4*. To enhance the adequacy of the original reviews on TripAdvisor, the user-names of reviewers are shown in *Appendix 3*. Moreover, one of the interviews was performed in other language than English, precisely Slovak, and translation as well as the original transcription is showed in *Appendix 4*.

2.5.4 Confirmability

Conformability is the degree of neutrality to which others agree or corroborate with the research findings (Golafshani, 2003). Researchers must take steps to demonstrate that findings emerge from the data and to which extent was the researcher biased during the research process (Anney, 2014). This master's thesis is guided by a supervisor with knowledge of the studied field of tourism, which, according to Trimble et al. (2011) supports to keep away from the thesis research bias.

3 THEORY

The theoretical framework of this thesis presents discusses and compares the concept of boutique hotels, characteristics and features. The theoretical perspectives in this chapter are presented as a discussion of the notions and theories chosen by the researcher and selected by her as relevant for the research. After discussing the general understanding of the boutique hotel concept, the research concentrates a section on the perception of the concept of boutique hotels in destination of Spain. Moreover, tourists' perceptions about stay in boutique hotels through theoretical framework of peak and secondary experiences are discussed in order to discover what importance the boutique hotels have in the notion of tourists' experience. All the theories discussed in this chapter fit within the process of answering the research question: *“What elements characterise the Spanish boutique hotel segment based on the perceptions of tourists with experience of the Spanish hospitality market; with regard to quality of products and services, approach of employees, the hotel design, atmosphere and experience?”*

3.1 Boutique hotels history

The origin of the word boutique comes from the Greek word *“apothēkē,”* meaning storehouse (Word origin, 2015). The expression *“boutique hotel”* comes to the hospitality industry from literal comparison of a boutique as a small shop, opposed to a department store (Freund de Klumbis, 2002). The concept of boutique hotels and characteristics are an issue of discussion of this section.

The history of the concept of the boutique hotels is uncertain. Lim & Endean (2009) deem the London's Blakes Hotel built in 1987 as the first boutique hotel. However, other researchers such as Albazzaz et al. (2003) argue that it was in 1984 the Morgans Hotel in New York. In addition to this discussion, according to Anhar (2001), the first hotel using the term boutique was the Bedford in Union Square hotel in San Francisco. Even so, it is described that the formation of boutique hotel segment was caused by demand pressure on the hospitality market to improve and transform their performance (Arifin et al., 2015). International travellers started to search for more than a bed for the night and required high quality service with an extra factor (Freund de Klumbis, 2005).

3.1.1 New model of customers behaviour

As indicated, the tourism industry is constantly changing. The trend of boutique hotels has developed as reaction to changes in travellers taste and behaviour (Ballesteros et al., 2007). However, the success of the business depends on the customers, and the way, how they are willing to spend the money (McKenney, 2014). It is emphasized that for the customers in general, *“having experiences is becoming more important than owning objects”* (Milburn & Hall, 2005, p. 1). There is an active

movement to avoid the mainstream in favour of personalisation, dynamic service and unique experiences instead of a commoditised product (McKenney, 2014). An experience becomes a product, which is memorable to the customers (Freund de Klumbis, 2002). The new generations of customers seek for theatre, excellent hospitality and a real understanding of their needs. According to research of Milburn & Hall (2005), international travellers look for value for their money and at the same time want to be appreciated and valued. McKenney (2014) emphasizes that consumers are more likely to pay for combination of attributes and experience. **Chyba! Nenašiel sa žiaden zdroj odkazov.** presents the triangle model based on the theories of Freund de Klumbis (2002), where the hotel establishments are divided according to the service they offer. Boutique hotels are in the top category, which represent the combination of basic value such as accommodation, cleaning amenities with another category of design and additional services. Adding together, boutique hotels are representation of places with a unique individual identity and new innovative ideas and personalized services.

3.2 Boutique hotel concept

Boutique hotels are a sub-category of lifestyle hotels. There is no official and versatile definition of the boutique hotel sector (Albazzaz et al., 2003; Lim & Endeen, 2009). Nevertheless, the literature concentrated on boutique hotels seems to be relatively uniform in explanation, and thus is possible to identify some common characteristics. In different sources, boutique hotels are often connected to words as innovation, alternative, design, uniqueness (Anhar, 2001; Arifin et al., 2015; Freund de Klumbis, 2002).

Another distinctive aspect is the ***number of rooms***. As mentioned, boutique hotels have a limited number of sleeping rooms (Jones et al., 2013). Aggett (2007) adds that the maximum is 100 rooms per hotel. Moreover, overall hotel is smaller in size, what consequently has an impact on creating intimate atmosphere and thrilling ambience (Balekjian & Sarheim, 2011). However, Freund de Klumbis (2002) argues that boutique hotels have no upper limit on the number of the rooms, and can be up to 400 rooms.

Salas (2014) also notes that boutique hotels are different in their ***location choice*** in comparison to chain hotels. According to Albazzaz et al (2003), boutique hotels are mainly located in trendy districts in suburban areas or town and city centre. Additionally, Arifin et al., (2015) emphasize that they are mainly established in buildings that have walking distance from main sightseeing sites for the leisure travellers or close to business areas, for the international business travellers. Considering the location of boutique hotels in resort destinations, it is pointed out that location is as important as in city hotels, boutique hotels are frequently hidden out of massive tourist spots (Milburn & Hall, 2005).

There are other similar categories with small room rate and great style such as design or lifestyle hotel. Boutique hotels distinguish themselves through the historical value of the building, luxury, and

notable architecture. Salas (2014) argues the boutique hotels are more about quality of details, luxury disparate elements, and feeling of intimacy. It is claimed that they provide their guests with intangible qualities such as feelings, imagination and create a coherent and compelling picture (Arifin et al., 2015). They have intention to fulfil the practical as well as emotional needs of the demand side (Freund de Klumbis, 2002).

Furthermore, Harrison (2015) points out, that the individual boutique hotels should reflect the personality of location's heritage and nature. This is interrelated to another feature of boutique hotels and that is **unique design** and aesthetic style (Freund de Klumbis, 2002). Historical properties, reconstructed palaces or mansions used as a common location to build in these kinds of hotels, for the reason that significant architectural aspects are seen as an important element of overall boutique hotel experience (Albazzaz et al., 2003; McKenney, 2014). In addition, the interior is adapted to the personality of the building with design furniture and high-tech in-room facilities; fitting music and decoration themes are incorporated (Lim et al., 2009). Even if the building has historical character, the interior is supplemented with modern contemporary design.

It is pointed out that boutique hotels do not specialize in any particular group of people, as they are suitable for business as well as vacation travel motives (Lim & Endeen, 2009). However, McKenney (2014) argues that it is possible to specify the target group, because boutique hotels are mainly aimed at travellers in their 20s and 50s, most within the middle to upper income level.

The facilities of boutique hotels provide travellers with other exclusive amenities such as high-quality restaurants, bars and lounges and spa's as an integral feature of their service (Omanukwue, 2011). It is pointed out that thank to the distinctive design and architecture; boutique hotels often provide authentic cultural or historic impressions (Jones et al., 2009). They are examples of customer experience differentiation, because their guests are treated with personalized service (Arifin et al., 2015). It is emphasized that not only accommodation should meet the special requirements of the visitors, but also other facilities such as restaurant or wellness. According to Fuentes-Moraleda et al. (2014), this can be achieved with offer of diet and special-needs meals, a range of unique beverages, tailored packages of wellness or business centre services.

One of the suggested alternative options, which complement the experience factor of boutique hotels, is a high level of the **customised service** (Albazzaz et al., 2003). The notion of the experience is explained in following section. According to Victorino et al. (2005), boutique hotels customized option adapts the service offering to each individual guest. Examples of this kind of offer are childcare option, personal driver, or flexible check in/out.

The hospitality industry is a service-oriented area; it is one of the segments based on everyday interaction (HN, 2015). Despite developments in technology, daily face-to-face interaction with clients

is still important in business relations (Öter & İçöz, 2009). Fuentes-Moraleda et al. (2014) claim, that boutique hotels are recognizable by the professionalism of their employees. It means that employees in the tourism industry are facing challenges of international and multicultural environment and this results in cross-cultural interaction more intense than in the past (Öter & İçöz, 2009).

Freund de Klumbis (2002) argues that boutique hotels distinguish themselves from regular hotels by different style of guest interaction match individual guests to experiences. Jones et al. (2009) argues that visitors of the boutique hotels should feel as though they are recognized as individuals. Omanukwue (2011) points out that boutique hotel are characterized for their high staff-to-guest ratio, which allows them to provide travellers with *personalized guest approach*. In addition to that, interaction between hotel employees and visitors is more familiar, creating a relaxed environment (Aggett, 2007).

Some of the techniques of boutique hotels are to stay alert to the visitors needs and call the travellers by their names in conversation (Gee, 1994). It is perceived that this kind of employee-guest approach sends a courteous and profound message toward the visitors. Öter & İçöz (2009) highlight, that the first five seconds have crucial importance in service contacts, for the reason of travellers' general impressions of the place. Therefore, it is important to point out that there should be special attention dedicated to the way, how this relation is handled. In addition, the interaction between the clients and employees should be carefully planned and managed by management of the hotels (Gee, 1994).

It is perceived, that etiquette knowledge of employees is an integral part of the hospitality industry, where the boutique hotels are no exception (Gottsma, 2011). Öter & İçöz (2009, p. 9) define etiquette as *“the socially desired and accepted rules, which facilitate human relations.”* For that reason, etiquette or good manners are conventions of the society and proper etiquette for the initial business encounter can make a difference in the boutique hotel market. It is important that hoteliers know and practice the hospitality ethics for several reasons: to show respect, to avoid embarrassment, to enhance understanding, and to avoid dealing from a weakened position in negotiating (Gee, 1994). Use of business ethical rules helps present a uniform, professional face to the public and encourage all employees in a company to act in a uniform manner.

According to Gottsma (2011), special attention of boutique hotels should involve recommendations of restaurant and different activities, assistance tickets purchase and reservations. As already mentioned, it is advised to use the guest names by all hotel staff members, which is clearly more difficult to achieve in a large-scale hotel (Anhar, 2001). Öter & İçöz (2009) emphasize never using imperative speaking style while talking to the client.

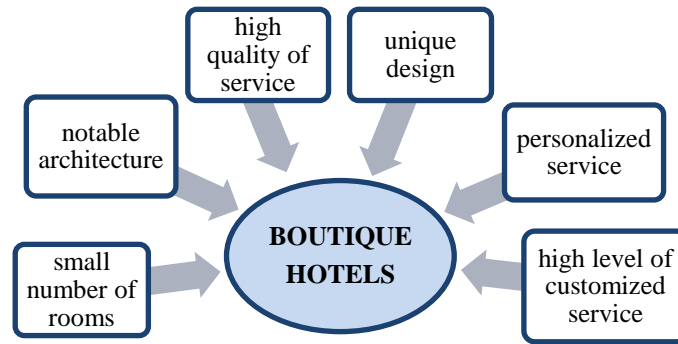
Even though boutique hotels are presented on the market as luxury and high quality establishments, with special attention to the selection of the employees (Salas, 2014), as every tourism company they

have to deal with negative comments and direct feedback and complaints. It is common to get a negative direct comment for low performance or absence of a desired feature (Pizam & Ellis, 1999). The process of dealing with complains plays a very crucial role in sustaining the satisfaction of the visitors of the hospitality establishments (Malik, 2013). It is perceived that the style of apology should reflect the quality level of the establishment (Galicic & Ivanovic, 2009).

As mentioned, boutique hotels are characteristics of the special relationship with the guest. Therefore, it is underpinned that a guest presenting objections should be taken seriously while maintaining a professional attitude. The main reason for this is that travellers complaining about their state can be still turned into the final positive experience (Galicic & Ivanovic, 2009). Boutique hotels have different style of such as rewarding a complaining guest with additional gratis service or discounts for a future visit. It is recommended to put forward options or alternatives, and state things that can or will be done because directly impact on their future visit and customer loyalty. Furthermore, traveller satisfied with the performance of employees may generate positive word of mouth promotion for the hotels (Malik et al., 2013).

Moreover, boutique hotels according to Jones et al. (2009) differentiate themselves in the hospitality industry through an *ultimate experience*, which is creating their competitive advantage. As emphasized by Van Hartesvelt (2006) the combination of high quality design and services creates a unique value for boutique hotels. Anhar (2001) stresses boutique hotels put emphasis on entertaining their guests by creating a theatrical atmosphere that attracts all senses. Boutique hotels try to offer uplifting package combining interesting art, music, lighting and additional services for the consumer to enjoy (Freund de Klumbis, 2002; Omanukwue, 2011).

It is evident from previous discussions that boutique hotels offer diversity and unique value for the travelling. Boutique hotels differentiate themselves in the hospitality market, because of the individual attributes, a combination of traditional value drivers such as comfort and high quality service and innovative value drivers, which create the ultimate experience for their guests (Victorino et al., 2005). The characteristics representing boutique hotels participate in the creation of a unique and attractive hospitality segment. They are summed up in the *Figure 6*.



*Figure 5: Characteristics of boutique hotel segment
Created for this project, based on Alekseeva, 2012; McKenney, 2014; Omanukwue, 2011*

3.3 Boutique hotel sector in Spain

The Spanish hospitality segment has the big contribution on the national economy of the hospitality sector (López-Fernández et al, 2011). In 2013, Spain had the highest number of hotels in Europe (Alonso Almeida, 2013). According to Ballestero et al. (2007) destination of Spain is known for its extensive hotel complexes and the beach summer-vacation establishments, which are usually closed for low season. However, it is observed, that interest in rural and cultural tourism increased, which resulted in the adaptation of the offer to the wishes of the demand side (Ballestero et al., 2007).

Ballestero et al. (2007) moreover emphasize, that evolution of technology immersed in innovations in the hospitality industry, and at the same time in the mentality and demands of tourists. Moreover, there are other factors such as retirement age, increase of living standards in previously undeveloped countries or simplified conditions for travelling, which shape the demand in the Spanish tourism. It is perceived that the globalisation of tourism is expected to attract higher numbers of international wealthier travellers to Spain (Ernst & Young, 2014). Moreover, it simultaneously affects the standard of hotels that customers expect, which means Spanish hotels have to ensure they set up quality systems and pay increased attention to the tourists' demands. Subsequently, new trends in hotels product offer are emerging such as personalization of services, management, and presentation of the establishments (Ballestero et al., 2007).

It is pointed out that Spain is a culturally rich country, with lots of historical buildings, castles, and mansions. Investors, who built in boutique hotel, provide the option to save the dilapidated building and retain the original structure and features. Boutique hotels are in Spain therefore often housed within converted heritage buildings with historical integrity that tells their own story (Chen, 2012). Reconstructed mansions, palaces, and monasteries transformed into luxury accommodation have their individual name in Spain: *paradores* (Timothy, 2011, O'Sullivan, 2009). Nevertheless, it is not possible to include all boutique hotels in Spain to this category even though some of them belong to this category. The reason is that not all of them accomplish the requirements of personalized high-quality service, size or customized products.

As discussed in previous sections, uniform definition of the boutique hotel concept does not exist. For that reason, there are no official statistics about the boutique hotels sector in Spain. Nevertheless, according to a research of PricewaterhouseCoopers (2014), Spanish boutique hotel sector is one of the top ten in Europe. Ballestero et al., (2007) also emphasizes, that traditional tourism model of Spain 3S (sun, sea and sand) is gradually being updated with a component of “*experience*.” Boutique hotels are examples of customer experience differentiation on the hospitality market (Llamal & Islamil, 2014). According to Ballestero et al. (2007), boutique hotels in Spain are understood as an alternative concept of a hotel establishment, with offer of luxury functions and services. Moreover, they are targeted for both leisure and business tourism and more importantly, they should represent a more flexible solution in terms of seasonality.

As emphasized, guest-employee relationship of boutique hotels is different. However, considering Spain the approach is comparable to the rest of western European countries, with a good customer service and knowledge of foreign languages (Meaney, 2003). Bosrock (2006) argues that English should be expected to be widely spoken. Nevertheless, English is spoken in major cities and coastal resorts (Sadlowski, 2010), which are the common locations of boutique hotels. According to Bosrock (2006), people of Spain can be described as cheerful and outgoing and they will use expansive body language, therefore the professional communication is more relaxed. One of the distinctive features of the Spanish business culture is siesta, which is a midday break habit, when the businesses are closed (Meaney, 2003).

For all the mentioned reasons, boutique hotels are claimed to stand for an innovative concept on the hospitality market. Landman (2013) emphasizes that boutique hotels in Spain have a potential to fight some of the problems in the current market place. In the case of Spain, it means the seasonality and the useful exploitation of historical properties.

3.4 Experience

Experience is often emphasised as part of boutique hotels essence. Schmitt (1999) states that tourism companies moved to create experiences for their customers, instead of just offering features and benefits. According to Arifin et al., (2015), boutique hotels are representation of the service experience economy. Sørensen & Jensen (2014) argue that for the success of the hospitality industry it is important to provide visitors with the experiential attributes of consumption. As presented above, boutique hotels are characteristic for their ability to meet the basic customer needs as well as offer an extra factor of experience. While travellers, who are consumers of hospitality establishments, are engaged in rational choice, they are often driven by emotions, because consumption experiences are directed toward the pursuit of imaginations, feeling, and fun (Schmitt, 1999).

Successful service providers realise that experience is defined as “*an outcome of participation in a set of activities within a social context*” (Gupta & Vajic 2000, p. 34). In other words, it is characterized as a state of mind, which results in personal feelings of satisfaction, gratification, and fulfilment. In this context, travelling is seen as a way to experience something different. In addition, it is noted that experience as an institutional pleasure-seeking activity, offers opportunities of escape from daily lives and daily routine. Experience in the hospitality industry is characterised a sensation of knowledge resulting from some level of interaction with different elements of a context created by a service provider (Gupta & Vajic 2000).

The design feature of the boutique hotel sector is also considered important in the experience of the hotel stay (Freund de Klumbis, 2005). Aggett (2007) points out that the individual character itself is part of the traveller’s experience. This is seen as an important aspect in gaining an advantage over competitors (Lim & Endeen, 2009). It is significant to point out that boutique hotel experience is not about individual features of establishments but about the combination of the aspect which characterize boutique hotels (Freund de Klumbis, 2005). The hotels introduce one general style or design rooms individually, in order to provide visitors with different experience each time they come (Rowe, 2003). Customers of service experience are perceived as passive recipients of design choices and rules of the service provider (Gupta & Vajic 2000). It means that the travellers can find options to choose such as the room level, but they have to accept the options they are imposed to, such as style or tangible room equipments, even though they have a choice of complementary services.

Another factor distinguishing experience from other products is the involvement of the service consumers in the process of service and interaction with other boutique hotel guests and employees (Gupta & Vajic 2000). It is perceived that this factor enhance the feeling of travellers of belonging and participating in the final experience. Furthermore, Baum (2005) points out that tourism experiences generally rely on a number of encounters between tourists and tourism employees. Thus, it can be assumed that experience encounters lead not only to increased tourist satisfaction, but also to increased employee satisfaction and work motivation, which lead to other positive consequences.

3.4.1 Peak and secondary experience

Tourists’ motives to travel vary from one individual to another. Concept associated with travel experience consists of two dimensions, which is peak and secondary experience. Peak experience requires element of surprise and the benefit. In other words, peak experience is referred to as a motivator for travelling (Haven-Tang & Jones, 2009). According to Quan & Wang (2004), supplement service providers such as boutique hotel accommodation are considered part of the secondary experience. Even though the boutique hotels do not represent the main travel reason, they can stand as supporting consumer experiences derived from the activities facilitating the peak experience. It is pointed out that overall travel experience is created as a combination of peak and supporting customer

experience and therefore, the boutique hotel can be considered as part of experience economy (Haven-Tang & Jones, 2009).

According to Ryan & Glendon, 1998, supporting experience has its importance, as its quality or total absence affects the level of satisfaction about the entire travel experience. This supports the notion that supporting experience might in some cases, turn to be peak experience (Quan & Wang, 2004). If the motivation for visiting boutique hotels is connected to the encounter of service, which creates a memorable and inherently personal event, this experience can be considered as a peak. On the other hand, when the boutique hotel is complementary to other major motives of travel, the experience of the visit becomes secondary (Quan & Wang (2004).

3.5 The Concept of Hotel Service

This section is included in the theory chapter in order to understand, how the travellers visiting hotels perceive the experience. Due to the intangibility of service in the hospitality industry, the quality of travellers' experience is difficult to evaluate. One of the parameters for the determination of the quality of service provider is satisfaction of the visitors. Holjevac et al. (2010, p. 2) state, "*satisfaction occurs when product or service is better than expected.*" According to their theories, it means that satisfaction of tourists occurs, when expectations of a product or services are met. Travellers have different needs and views on what influences their perception about experience, which means that satisfaction is a subjective issue. It is perceived by Galicic & Ivanovic (2009) that travellers from different countries place different emphasis on features of the hospitality establishments such as hygiene, food and service quality, staff's attitude towards guests, style and design. Moreover, it is pointed out that tourists frequently rely on the physical evidence that surrounds the service such as room, reception, clean air, information, furniture (Hoffman & Bateson, 2006).

Freund de Klumbis (2009) proposes the six more detailed categories of elements, which contribute to travellers' positive impression. That is illustrated in *Figure 6*. Freund de Klumbis (2009) moreover points out that together with the variety of components are geared toward a balanced sensual experience, often quoted as the X-factor, and connected to the sixth sense of people. All these elements contribute to the overall impression of the travellers' experience. It is perceived that the atmosphere of the boutique hotels has power to and evoke theatrical and dramatic experience that every visitor evolves with personal imagination.

OPTICAL	OLFACTORY	AUDITORI	HAPTIC	GUSTATORY	6TH SENSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • art • design • decoration • colours • presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • air freshness • cleanliness • aromas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sound • music • silence • atmosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • room temperature • matherials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flavours • food • ingredietes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • imagination • fantasy

*Figure 6: Factor forming the visitors' satisfaction in boutique hotel
Created for this thesis based on theories of Freund de Klumbis (2009)*

However, Malik et al., (2013) make a different division and create three important aspects that resolve in the travellers' satisfaction and add a missing human factor of the experience in Freund de Klumbis' division. More precisely: staff quality, room qualities, and overall hotel value are the top three hotel factors. Additionally to this discussion, Alekseeva (2009) points out that the location, as a factor for satisfaction, is equally important.

3.5.1 Summary of theoretical framework

In conclusion, it can be presented that boutique hotels acquire a unique character, where special design and comfortable decor are the main features. What distinguishes boutique hotels from standardized hotels is the connection that hotel guests experience with members of the hotel staff and tailored service offer (Anhar, 2001). Even though several of the factors discussed in the theory chapter can be also applied in other hotels, it is important to point out that in discussion of boutique hotels, it is essential to concentrate on combination of these aspects, and how all together create a unique atmosphere of boutique hotel segment, plus distinguishable position on the tourism market.

There is a lack of scientific sources specifically describing the boutique hotel sector in Spain. However, this section provides a combination of theories, which partly reveal how the boutique hotels are perceived in general. It was described that satisfaction is one of the conception, which can indicate the quality of the service that boutique hotel presents. There are several categories of individual products and services, which participate in overall satisfaction of travellers, such as staff approach, room equipment level, design, food quality, atmosphere, decoration. It is evident, that boutique hotel concept is perceived very similarly in Spain as general meaning. However, Spain sees the opportunity to deal with the problem of seasonality through boutique hotels, as they appeal tourists to cultural heritage experience. The theory chapter presented and discussed the notion of the satisfaction connected to the experience the travellers are provided. The key theoretical findings about boutique hotels together with introduction present a platform of theories for further analysis. It means that the individual visitors' perception can be compared with presented theories.

4 ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the analysis of the data. The structure of this chapter is divided in two main sections. The first part of the analysis chapter belongs to content analysis of the TripAdvisor reviews. Perceptions of individuals displaying their boutique hotel experience on the online feedback platform are studied. The content analysis is followed by analysis of individual semi-structured interviews. The interpretation of data is mainly based on the personal knowledge of the researcher and interaction of the participants and their perceptions. This part of analysis involves direct quotations of interview participants. Finally, all the findings are summarised and discussed in the end of the chapter.

The analysis is an essential part of the thesis looking for new patterns among the answers of the reviewers on TripAdvisor and participants of the face-to-face interviewees. The fundamental purpose of this data analysis is to find answers to the research question concerning the main elements that distinguish Spanish boutique hotel segment on the tourism market.

4.1 Content analysis

As discussed in the theory chapter, the hospitality industry is missing universal definition of a boutique hotel (Albazzaz et al., 2003; Lim & Endeen, 2009). Therefore, the researcher is looking into the content of reviews published on TripAdvisor and search for patterns between them, in order to discover patterns of how is this concept perceived in reality. Within the section is discussing elements, which are according to the visitors of boutique hotel specifying this unique segment. The aim of this section is to analyse the of the tourist positive and negative experiences, who have visited one of the boutique hotels in Spain. Precisely, the researcher analyses the satisfaction of tourists with individual product values and services. The section is divided into 6 categories: employees, facilities, products, service, design, and location, which emerge from frequently discussed topic in the TripAdvisor reviews.

4.1.1 Employees

First and widely discussed topic is personalized approach of the employees to the tourist, who visited some boutique hotel in Spain. One of the TripAdvisor reviewers describes this: *“we were offered champagne while checking in. The staff goes that extra mile just to make your stay more enjoyable and comfortable”* (Reviewer N). It shows that according to Reviewer N, the employees of boutique hotels are considered to be performing service, which has different standards in comparison to other hotel categories. As seen from the feedback, additional services are desired. Related to that, Reviewer G expresses very similar notion, he states that boutique hotel employees: *“need the good references from all whom stay with them so they tend to go the extra mile.”* He is commenting on boutique hotels in

general, are performing the best performance in order to receive positive feedback. There is pattern of reviewers using the word “*extra*” while commenting the employees, which signifies the important role in the eyes of travellers. According to theories of Galicic & Ivanovic (2009), there is a special connection between satisfaction of the visitors and employees approach.

Reviewer B has similar experience with boutique hotel, which he visited. He comments his experience: “*upon arrival was greeted by very friendly reception staff and shown to room, excellent knowledge of the hotel ... made to feel extremely welcome*” (Reviewer B). He describes that employees provided services beyond expectations, which made him feel special. Reviewer O put visited boutique hotel in comparison to other hotels. He comments the performance of boutique hotel employees: “*they were the most friendly and helpful of any hotel I have stayed in*” (Reviewer O). It is perceived from this feedback, that visitor of boutique hotel consider boutique hotel employees approach as special and reputable, because it is possible to identify it as distinguishable from other hotel services.

On the other hand, there negative experience with employees of one of the boutique hotel is mentioned. It is seen from this review, that reviewer associates boutique hotel with the special employee approach. Reviewer P presents the negative experience with unsatisfying service; “*I would not stay at this hotel next time. There's NO service!*” In order to underlines the dissatisfaction, the Reviewer P uses exclamation mark. Therefore, it signalise that the bad performance of employees has the direct impact on the satisfaction of the guests This can be applied in any hotel also out of the category of boutique hotels; however, in combination to the other factor it is particularly important for boutique hotels. There is a more negative comment toward employees of boutique hotels and services using the expression “*underserviced*” (Reviewer H). It is perceived that by using this expression, reviewer indicates that experience did not meet the expectations.

Summarizing mentioned reviews, there is a visible pattern suggesting that boutique hotel staff are an essential part of the travellers overall hospitality experience. As emphasized by Teo et al., (1998), employees of the boutique hotels have a special aim to provide their visitors with more personalized service. Furthermore, there is beginning of pattern revealing that he travellers staying in boutique hotels seek great employees’ performance. This discussion correlates with the theory of Freund de Klumbis (2002) perceiving that tourists nowadays seek for excellent hospitality service and a real understanding of their needs.

4.1.2 Facilities

Another element mentioned in the reviews is the range and quality of facilities, which boutique hotels offer. Reviewer I aims negative comments toward insufficient hotel facilities. It is presented that: “*it is a shame that the hotel has no restaurant.*” This perception of reviewer consent with theories of Omanukwue (2011), who put emphasize on high quality restaurant as one of the must that boutique

hotel should have, in order to satisfy the tourists visiting the hotel. Reviewer B describes: *“the restaurant attached to the hotel is equally special, meat and fish cooked over a hot coal setup”*. Furthermore, boutique hotels are according to Freund de Klumbis (2003) expected to offer other luxury facilities. The Reviewer B even uses the word *“special”* to support the importance of restaurant experience for boutique hotels.

Furthermore, Reviewer K has positive experience with the bar in the hotel he visited: *“there's a beautiful bar in the hotel that has a great bartender.”* Nevertheless, not only presence of facilities is important, but also their quality. Reviewer H criticise the Spa facility in one of the Spanish boutique hotels: *“Overrated... The so-called "Spa" was small.”* As it is seen from this feedback, the boutique hotel did not meet the expectations in terms of quality of the spa facility and therefore lower the final perception about the establishment. Reviewer H also finishes his review with the phrase: *“never again!”* Therefore it is perceived, that combination of the services he was provided, where one of them was a Spa are according to him on not satisfactory level. The pattern revealed in this discussion suggests that facilities are also important part of the boutique hotel experience, especially they quality and range of service.

4.1.3 Products

Following that is boutique hotel room. It is evident, that this aspect is not very specific for boutique hotels, but for any establishment in the lodging industry. Nevertheless, in combination of another element can be considered as an important element to be discussed while studying boutique hotels. The rooms are also highly discussed in the reviews. Reviewer C explains: *“the room was clean but stuffy. Bed was not comfortable as again, it being old or cheap.”* This reviewer has a negative experience with low quality of equipment in the room as his expectations differ from experience he had. It is perceived that boutique hotel rooms are expected to have functional, comfortable, and modern equipment.

In addition to discussion about room, Reviewer G *“staff has more time to spend with you on questions about the area & sightseeing & is more inclined to make your stay the most comfortable.”* From the point of view of this reviewer, it is understood that compact size and smaller ratio of the rooms of the hotel provides employees with opportunity to dedicate more time to the customers. There is another beginning of pattern showing that room is one of the hotel products, which are expected to provide comfort, luxury feeling and at the same time create a homely atmosphere.

4.1.4 Service

Related to the discussion is a boutique hotel room service. This feedback of Reviewer P comments: *“the room service is Japanese food from another restaurant. I found it's funny to serve sushi only in a hotel in Spain...”* This reviewer points out the issue, where the service provided in the boutique hotel

is not in accordance with the style of the boutique hotel and setting. This issue is possible to connect to theory of Albazzaz et al. (2003); underlining that personalized service should reflect personality and style of the place, as well as environment the hotel is set in. Furthermore, Reviewer C describes it: *“breakfast was very limited for a boutique hotel.”* It is perceived that by view of reviewer C about services provided by boutique hotel is related to high quality and variability in service choice. As emphasized by Fuentes-Moraleda et al. (2014), boutique hotel are characteristic for the offer, which is meeting special and customized needs by offering tailored packages.

4.1.5 Design

There is another aspect of boutique hotels, which seems to be important for Reviewer K. He describes his point of view: *“it still has many original structural features yet still provides a very modern and contemporary feel with carefully chosen décor”* (Reviewer K). It is perceived that the aesthetic feature of the visited hotel creates a special atmosphere for the reviewer; and therefore complements the positive final experience. Additionally, Reviewer L describes design of the hotel as “cool.” This discussion is showing small pattern among reviewers, noticing design of the hotel, which is worth of their comments and therefore perceived as important part of the experience. The style of boutique hotel itself cannot satisfy the needs of the visitors of a hospitality establishment. Nevertheless, as pointed out by Van Hartesvelt (2006) a unique value for boutique hotels is created by combination of design and service.

4.1.6 Location

Continuing the analysis, another of the boutique hotel aspects more times mentioned in the reviews is a location. Review A points out that: *“first impressions were amazing the view was stunning.”* He talks about the view as a positive feature of the hotel, which is perceived made the stay pleasant. This tendency of location is viewed also in feedback of Reviewer J who states that: *“the location of the hotel was also ideal, right in the heart of the gothic area.”* He describes that one of the conditions of the stay was convenient distance to the sightseeing area. This confirms the theories of Alekseeva (2009), who put emphasize on the location, as one of the factor participating in overall satisfaction with a stay.

There is a pattern among reviews indicating that not only interior ambience, but also exterior is an important issue regarding the satisfaction of the tourists visiting boutique hotel. Reviewer E comments the location of the boutique hotel he visited this: *“the area around the hotel is a bit overcrowded and too touristic.”* He writes that the stay experience is interrupted by noisy environment. Albazzaz et al (2003), in their definition of boutique hotels points out that they are frequently situated in popular districts in suburban areas or city centres. However, Reviewer E has negative position, which indicates that if the location is noisy, the fortunate distance to the centre turns into disadvantage.

Similar view has reviewer G: *“slightly marred by the noise we heard overnight.”* Nonetheless, this feedback is interpreted as less critical, in comparison to the point of view of Reviewer E, because of the used word *“slightly”* that lowers the attention on the noise. Simultaneously, when the hotel area is quiet and not disturbing the stay, the location is contributing in a positive final impression. It is possible to add this discussion with feedback of Reviewer B: *“the general feel around.”* He explains that the pleasant atmosphere, which makes the traveller relax and feel comfortable, positively influences his stay in the hotel.

Nevertheless, the central location does not directly equal to a noisy environment. Reviewer L: *“the city highlights are all within walking distance... and this hotel provides the perfect antidote to a very lively city.”* There is a strong begging of a patter, which shows that satisfaction of tourists visiting boutique hotels depends also on the locations. The theories by Arifin et al. (2015) highlight the location, as a factor important for visitors of boutique hotels. The first it should allow easily accessible motion in the important sights of the destination. Simultaneously, the advantage of the hotel setting should not according to reviewers, be limited by noise.

4.1.7 Combination

As mentioned several times in the theory chapter boutique hotel are unique for not one, but a combination of different high quality values, product and services. Reviewer C comments the advantages of such fusion: *“perfect combination...quality service...perfect location... the spacious rooms, nicely decorated.”* Van Hartesvelt (2006) the combination of design and service create a unique value for the places included in the boutique hotel segment. The experience gained from the stay in the particular boutique hotel is not dependent only on the services but also on the overall impression that the building and decoration gives, as seen from the Reviewer J: *“In addition to the very friendly and helpful staff the hotel building and interior decorations are exceptional.”* The emphasis on combination of the different elements shows that requirements of travellers are changing and they want to spend money on a combination of high quality service as a must, plus other added tangible and intangible values.

4.1.8 Summary of content analysis

As it is visible in the content analysis, there are studying several categories that are colliding with discussed theories in the theory chapter. In order to summarize the answers and provide comprehensible view to the content analysis, there is created *Figure 7*. Selected and discussed reviews are included in three columns, which were discussed in this section and sub-sections and so: Services & Products; Employees; Design & Location.

<i>Services & Products</i>	<i>Employees</i>	<i>Design & Location</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The room was clean but stuffy. Bed was not comfortable as again, it being old or cheap (Reviewer C). - Thoroughly enjoyed my stay here and made extra special (Reviewer B). - The first impressions were amazing the view was stunning (Reviewer A). - Hotel provides the perfect antidote to a very lively city (Reviewer L). - Breakfast was very limited for a boutique hotel (Reviewer C). - Perfect combination...quality service...perfect location... the spacious rooms, nicely decorated.” (Reviewer C). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The staff goes that extra mile just to make your stay more enjoyable and comfortable (Reviewer N). - Need the good references from all whom stay with them so they tend to go the extra mile (Reviewer G). - Friendly reception staff and shown to room, excellent knowledge of the hotel...made to feel extremely welcome (Reviewer B). - They were the most friendly and helpful of any hotel I have stayed in (Reviewer O). - I would not stay at this hotel next time. There's no service!” (Reviewer P). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It still has many original structural features yet still provides a very modern and contemporary feel with carefully chosen décor (Reviewer K). - This hotel is small but perfectly formed (Reviewer N). - The hotel building and interior decorations are exceptional (Reviewer J). - Slightly marred by the noise we heard overnight (Reviewer G). - The city highlights are all within walking distance... and this hotel provides the perfect antidote to a very lively city. (Reviewer L).

*Figure 7: Summary of reviews used in content analysis
Created for this thesis*

Relating to that it can be seen that importance is put on combination of various services rather than individual amenities. Several reviewers describe more than one element contributing in their positive impression. This correlates with theories emphasized by McKenney (2014) emphasizes that consumers are more likely to pay for combination of attributes and experience, and therefore it is not possible to highlight the most important one. Visitors with the boutique experience highlights quality of service as well as design, location or atmosphere. On one hand, the experience as a factor for choosing boutique hotel is not mention in such extend in the reviews. On the other hand, it is perceived by researcher that this element is not neglected in expectations of travellers. It is for the reason that there is mention an extra factor, which has different meaning but indicates, that tourists are not satisfied with persistent and usually provided high quality service but they expect more from boutique hotel in terms of mentioned experience. Nevertheless, there is pattern of reviewers focussed on boutique hotel as regular luxury establishments rather than the places with value of experience and unique feature they offer.

The content analysis serves as preliminary method before interviews, in order to get more practical perceptions and patter of features, which are perceived to specify boutique hotels in Spain. The discussed topics and discovered patterns from the content analysis help in process of creating interview guide as and its specific questions. As for instance, through the bad experience of reviewers the question about level of professionalism of employees. Another question, which emerged from the content analysis concerns, how the perception of the hotel changes, if the hotel hold in its name the term “*boutique.*”

4.2 Interview analysis

As mentioned several times in the previous sections, the questions of the interview are based on the theoretical framework discussed in the thesis as well as the performed content analysis findings. Moreover, through the thorough revision of the transcribed data, together with the findings of the content analysis revealed the topic and commonly used words that participate in creation of the categories relevant for answering the research question, which was also presented in the methodology chapter as coding. These topics create the structure for following the interview analysis text. The researcher creates the word cloud in Figure 8 in order to illustrate the discussed words and topics, chosen based by the researcher from the interviews representing the starting point for the choice of the main analysis sections.



*Figure 8: Illustration of topic selection process.
(Created for this thesis with programme WordItOut, 2015)*

In the interview process, the researcher is involved in the face-to-face interaction with the eight interviewees. The variety of the research participants are outlined in the section number 3.2, through their background information. Moreover, as described in the section about sampling, the interviews are not obligated to have experience with the boutique hotels, but all of them were chosen based on their experience with Spanish hospitality industry or knowledge about it. After interviews are performed, it is possible to divide participants into four groups, based on their knowledge and experience with the boutique hotel concept. **Professional** experience indicates, an experience as an employee in one of boutique hotels; **personal** category represent the interviewee has an experience as a visitor of one of boutique hotel, **theoretical** stands for people who read or heard about boutique hotels and the last category is for participants of interviews with **no knowledge** about boutique hotels. Some of the participants belong to more than one category. *Figure 9* shows the division of interviewees into the mentioned categories.

<i>Professional</i>	<i>Personal</i>	<i>Theoretical</i>	<i>No knowledge</i>
Vivien, Peter	Vivien, Fabrizio	Blazena, Sohaib, Giorgio, Vivien , Peter	Shagufta, Iskren, Fabrizio

*Figure 9: Division of interviewees according to knowledge about boutique hotels
Created for this thesis*

4.2.1 Basic knowledge

The first selected category, following the coding process is the general understanding of the concept of boutique hotels. The questions about the knowledge of the concept are studying the basic familiarity that interviewees have with concept of boutique hotels. As mentioned several times, the term boutique hotel is missing its own unified definition in the tourism industry (Albazzaz et al., 2003). Moreover, different hotels are approaching the concept in diverse ways. Therefore, the researcher tries to find out, how the concept is known, based on perceptions and experience of the interviewees, selected for the research of this master's thesis. As an example is the answer of this interviewee:

"I didn't meet with it in practise. I know, that these kinds of hotels have more intimate atmosphere." [Blazena]

Blazena says that she have never visited one of the boutique hotels. She moreover specifies in the interview that she heard about the term boutique hotels couple of times and therefore, she may associate it with some generally known hotel features. She describes that what comes to her mind when she hears the term boutique hotel is their special atmosphere underlined by friendly and private feeling. After introducing the topic of the research interview to one of the participants, Shagufta creates an association with other kind of establishment:

"The boutique, I have normally known is for shop." [Shagufta]

She explains that boutique is in her mind connected to the kind of small, specialized shops. This is related to the discussed in theories presented by Freund de Klumbis (2002) that expression "*boutique*"; comes to the tourism terminology from the type of small shops. She moreover gives details that this strong connection of the word boutique to the shop with clothing, is making the process of association with hotel more complicated and according to her view, it is a little bit confusing. Additionally, she presents that:

"It's quite a new term for me." [Shagufta]

From the answer of this reviewer with wide travelling experience, it is perceived by researcher that the concept of boutique hotel is not a sufficiently exploited in the tourism industry. The lack of unified definition of the boutique hotel segment is discussed in the different literature sources for instance,

theories by Lim & Endeen (2009). Moreover, the concept is seen as a new trend of luxury establishment, not to a great extent familiar to international travellers yet. Therefore, it is interpreted by the researcher, from this analysis based on the discovered pattern of the interviewees that this term is not that common in the travelling community.

Linked to analysis of the boutique hotel concept is the interview question, asking to describe boutique hotels with only three words. Research is done in order to see, what the main association with the term boutique hotel are, in perceptions of participants of the research. Giorgio, who mentions having some knowledge about the boutique hotel segment in the interview, describes them as:

“Expensive, fancy and stylish.” [Giorgio]

He uses the word “*stylish*” that is perceived by the researcher to be mainly connected, to the design and its relation to overall created atmosphere through music furniture and decoration. Giorgio labels boutique hotel as “*fancy*” interpreted by the researcher in connection with the use of luxurious choices of materials and equipment making a sophisticated impression on him. Furthermore, this interviewee is mainly connecting boutique hotels with their luxury character, as seen from the choice of the words he uses to describe them. In addition to this discussion, Iskren show his knowledge about boutique hotels through the choice of these three words:

“Maybe small, but fancy and with unique atmosphere.” [Iskren]

He, as well as Giorgio, uses the word fancy in connection to the topic of boutique hotels. He also points out that boutique hotels are small establishments. He also describes boutique hotels as places with “*unique atmosphere*” that according to his perception makes these hotels distinguishable from other establishments. Vivian makes different selection of words, while describing boutique hotel:

“Familiar, quality service, small number of rooms.” [Vivien]

She uses the word “*familiar*” and explains that she means family atmosphere and comfortable impression of the establishment. Furthermore, she draws attention to another feature of boutique hotels and so, smaller number of room. The mentioned featured makes her perceive boutique hotels luxury for her. Additionally to this discussion, Vivien sums the importance of atmosphere:

“Very important, it helps to feel like home.” [Vivien]

According to her perception, the atmosphere of boutique hotels should make the tourists visiting hotels make feel comfortable, and relaxed. The feeling of home atmosphere stands in the words of Vivien, for the core value of the boutique hotel places. Sohaib points out other characteristics of the boutique hotel establishments:

“It should be value for money, good location and polite staff.” [Sohaib]

First aspect of value for money, Sohaib describes as hotels, which are good and affordable and at the same time makes him feel happy to stay there. Good location and polite stuff are in theory framework understood as not just specific for boutique hotel, however with extra factor and combinations of other features stand for the values of boutique hotel. Additionally bring to the discussion statement, where he highlights, what makes the boutique hotels stand out on the tourism market:

“I guess they the details are very like well polished.” [Giorgio]

According to Giorgio’s perception, the boutique hotel concept is based on the high standards of sophisticated details, which are brought to appealing level. There were discovered notable patterns showing that boutique hotels are connected to expressions such as innovation, fancy, design, uniqueness, which are confirming the theories of Anhar (2001), defining these words as characteristics of the boutique hotel segment. After short discussion of generally defined features of boutique hotels during the interview, Fabrizio marks one of the hotels he visited as a potential boutique hotel:

“It seems similar to where I said last time, because it was old building, the person who was in charge was very friendly, he called us by names and he was telling us lot of the history of the life and he was trying to recommend us things in very personal way. Maybe it was boutique hotel, but it wasn’t written anywhere.” [Fabrizio]

The researcher perceives from his statement that boutique hotels are not widely common name of hotel establishment, even though the concept is expanding. As perceived from the Fabrizio’s perception, the issue that some of the hotels are not using this label also affects the unfamiliarity with the concept of boutique hotels, although they would be characterized as boutique hotels (Palau de la Mar, 2015). Therefore based on the responses of the interviewees, the tourists, which are users of luxury establishment, might possibly overlook the fact that they are staying in a hotel, which is a boutique. In other words, it is perceived by the researcher that tourists, visiting the hotel are motivated exclusively to experience the kind of outstanding treatment and comfort while being out of their homes.

4.2.2 Name of establishments

Subsequently to the discussion about the overlooking of the stay in boutique hotels relates an issue considering the name of the establishments. Even when the hotels are identified as boutique, it does not automatically mean that they are using the name of boutique hotel. There is no rule connected to the name of the hotel stating that hotel, engaged in the boutique hotel segment has to put this label in the official name of the establishment. Therefore, the researcher finds interesting to study the view of the interview participants on this issue. More precisely she is asking the questions to find out, what importance have the label “boutique” in the name of boutique hotel establishment for the studied

concept. This question is created in order to find out if the name of the boutique hotels should be involved in characterization of this hotel type according to the perceptions of the interview participants. The several interviewees have positive perception about hotel characterized as boutique as for instance it is presented this opinion:

“I think that it makes the hotel stand out of the crowd.” [Blazena]

It is understood, from this reviewer perception that boutique hotel concept stands for an advantage in terms of recognition on the tourism market. Sohaib, as he mentions several times in the interview, underlines the importance of value for his money:

“Some friend, I know they do care about the fancy words. It makes a difference for them. For me it does not matter, I would definitely go for reviews, in stated of name of the hotels.” [Sohaib]

He describes that, according to his view of the label “*boutique*” does not change his opinion about the particular place. Sohaib makes clear that he concentrates on reviews published on the internet about the place, instead of concentrating on the category they belong. However, he additionally describes the probable perceptions of other people he thought of, to show that their view is modifiable to use of so-called “*fancy*” words such as term “*boutique*” hotel. Other opinion considering the establishment name is stated by Iskren:

“I imagined its something like mixed with shopping and hotel.” [Iskren]

He explains that for tourists, who do not know this term in relation to the hospitality industry, may be the work hotel confusing because of its association to the shop. This was also mentioned by Shagufta, who made the same association in the previous section. He explains that before knowing the concept, he imagined that boutique hotels are in some way connected to shopping places, which is not correct association, as the concept has a different execution in practise. Conversely, he adds that when more people will have the knowledge, it would be easier for the particular travellers to look for boutique hotel, to find one. He explains:

“...if the people would know what now what exactly is boutique hotel it will influence them for example to search when they are looking in the internet if they search this kind of hotel, maybe it would chose this, this type of hotel.” [Iskren]

He says that the search for the hotel on the internet is complicated, due to the range of the establishments presented there, and therefore specific group such as boutique hotel will be easily distinguishable buy putting the term “*boutique*” in the name. It is interpreted by the researcher that analysis revealed two patterns related to this discussion. One of the patterns is showing that the boutique hotel term, employed in the name of the establishment is changing the view of tourists.

Moreover, it is perceived by the researcher in relation to this pattern that, the word “*boutique*” in the name, is underlining the values and character of the place and sets the message to the tourism market about remarkable experience of the concept avoiding stereotyping, unique design and service quality. However, second pattern is indicating that the name sometimes does not have that much importance for travellers visiting luxury establishment in comparison to service offer and quality. It is claimed that when it comes to comparison of hotels on the internet, the positive reviews stand before the prestige and image of the place. There are missing theories discussing the terminology in the name of the boutique hotel, and therefore, this problem can serve as a scope for further research.

4.2.3 Chain of hotel vs. boutique hotels

One of the topics that were not discussed in previous section, however discovered through the process of coding is the matter if boutique hotels belong to chains or should stand as individual establishments. This sub-section is involved in the thesis because it participates in answering the research question, as this is part of the perception of the interviewees about boutique hotels. The direct comparison of chain hotel to boutique hotels is seen in the answer of Peter. He explains why people are re-visiting according to his view boutique hotels:

“I think that these people would not go back to standard 5-star hotel, something that is chain oriented and very much standard and some procedures and very cold because they have four hundred and five hundred room and I don’t remember their name.” [Peter]

As it is interpreted from the Peters perception, boutique hotels are compared to chain hotels that make them different categories of establishments. He describes the features that are characteristic from his point of view to big chain hotels such as standard procedures and services and highlights them as disadvantages. In addition, Giorgio uses the word “*chain*” in order to name the establishments standing on the tourism market in the opposite position to the boutique hotel:

“Everything in order so you have like the personnel and everyone as cares more about you that then you are if in the big chain.” [Giorgio]

He points out the personalized services as feature of boutique hotels that the chains hotels are lacking. On one hand, the theoretical framework does not present their theory on discussing whether the boutique hotel should stand as individual or might possibly by a part of big hotel chain. Other topic related to the of boutique hotel. On the other hand there are author of the different theories such as Salas (2014), separating boutique hotels from hotel chains.

4.2.4 History

The history as unique value of the boutique hotels is also discussed in different connection during the interviews. Selection of this category of the questions dedicated to history aspect of boutique hotels is

based on the theoretical framework presented in the theory chapter. In the view of Peter, the historical aspect of the boutique hotels is also important part of them:

“Yes, i think that’s also quite important, especially as they all are design oriented. It’s very interesting to look how they incorporated into the historical building. [...] I would certainly be interested, like did the boutique hotel came to exist.” [Peter]

Peter explains that boutique hotels this special advantage of the unique design, which makes them interesting according to his perception, to the tourists. He adds that he would be interested to hear more about the project, how the original building was changed to boutique hotel. Shagufta emphasize a historical feature as interesting and important part of the boutique hotel experience. She explains that it would be interesting for her to visit boutique hotel:

“If it’s an old castle or like building from old times, I would like to go and stay there and to also for the sake for its historical importance.” [Shagufta]

According to Shagufta’s proposition, history is creating special significance for the hotel and may serve as one of the points, which initiate the attraction for a visit. In connection with discussion about having design and style, it is possible to discuss the interest in the story behind. Sohaib shows interest in staying in historical building. He would consider paying more if the stay would involve the experience.

“Stay in the palace, in historical building, that would be nice. Of course, I would pay for that.” [Sohaib]

Sohaib says that the factor of experience, stimulated by the historic building is appealing to him. From this participant’s perception, it is perceived that as a part of the boutique hotel experience, history is important element representing one of the values of the researched segment. Additionally to the discussion about history, Blazena is creating an image, presenting new ideas to forward the concept of boutique hotels to other level:

“And maybe it still is that these people are also adequately dressed.” [Blazena]

She also considers the historical atmosphere of the boutique hotel places an advantage. However, her imagination about boutique hotels goes far ahead as she describes that it would be interesting to have theatrical acts included in the experience such as period costumes on employees, reflecting the historical character.

As mentioned, employees of the boutique hotels have option to provide gusts with more specific and detailed information and can spend time explaining more details about the place and therefore, it is

possible that they mention also the historical data. Fabrizio show a negative position toward the storytelling in the boutique hotels:

“I was not really interested, I was not really listening.” [Fabrizio]

On the contrary, other interviewees show the interest in the story behind the hotel, in terms of historical facts about building or other special details about the hotel. For that, the researcher identifies that Fabrizio want to enjoy the stay without interruptions that are unnecessary from the employee side. He is satisfied with basic information of them. The researcher therefore found his view conflicting with other interviewees:

“Yes, it is always interesting know some background info.” [Vivien]

Vivien points out that historical background is interesting for her, while visiting vintage, recuperated hotel building with its added cultural value. Shagufta has similar views as Vivien as she explains she would be interested to hear more about the building and its history and architecture. In addition, another interviewer, more precisely Blazena says that she likes to hear the story about the hotel, which can be part of the experience of the place:

“I would be interested to know, from which century is the hotel and in which style is build in or what happened there and what is related to what. [...] I would welcome that.” [Blazena]

She moreover points out that she is not only interested in history, but also in design in connection of the place with some significant historical events. There is a small pattern showing that interviewees confirm the interest in the background story of the place they are staying in; and therefore, boutique hotel may provide them with some complementary information, involve them deeper into the atmosphere, and make them experience something different.

4.2.5 Service

Boutique hotels are connected to luxury, which is usually associated in peoples' minds with a high quality of services. Moreover, there is an emphasis on customized services in theories discussing the boutique hotels (Victorino et al., 2005). However, the precise service types are not exactly determined. Therefore, the researcher look for answers among the interviewees describing, what kind of services are perceived to be connected with such establishments. Giorgio's position towards this question is following:

“They are changing your towels every day, bed sheets every day, so that it really nice [...] and you can also ask to the receptions for everything so that's definitely fun!” [Giorgio]

His expectations include the cleaning service, which is in his view the obligation of these establishments together with the polite employee service. One of the special services mentioned in the interview is wake-up call. Despite the fact that this service is not any innovation in the hospitality industry, there are apparently hotels, which do not offer this service. As one of the priorities of personalized service, it is mentioned by Fabrizio that hotel should provide this service automatically without any time restrictions. He says:

“Maybe they can wake me up, whenever I want.” [Fabrizio]

As it is seen, the interviewee points out small points of service attention to guests, which is important to him during the visit, and can without doubt, be omitted. Another special requirement is pointed out by Giorgio:

“Probably it would be nice to guided tour.” [Giorgio]

As discussed in the Theory chapter, many of boutique hotels are set in the historically and culturally interesting environment (Albazzaz et al., 2003). According to Giorgio, the possibilities of additional services such as guided tour are changing the range of hotel offer, which makes the place more attractive. Therefore, it is interpreted by the researcher that incremental changes in details can transform the overall final perception about the places. Other way to provide travellers visiting boutique hotel with customized service is to keep to the service time schedule:

“Last thing I would like to add is especially the room service. They should be on time and they should make sure they are using right things.” [Sohaib]

The high quality of the service should be according to Sohaib also reflected in products holes are using to maintain the place. Furthermore in his opinion, services should stay their usually time schedule in order to not interrupt the tourists inside the establishments. Another thought by Vivien is relating to facilities presented in the places:

“If it is a 5-star hotel, it should have all facilities possible.” [Vivien]

She connects her answer to the luxury character of the boutique hotel establishment. Moreover, according to her perception, boutique hotels should offer a variety of facilities, including restaurant, wellness area, even venues for events, and others. In opposite side, there is the opinion presented by Iskren:

“I don’t know if the gym or swimming pool would be in place in such hotels. It’s just more common for big hotels. It’s not in place if the building is old. It make unique ancient.” [Iskren]

He explains that modern facilities such as swimming pool might interrupt the historical character of building. In his opinion, it is not a disadvantage if the hotel does not offer variety of facilities, because it is more important that the experience provided by boutique hotel have a complex character. Peter looks at the discussion about boutique hotels from other angle, because he has a professional experience with the boutique hotel in Spain. According to his opinion, these kinds of hotels do not have to differentiate themselves on the market through special facilities, which he sums in following statement:

“I don’t think it needs to have anything special, it needs to be extra guest oriented it needs to pamper the guests, but need to be relaxing experience for them. It needs to have general facilities that the hotel does, but they need to step up the customer service.” [Peter]

In his view of the services, he emphasizes the attention, given to the guest of the hotels. He suggests that boutique hotel are not necessary in need of special facilities, but the facilities need to be adjustable to the special requirements of the individual needs of travellers visiting boutique hotels. The interview analysis shows that there is a notable pattern showing that boutique hotels are expected to provide different option of high quality services and facilities, in order to provide travellers visiting with options of customization. The discovered pattern is validates the theory by Albazzaz et al. (2003) discussing that boutique hotel are characterised by customized amenities. Additionally, Sohaib concentrate his answer specifically on case of Spain. He explains that according to his view:

“If the hotel is good in providing good service like big hotels, they have some good business opportunities in Spain. However, would say, that there is very tough competition.” [Sohaib]

Sohaib presents opinion that Spain is attractive destination for tourists as well as for developers of the hospitality establishments. It is interpreted by the researcher that according to Sohaib, if the small hotels such as boutique for instance, are able to provide good quality of services and thus win the attention of travellers communities underlined by value of new ideas. This pattern is confirming the theory that boutique hotels in Spain have a chance to represent differentiation on the hospitality market (Llamal & Islamil, 2014).

When it comes to Spain, several interviewees such as Giorgio, Vivien or Shagufta stated that they do not see differences between Spanish hotel level and level of the hospitality services of other countries. Nevertheless, Peter points out that he perceives that Spanish hotel have special oriented objectives in terms of services:

“I think as Spain is very gastronomy oriented, I would say that their hotel are also aiming very much on providing good gastronomic experience for the guest. [...] I would

as foreign, chef to expect them to introduce me to local cuisine, but doing this in luxurious and more unique way as possible.” [Peter]

Peter explains that Spanish dishes are attractive point of the culture. According to his view, boutique hotels in Spain take special luxurious approach to the use of the cuisine that make them distinguishable on the market. It is interpreted by the researcher from the Peter’s answer that Spain is famous for its cuisine, and therefore the experience of the luxury hospitality sector such as boutique hotels, is concentrated on providing tourists with unique food experience. In addition, Giorgio highlights the food as one of the special motives for considering the visit of Spain:

“I like to try a lot of food and to talk with people, because Spanish people are very warm.” [Giorgio]

From this answers, it is interpreted by the researcher that the food experience play important role in the offer of services in Spain. The analysis of the participants’ interview answers is showing pattern that the boutique hotel segment in Spain have an opportunity to offer diverse experience for example through cuisine. This notion has can be connected to the theory of Ballestero et al. (2007) stating that new trend of product offer making the boutique hotels attractive in destination of Spain.

4.3 Number of rooms

One of the issues of boutique hotels, which are discussed in the theories of different literature authors discussed in the theory chapter, is the number of the rooms. According to Jones et al. (2013), boutique hotels should not have more than 100 rooms. Giorgio looks at the room number aspect of boutique hotels from his point of view:

“There would be also smaller amount of guests, probably the rooms are very tiny and yeah. Everything in order so you have like the personnel and everyone as cares more about you that then you are if in the big chain.” [Giorgio]

He explains that, the smaller range of rooms brings advantages for the employees to spend more personalized time with the guests. Consequently, travellers visiting boutique hotel have more welcoming feeling and therefore the final impressions are prone to be positive. Not considering the consequences that come with the number of rooms in boutique hotels, Fabrizio expresses his general opinion about the issue:

“Actually, I don’t really care. I care there is my rooms, I don’t care about others.” [Fabrizio]

On one hand, in Fabrizio’s view, the number of rooms is not crucial point, when it comes to hotel choice. On the other hand, the importance is in the answer of Fabrizio put on the room as individual

unit, and therefore, the requirements about quality, is put on that. In regards to opinions of other interviewees, Vivien replies to the question of how many rooms do you perceive should boutique hotel offer by statement:

“Depends on the business goals. Sun and sea resorts should have more rooms, city and boutique hotels should have fewer rooms.” [Vivien]

She describes that in order to meet all objective that boutique hotel segment set, the number of the room should be limited. She moreover, put them in comparison to chain hotels located in vacation summer resorts where according to her perception should be hotels with larger number of rooms. Peter also states that the number of the rooms is one of the essentials of the boutique hotel concept:

“Yes, certainly. If there would be more than 100 rooms I don’t think that front office staff would be able to recognize each and every guest and also remember maybe the name or at least what language do they speak.” [Peter]

Peter underlines the advantages that are brought by the number of the rooms under 100 per hotel. He explains that if the hotel has lower number of rooms, the service approach is more concentrated on individual visitors. This view confirms theory author Aggett (2007), which indicates that boutique hotel should have fewer rooms in compare to big sea resort chain hotels, because it helps to create intimate atmosphere and enables employees to develop closer relation with the tourists.

4.3.1 Employees

Despite these considerations, patterns of bad experience from the TripAdvisor reviewers were discovered in content analysis cases of during the discussion. There is competition in the hospitality industry, where the attention of the employee attitude and skills are crucial part of the strategy quality evaluation as emphasized by (Öter & İçöz, 2009) that employees are facing challenges of innovation the hospitality industry and thus the requirements are higher. For this reason, it is considered by researcher as important issue to be discussed in order to answer the research question. This raised the question for the consequent interviews, asking how tourists imagine professional employees. Sohaib gives very clear answer:

“Professional, demands that you are polite and you are honest.” [Sohaib]

He points out the honesty as a key to professional attitude. Shagufta does not have particularly personal experience with boutique hotel employee. However based on her previous experience with other hotel employees, she describes a professional one as a person:

“Who actually understand the problem and then are willing to solve the problem that would be professional.” [Shagufta]

She explains that problem handling is one of the challenges that the employees have to overpass and way, how is it done, that is the responsibility of the hotel and it reflects the quality of the service. On the other hand, Vivien knows the tasks and duties of boutique hotel employees very clearly, because of her experience as tourist visiting one of the boutique hotels and as an actual employee of the boutique hotel in Spain.

“I would say that, he should be polite, willing to help the guest. Also kind with the guest as well as with his or her colleagues, knows the city and its attractions, nice appearance.” [Vivien]

She explains that knowledge of the environment, where the hotel is set is according to her view very important, because of tourists visiting boutique hotels should be able to rely on the recommendations of them. Another interviewee puts emphasize on employees as the main aspect of the customer satisfaction in the boutique hotels. She brings her angle to the discussed matter:

“It's always about those people, who work there and how nice and helpful they are, so people feel comfortable that that does not burden them.” [Blazena]

Blazena points out that feel of comfort during the holiday is also influenced by the behaviour of the employees and their approach to the tourists visiting a boutique hotel. She moreover explains, that it is not that important for her the professional and artificially acting employee, on the other hand she prefers more friendly and more human approach. This opinion relates to theory that the interaction between employees and visitors in a boutique hotel is more familiar, creating a relaxed environment (Aggett, 2007). In more detailed, Fabrizio brings up to the discussion also personal experience with employee who he claims was behaving in professional way

“He was recommending us places where to eat or what to do or what to buy.” [Fabrizio]

He presents the opinion that knowledge about the destination in order to give customized recommendations is another concern, which should be professionally handled by the hotel employees. There is a beginning of pattern revealing that professional level of the employees in boutique hotel has significant impact on the impression of the visiting travellers. Another opinion is expressed by Giorgio:

“Everything in order so you have like the personnel and everyone as cares more about you that then you are if in the big chain.” [Giorgio]

He describes that there is a closer connection between the boutique hotel employees and visitors in comparison to big chain hotels. This relationship is possible to observe on more polite and caring behaviour of the hotel staff. The pattern concerning the polite approach of the employees is confirming

the theory of Baum (2005), who emphasizes that experiences rely on a number of encounters between tourists and tourism employees.

As is emerging from the analysis about boutique hotel employees, the hotels are considered to offer high quality service approach. Nevertheless, besides the positive experience with boutique hotel employees, it is normal that some problems occur in the everyday run of boutique hotels. The important question related to this issue, in terms of the demand side discussion, is how these kinds of problems are perceived to be handled in a proper way, in order to fix a bad impression of the tourists visiting boutique hotel. This may lead consequently to negative feedback and word of mouth. Shagufta shows her strong opinion about bad experience and its consequences:

“The bad experience remains in your main years and years. You can never happen to forget that.” [Shagufta]

She says that problems are hard to be forgotten during holiday, but even worse is if the employees do not know, how to handled them or have no interest to remunerate and fix it. Therefore, according to her opinion, it is very hard to change her mind about the hotel where she had a problem with any remuneration. Nonetheless, other interviewees have proposed some ideas of taking care about the any incidence. For instance, Giorgio proposes this solution:

“Maybe a discount or something or depending of course on what happened.” [Giorgio]

He explains that he is paying to have an experience, and therefore, he expects a good value of the service and experience. However, if there is something wrong with the service and something unexpected occurs, it should be compensated. There is a pattern indicating that handling of problems should be in boutique hotel taken by level, reflexing the values of the establishments as emphasized in theories of Galicic & Ivanovic (2009).

4.3.2 Methods of employees

One of the methods of the boutique hotel employees, discussed in the theory framework, is to call the visitors by their name. This sub-section is discussing this employee approach as particular aspect distinguishing boutique hotels from other establishments in the theoretical outline. By analysing the unique styles of guest treatment, the researcher looks for the answer for the research question. In addition, for that reason, the interviewees are asked during the interview to express their view of this matter. This can be identified for example, in Blazena's answer:

“It is very nice, One have a feeling that they are interested in their visitors and they try to meet the needs and some kind of estimate and make people happy with some recomendations what we can do. That's very pleasant!” [Blazena]

She explains that the dedication of the employees might make the whole experience more pleasant. It is interpreted by the researcher that she is very positive in her answer. Furthermore, she explains that in her opinion, there is no need of perfection in the customizing of the experience and suggesting perfect places to go and other activities to do. However, she appreciates the effort and enjoyable attitude of the employees, which may influence her impression about the place. Fabrizio describes his position toward this approach by following:

“It was good, i felt like I was important and I am important.” [Fabrizio]

He put emphasis on the matter by using word “important.” He explains that as a tourist visiting a boutique hotel he is a customer of the service, which means he pays for that experience and therefore wants to be rewarded by his own satisfaction. The approach of the employees where the tourists visiting boutique hotels are called by the last name makes him feel like he is under special treat. Similar attitude towards this matter is shared by Vivien. She explains that when she is called by the last name in a boutique hotel:

“I think it makes a good impression in a guest, feels like he is important.” [Vivien]

Vivien points out that, when the guest is called by their own name it supports them to have a positive feeling about the place they are staying. The analysis indicates that there is pattern of use of a word “important” connected directly to personal satisfaction of travellers visiting hotel used in the answers of interviewees. By pointing out the attention on themselves as a priority in experience with boutique hotel, the answers of the interviewees confirms the theory that boutique hotels belong to the category of establishments, which care about identity of their visitors and treat them with special attention (Freund de Klumbis, 2002). Giorgio expressed his attitude toward this kind of behaviour by following phrases:

“It’s very, very nice. Because you feel that, you are more welcomed, and that’s not really like you are a one this big chains” [Giorgio]

It can be seen from the statement that Giorgio perceives this topic this in a positive way. Moreover, he highlights it as an advantage of smaller hotel in comparison to a big hotel chains as the employees of boutique hotels have a chance to get closer to their visitors. Sohaib feels the same about this employee special treatment:

“I would feel very special. It would feel like very nice if he or she know my name. That’s very nice for me it sounds like they are giving individual attention to people.” [Sohaib]

He explains that feeling, as individually approached guest is very pleasant. This attitude supports the intention of boutique hotel experience to make travelling visitors feel welcomed. Shagufta position towards this kind of approach is very similar:

“I would really like that, because who doesn’t like the personalized experience. It gives you kind of more association with the place and you were you want to come the next time as well.” [Shagufta]

These extra steps in behaviour of employees have also, according to Shagufta direct impact on her future visits. She explains that employee’s exceptional concentration on visitors of the boutique hotel make them feel more involved into the stay; and moreover, changes the place to spend the night in into facility providing a unique experience. There is a beginning of pattern showing that visitors or potential visitors of boutique hotel consider to be called by the name as a positive aspect of etiquette of employees. Although the special services approaches are according to the discover patterns important, the interviewees put attention also on the welcoming moment, after coming to hotel. As seen from the Fabrizio’s perception:

“I would expect the Mr Negretti, welcome to our hotel, he shakes my hand, smiles to and, offers me chocolate and he brings me with a smile to the room.” [Fabrizio]

He moreover points out that it would feel professional, if the person in charge takes the guests to show then the room. He explains, that he want to feel welcomed from the first moment after arrival. This correlate with theories of Öter & İçöz (2009), emphasizing the first five seconds in service contacts, for the reason of travellers’ general impressions of the place.

The analysis of the replies reveals a pattern connected to the attitude of employees to the tourists visiting boutique hotel. The involvement of the individual tourists visiting boutique hotels is according to several interview responses positively evaluated. It confirms the theories of Omanukwue (2011) points out that boutique hotel are characterized for their high staff-to-guest ratio, allowing the employees performed personalized guest service.

4.3.3 Employees in Spain

Closely related to the matter of employee behaviour is the discussed issue applied on the case of Spain. In other words, the earlier analysis section brings patterns considering boutique hotel employees in general. Consequently, this sub-section of the analysis is discussing the perceptions about boutique hotel employees in Spain, and they are based on some experience and knowledge, presented by participants of interviews. During the interviews, the researcher asked, if there is a difference between the approaches of the lodging industry employees in Spain and other countries. One of the examples is Shagufta:

“Yeah, I guess it does a lot of difference, because certain values in your culture then you also bring it. If you have very dominant cultural hospitality, then of course it would also go to your businesses if you are running the hotel. [...] ...people are coming to hotel,

from all around the world and you want to show them what's your values are. So, I guess it does have a lot of influence. [Shagufta]

Shagufta discuss about culture influencing the tourism business behaviour in general. In her opinion, the cultural values of any country are reflected in the way, how the employees approach their visitors of the hotels. She also describes Spain as dominant, which is interpreted as strong culture with developed hospitality services that is influenced by their temperament nature. Sohaib proposes his personal experience with a particular employee in Spain:

"He had had this extrovert quality. [...] While making pizza he told me which places you should go. That's kind of things are very attracts you appeals you." [Sohaib]

He says that Spanish employees interact with tourist on an everyday basis; they are friendly and talkative, which changes the mood of the experience to very positive kind. On the other hand, he does not think that Spanish culture has an influence on the level of employees' professionalism in the hospitality service industry. Sohaib adds to his answer:

"However, from practise, I do not think so. They really maintain professionalism as well." [Sohaib]

Sohaib describes that from his experience, he did not see differences in the behaviour of the Spanish employees that would stand out and change the perception about the overall experience in any way. Giorgio describes the comparable opinion about Spanish employees:

"Specifically about Spanish employees I don't think so. It's quiet the same approach that. Yeah because you still feel that, it's their duty and their task. They are acting like everyone else." [Giorgio]

The behaviour of employees is according to his perception important for him. This statement can be related to the theory of Meaney (2003) stating that Spain the approach is comparable to the rest of western European countries, with its good customer service and knowledge of foreign languages. Thus, next issue discussed in the research process is foreign language ability of employees in Spain. However, the part of the theory considering the foreign language speaking ability is discussed and disproven by other participants as for example:

"Every time, no one speaks English. Some of my friends had to travel and they had lot of troubles, they checked quiet late in the hotel and nobody understood English, so it Spain it would be problem if you don't understand English." [Shagufta]

Shagufta gives particular examples from her trips, and concrete examples of the trips of her friends to point out that the Spanish employee has problems to speak English. According to her opinion, the

basic knowledge of Spanish is necessary, while facing the hospitality industry in Spain. It is interpreted by the researcher that the emphasis is on the word “*problem*,” what is interpreted by the researcher as an obstacle in overall satisfaction with the proposed services. Another view is presented by Fabrizio:

“Yes expect to at least they speak English, but usually I did not have problems, apart from this experience, everybody speak English.” [Fabrizio]

In the researcher view, “*this experience*” refers to bad experience, with employees in Spain without English language skills, which caused Fabrizio some bad impressions about the particular place. On one hand, he explains that he did not encounter other not speaking Spanish employees. On the other hand, Fabrizio describes that in his expectations, personnel of boutique hotel should speak English. Moreover, in connection to Shagufta’s negative experience, Fabrizio says that he did not have any problems with language skills of Spanish employees.

Based on the presented analysis, there is a pattern showing that employees in Spanish boutique hotels are perceived by interviewees to behave professional. On the other hand, several interviewees put emphasis on insufficiency in the skills of Spanish employees in the foreign languages, which may negatively affect the experience. Therefore, it is identified by the researcher based on the analysis of this answer, that language skill should be involved as essential, while offering high quality of the service in boutique hotels. Furthermore, as a part of the suggestions it is also according the researcher apparent, that if the foreign language communication skills would become one of the characteristics of the segment, it may make boutique hotels be more noticeable on the Spanish hospitality market.

4.3.4 Target market

Boutique hotels are stated to be luxury establishment. The luxury is usually connected with places that are more expensive. Nevertheless, Fabrizio points out that he spends the holiday in boutique hotel, even though he did not spend that special extend of money on it:

“But where I stayed was boutique hotel, I am not reach and I stayed there. [...] I like that you have all the services basically, so you have starting from the facilities with compare to hostels there are in the room, then you entering the room and everything is tidy, clean there are changing your towels every day...” [Fabrizio]

It is therefore perceived by researcher that, luxury is in the understanding of boutique hotel connected in meaning of high quality of service with attention to detail and clean interior environment. When it comes to age of visitors, Blazena points out that according to her opinion families with children usually search for bigger places, where the infrastructure of the hotel as well as facilities is adjusted to the needs of children:

“Usually, the bigger complexes, when the kids were smaller. [...] So, it had to be on one hand hotel that offered all the services, which are expected mainly in connection to children [Blazena]

However, she adds that now, when she is deciding on a holiday based on her preferences, she would like to visit a smaller hotel as for instance boutique hotel. Furthermore, Sohaib demonstrates that:

“If you look for this luxury, yes. I do not think everybody would like to go for that because is very expensive yeah. So for me I think is for particular segment not for everybody.” [Sohaib]

He explains that high prices of boutique hotels make their target group limited. From the performed analysis of target group topic, there is a beginning of pattern showing that boutique hotel as not dedicated to a target segment of families with children. However, this group of travellers is not excluded by theories of McKenney (2014) who points out that boutique hotel are mainly aimed for the travellers in their 20s and 50s, most within the middle to upper income level. Therefore, the pattern is not exactly confirming the theory, but also is not disproving it.

4.3.5 Experience

This sub-section deals with the aspect of the experience as one of the emphasized values and features of the researched segment. The value of experience in boutique hotel industry is emphasized in several previously discussed theories and therefore, this question was implemented into the questions of interview research. However, it is not clear, how the experience is understood and how the notion should be executed in practise. To comment the matter, comparing boutique hotels to other different types of establishments in general, Giorgio states:

“They want more like inclusive experience.” [Giorgio]

He points out that boutique hotels, are more than a place to sleep overnight, but they engage tourists visiting the places through the historic charm of building and internal atmosphere into overall experience. As it is clear from the statement, Giorgio directly connects a boutique hotel stay with value of experience. Therefore, it is interpreted by researcher; that he sees the value offer the boutique hotel creates by combining different luxury features accompanied by details such as decoration and music. These observation, involving music and decoration into the perception of the features of the boutique hotels is confirming the theory of Freund de Klumbis (2009), proposing the auditory and haptic factors into the experience. According to Blazena, a boutique hotel have special value proposition, which is based on their history and events they are connected to She explains:

“Basically, I like all these kind of small places, they unique as they experienced something rather than the new buildings or hotels” [Blazena]

She points out that she prefers smaller boutique hotels rather than big chain hotels, because they have the extra factor of experience. According to her opinion, the atmosphere of the smaller place is in boutique hotels underlined by the story of the building and modern contemporary design, in combination with historical construction. The overall performance of employees is also referred to as the part of the overall offered experience by Shagufta:

“...who doesn’t like the personalized experience!” [Shagufta]

Shagufta connects the personalized behaviour not only as an act of professionalism, but also as the part of the experience provided by boutique hotels. In opinion of Shagufta, the travellers visiting boutique hotels are in favour with personalized services, which makes the experience more appreciated. Peter stresses the value of experience for the boutique hotel segment, in connection to his experience with boutique hotels in Spain:

“Lately, is very important to provide with the experiences for the guest, because that is what they appreciate what they pay for.” [Peter]

He gives explanation that travellers visiting boutique hotel are expecting to be provided with unique experience. There is a pattern showing that interviewees look for more than a place to sleep over in foreign destinations. They seek an experience, which is provided by boutique hotel. This is confirming the theory of Ballesteros et al. (2007) pointing out that, boutique hotels have an extra factor of experience, which is updating the traditional “*sun, sea and sand*” tourism model of Spain.

4.3.6 Peak experience

Furthermore, the experience of staying in the boutique hotel was emphasized in several answers of the interviewees, and therefore it was interested to find out to what extent can the experience stand in terms of decision-making process. In other words, the researcher is interested to find out, if boutique hotels can provide an individual experience, covering the main motives for the travel. This question is created in order to find another of the elements characterising the studied segment and therefore answering the main research question. Giorgio expresses his opinion with strong disagreement:

“No, I don’t think even in the future, I would just travel for the hotel” [Giorgio]

Giorgio, the hotel cannot be considered as primer reason for travel. Even in the case, when the hotel is special and has an experience to offer, cannot be according to him seen as peak travel motivation. The similar view is expressed by another interviewee:

“No. Unless is for example big Spa hotel, where I want to go.” [Fabrizio]

He says that he can imagine the boutique hotel as the main aim of travel, only on the case, where is a big Spa facility. He also mentions the issue of facilities, with connection to big hotels, which is not fitting the presented characteristic of boutique hotels. It is seen that Fabrizio cannot consider going for a visit of boutique reason, when it is not connected to the more important motives. A strong disagreement is also shown by Shagufta; she answers the question if she would travel only to see the hotel by:

"I don't think so, No!" [Shagufta]

She admitted that she is not able to imagine the potential situation, where she would plan her travel only driven by the motives of hotel visit for its specific experience of the features. This discovered patterns of not perusing the boutique hotel as peak experience confirms the theory of Quan & Wang (2004), where the boutique hotel accommodations are considered part of the secondary experience.

Even though the pattern shows that boutique hotel cannot offer peak experience, which can be considered as a primary travel motive, according to the theoretical framework, they have another alternative advantage. The specific location of the boutique hotels are not defined, however, there is pointed out that they usually are located in bigger cities, or towns with some interesting cultural or historic sites or other touristic attractions. The interviewees were asked to associate the boutique hotel with the places they believed are the best location for a boutique hotel. One of the participants of the interview shares his opinion about the right location for boutique hotel, in terms of setting and environment:

"...cities, with historical and cultural, nothing this in the places along the coast. [...] I expect big chains of hotels there. You just go there for partying so you don't care about anything else." [Giorgio]

He thereby emphasizes that boutique hotels correlates more with the environment of the bigger places where is bigger concentration of tourists to cultural and historical sites. Several theories discuss the relation between the boutique hotels and the environment of the place. In more details, Giorgio also give examples of the cities, where the boutique hotel should be according to his perception located:

"I see these boutique hotels more in cities like Madrid, Barcelona, or Seville, in this kind of cities." [Giorgio]

As it is evident from the answer, he made a choice of the three particular big cities in Spain, which are in his perception, predicted to be convenient locations to run a boutique hotel. He explains that boutique hotels are more suitable for setting of the city, rather than to be in beach resort. In regards of the best time to travel to Spain, Shagufta gives an example from her travelling experience:

“I guess in winter time its quiet pleasant its still like 17 and 18 degrees temperature, of course it depends which part you go, but still its ...” [Shagufta]

She points out that Spain is not only for summer holiday type of travellers reached seaside destinations, but also is appealing in other year seasons. Based on his experience, Fabrizio is suggesting other season as best to visit Spanish destinations:

“Spring was perfect. So, I recommend spring. But, I experience from other people I know that in summer sometimes is very, very hot in some cities. So maybe spring is the best season.” [Fabrizio]

He explains that the season of spring is the preferable choice of time to travel to Spain, because of the temperature conditions. Therefore, and it might be related to the theories by Ballestero et al. (2007) that boutique hotel are potential hotel establishment to fight the problem of the seasonality. This is for the reason emerging from the pattern showing that boutique hotel brings flexible solutions in order to appeal tourists seeking luxury experience any time of the year.

4.3.7 Summary of the interview analysis

The analysis reveals different patterns considering perceptions about of boutique hotels in Spain, which contribute in answering of the research question. As the statements of the interviewees show, there were revealed patterns indicating the concept of boutique hotels is understood as unique and extraordinary part of hospitality segment with distinguishable features and experience offer describe by words such as *“innovation,” “design,” or “uniqueness.”* The insights of the interviewees imply that boutique hotels are establishments, with special employee approach and customized services. In connection to the research question, the pattern of interviewees put stress on experience, approach of employees and location in relation to Spanish boutique hostels.

The discovered pattern showing the interviewees’ perceptions were compared and discussed with the theories presented in the theory chapter. However, there are also topics, which contribute with new knowledge to the thesis, because the theories were not presented in the theoretical framework such as opposed position of boutique hotels to chain hotels. The overall findings are more precisely presented and explained in the following conclusion.

5 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the research of this master's thesis was to identify patterns considering the boutique hotels segment in Spain, based on the perceptions of the tourists, with personal experience of Spanish hospitality industry. The researcher identified problems related to topic of boutique hotels, where there was not clear what are the characteristic features of boutique hotel concept and especially concentrated on destination of Spain. The conclusion of the master's thesis is divided into four sections: The finding of the research, practical contribution, and the section with future research proposals.

5.1 The finding of the research

This conclusion of the research finding provides the answer for the research question. The researcher in this thesis follows the paradigm of constructivism (Creswell, 2010). For that reason, the researcher concludes the answer for the research question in the form of pattern of the perceptions about boutique hotels.

There was used a method of triangulation to provide thesis with more credible data by looking at the thesis problem from different angles. The content analysis showed pattern of that reviewers with boutique hotel experience in Spain are concentrating in evaluation on combination of different attributes and features. Therefore, it was interpreted that the Spanish boutique hotels are not perceived by individual features, but combination of unique and special values creating the overall experience.. Conversely, there is pattern of reviewers concentrating on boutique hotel as regular luxury establishments rather than places with the value of experience and unique feature they offer.

Consequently, the analysis of semi-structured interviews was performed. The interview analysis revealed several features, through the perceptions of the participants of the interviewees about boutique hotels. In the interview part of the thesis research there were discovered patterns describing that the researched hospitality segment in Spain is seen unique, with outstanding design and customized guest-oriented approaches. The experience is also seen by the pattern of interview participants as important part of the stay in boutique hotels in Spain. The researcher reveals a pattern of perception about changes in Spanish hospitality market, presenting that boutique hotel are offering extra value of experience interrupting the traditional model of “*sea sun and sand*” presented by (Ballesterro et al., 2007).

One of the patterns formed through the answers of interview participants emphasizes the quality of the product used to maintain the environment in the boutique hotel establishments. The analysis illustrated that there is a pattern connected to use of word “*welcoming*” in the answer of the interview

participants. It is perceived by the researcher that interviewees put stress on the feeling of belonging into the provided experience.

Another related pattern showed that interviewees understand Spanish boutique hotel as individual establishment rather than being a member of the chain of hotels. The analysis shows pattern of interviewees using the word “*chain*” in order to associate the establishments standing on the tourism market in the opposite position to the boutique hotel. It is deducted by the researcher that the beginning of the interviewees’ pattern perceives the chain hotels to fit in beach destination and boutique hotel to historical cities of Spain, and does not mix these two concepts together. Moreover, the research indicates pattern of interviewees perceiving boutique hotels fit in bigger cities rather than sea resorts in Spain. It is for the reason that boutique hotel structure and appearance is reflecting the history and culture of bigger cities.

Furthermore, there are pointed out some differences based on the perception of the interviewees, which distinguish the researched segment from boutique hotels of other countries. According to revealed pattern, Spanish boutique hotels are specialized to gastronomy experience, as Spain has noticeable and generally famous dishes. Spanish employees are according to interviewees perceptions reach the high quality standards in terms of approach to hotel guests. However, there is other pattern implying the lack of language skills of hospitality employees. That in case of boutique hotels degrades the final experience.

Alternatively, even of the unique value of experience are perceived as attractive discovered pattern is showing that boutique hotels are not considered as primary motive of travelling. In other words, the boutique hotel experience is not perceived by the interviewees to be a peak experience. Nevertheless, the pattern shows those boutiques hotels are interesting alternative on the hospitality market with special values of history, customized services, and high quality personnel. Moreover, according to the interviewees, Spanish attractive destination in any time of year and therefore, boutique hotels are able to appeal tourist out off-season and therefore, are perceived by them likely to be attractive and appealing to the travelling community.

In conclusion, there are patterns of interviewees that put emphasize on personalized guest-oriented approach of the employees, the value of experience in the concept of boutique hotels, the factor of atmosphere with detailed design and decoration reflecting the character of the place. Furthermore, there is interpreted by the researcher that stress is on a variety of the high quality of services and products, customized to the special needs of tourists visiting boutique hotels.

5.2 Contribution

This master’s thesis is attempting to make not only the theoretical contribution but also a practical one. Therefore, it is proposed by the researcher that the findings of this study may serve for the managers

and employees of boutique hotels, or other hospitality establishments as a basis for re-development of marketing strategies or other purposes because the thesis is looking for elements that are specific to boutique hotel segment according to the tourist's perception. The paper could possibly serve as awareness for the visitors to look critically to their stay in regards of attention and customer service, which might potentially affect the quality and understanding of hospitality service in general.

5.3 Future research

This section explains how the data obtained from the thesis can be developed in the future. It is perceived by the researcher to be interesting to look at different approaches in terms of promotion of boutique hotels in Spain have. It is therefore considered by the researcher to be worth to dig deeper i to concentrate in the future research on the marketing strategies of the boutique hotel from the supply or demand side on a bigger scale.

Another option for the further qualitative research is to take a different angle on the study of boutique hotels. There are various possibilities how to look at this research. It is possible to concentrate on one of the discussed topic in more in-depth scale such as target market or experience, or else concentrate only on one selected boutique hotel in case study.

Moreover, it would be possible to look at the matter of boutique hotels exclusively from the supply side. It would be suggested to perform the semi-structured interviews with the boutique hotel managers in Spain in order to provide the research with data from the professional point of view.

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APPENDIX

5.6 Appendix 1: The research explanatory website



5.7 Appendix 2: The interview guide and correlation to theories

Codes	Question	Theory
General info	Please introduce yourself: name, age, occupation, nationality	
Customer behaviour	Why do you travel? What kind of holiday do you prefer? Do you have travel dreams? Where do you usually stay during your holiday?	Importance of experience in hospitality establishments (Sørensen & Jensen, 2014)
General knowledge about boutique hotels	How do you usually choose your accommodation in foreign country? What do you like about stay in hotel? Co materada na pobyte v hoteli What are the main elements you concentrate on while choosing the hotel? What comes to your mind when you hear boutique hotel? How would you describe them in 3 words? Have you ever visited boutique hotel in Spain? If yes what is your experience? Would you visit boutique hotel again?	The characteristics of boutique hotel sector (Albazzaz et al., 2003; Lim & Endeen, 2009). Characteristics of boutique hotels Freund de Klumbis (2003)
Boutique hotel environment	How important is atmosphere in hotel for you?	Boutique hotel equipment theory (Omanukwue, 2011) Customised service (Albazzaz

	What facilities should boutique hotel have? What facilities should not boutique hotel have? What kind of service should boutique hotel offer? What do you expect from the hotel restaurant?	et al., 2003) Fuentes-Moraleda et al. (2014)
Rooms	How many rooms should hotel have?	Number of rooms (Balekjian & Sarheim, 2011)
Employees	What role etiquette and protocol plays in success of boutique hotel segment? What is your hotel impression, when the employees do not speak your language or English? How would you describe a professional employee of a boutique hotel? How the problems in hotel should be handled? How do you feel about calling you by name by employees?	Responsibilities of employees Gottsma (2011) Dealing with complaints (Galicic & Ivanovic, 2009) Etiquette in the hospitality industry (Anhar, 2001)
Experience	How big of importance, do you put to hotel choice when you travel abroad? Are you interested in story behind the hotel , history, design, structure and location?	Peak and secondary experience Quan & Wang, 2004 Chen (2012)
Boutique hotels in Spain	When you travel to Spain, what are you looking for in hotel? What are the advantages in choosing boutique hotel when you travel to Spain? What are the disadvantages in choosing boutique hotel when you travel to Spain? Do you see differences in approach of employees of boutique hotels in Spain and other countries?	Spanish hotel segment (Chen, 2012).
Seasonality	When is the best time to travel to Spain?	Problem solution theory Ballesterio et al. (2007)
Target market	Who do you think is staying in boutique hotel?	Target market theories (McKenney, 2014)
Name of the establishments	How is the perception of the hotel influenced, when it holds boutique in the name? And why?	

5.8 Appendix 3: Selected TripAdvisor reviews

Avanti Hotel Boutique Fuerteventura

A. Cinnamon V: (Reviewer A)

We arrived late on Saturday 21st march after a long day travelling we were met by a smiling Natalie who showed us to our room wow first impressions were amazing the view was stunning a complimentary bottle of wine awaited such a nice touch. All the staff are polite and friendly nothing is to much trouble the breakfast is first class in a relaxed atmosphere and the hot tub on the roof is a must in late afternoon to watch the sunset thank you for making the start of our honeymoon extra special.

B. Bonus_2002: (Reviewer B)

Upon arrival was greeted by very friendly reception staff and shown to room, excellent knowledge of the hotel and Corralejo and made to feel extremely welcome. The room was absolutely spotless and comfortable. Fridge in the room filled with water and mixers along with a freezer compartment and ice cubes. Balcony and view amazing and furniture very comfortable. The sunbathing area and Jacuzzi on the roof terrace are excellent and comfortable and the perfect location for watching the sun set whilst enjoying a glass of vino. The breakfast is a buffet of fresh fruit, cereal, cakes, bread and pastries with the added extra of being able to order something hot from the kitchen, made even better as you can pretty much choose your own breakfast... the coffee is amazing - fresh and aromatic. Every time you entered an area in the hotel the staff made you feel very welcome and catered to. The restaurant attached to the hotel is equally special, meat and fish cooked over a hot coal setup, amazing fish and the best potatoes and sauces on the island. With the amazing view of the little beach and sea from the window. The little beach is also very good, didn't ever seem to get crowded. The number of shops and restaurants around the hotel are vast and there are plenty of activities to do. I would especially recommend "the

ugly duckling" restaurant about 5 minutes walk from the hotel. Thoroughly enjoyed my stay here and made extra special by the Avanti Boutique hotel and staff.

Boutique Hotel Calatrava

C. Kar8o (Reviewer C)

We don't mind paying for a good hotel as long as the room is very good and is a pleasure to come back to every day. Here the room was ok, in a modern style but I have to say I was disappointed with more than a couple of things. It was quite dark with very small windows and the "old city" view we had been sold was in fact a view of a plain ugly wall of another building. Also the lack of carpets on the modern flooring gave a cold and stark feeling rather than a luxurious and comforting sort of feel. The staffs however were very warm and helpful and the general feel around the hotel was relaxing. We enjoyed the rooftop terrace with great views and also the location was quite easy for walking around the city and seeing all the important things. Breakfast was very limited for a boutique hotel and although what we ate tasted good, there was serious lack of choice.

D. Jeroen K (Reviewer D)

Perfect combination. Very nice hotel:

- quality service, both in attitude and actual performance (eg organizing car rental, tips for trips/dinners etc).
- perfect location, easy access to old town whilst enjoying the nice park and sea view
- particularly like the spacious rooms, nicely decorated and the breakfast terrace.

Lots of opportunities to enjoy the city of Palma which has a lot to offer and easy to visit the coast line in north west / south west.

Hotel DO

E. Emrordi (Reviewer E)

This hotel could not be rated 5 star. It is well located - if you want to be downtown - but the area around the hotel is a bit overcrowded and too touristic. The hotel is very small and cramped, starting with the front desk. The staff is good and they do try their best. Beware of room 16! It is so small you hardly fit in, just a bed with 50 cm around it, no place for luggage, window opening to a smelly aisle. You can certainly find better hotel in Barcelona for similar value. Not worth it.

F. Michelle O: (Reviewer F)

We spent a very enjoyable 3 nights in Barcelona. We easily found the hotel as it is situated just off La Rambla. On arrival the staff were extremely welcoming and gave us a complimentary drink of cava whilst our bags were taken to our room. We stayed in Room 13 which I believe is one of the smaller rooms but it was nicely decorated and the bathroom was excellent - double sink, large double shower, separate bath, complimentary Molten and Brown toiletries. Breakfast was included and served at our table - rather than the self service buffets that you find in most modern hotels. The staff could not have been nicer, They spoke perfect English and indulged my imperfect Spanish. This is a lovely place only slightly marred by the noise we heard overnight from La Rambla.

Hotel Jazz

G. Nicole V : (Reviewer G)

Hotel Jazz! You read my review of it. It was recommended to us through a friend as a nice central place to stay. We were not impressed by it at all. We ended up going to a new place after the second night. Hotel Jazz had a lot of mold in its rooms & I'm allergic & ended up sick for the rest of the trip! We Inns more. Quaint little places that are quiet, staff is more kind & understanding, staff has more time to spend with you on questions about the area & sightseeing & is more inclined to make your stay the most comfortable. They have less rooms than big hotels & need the good references from all whom stay with them so they tend to go the extra mile!

Hotel Miro

H. TravelandShoes: (Reviewer H)

Overrated, overpriced, underserviced - never again! What a disastrous stay. The non-smoking room stank of stale smoke and upon our friendly complaint we were briskly told that no other room was available, that it wasn't their issue if previous guests smoked in a non-smoking room, and that "our sense of smell" was completely our own problem. After insisting something should be done (we had some good experience with a one-hour Ozone-purification of such rooms in other -better- hotels), a cleaning lady was sent up to our room who only laughed about it and sprayed some citrus scent into the air. The highly advertised "scenic view of the Guggenheim" was only viewable when leaning out of the window. The so-called "Spa" was a small, luke-warm whirlpool and an out-of-order steam room just large enough for maybe two small people. We checked out the very next morning.

After leaving a note to the management, we received an e-mail full of justifications with no sign of regret or apology whatsoever. Never again!

I. NashMelbourne: (Reviewer I)

The staff are extremely friendly and their English was excellent. The rooms were very nice and clean, they come with a stocked mini bar with snacks. The hotel is nicely situated and the main shopping area is a couple of minutes walk away. It is a shame that the hotel has no restaurant.

Mercer Hotel Barcelona

J. WMandCL_D: (Reviewer J)

If you get the opportunity to stay at the Mercer Hotel, grab it with both hands. My wife and I hadn't been to Barcelona before so we selected the hotel based on its location in the Gothic Quarter and positive reviews from other people who had stayed. We were not disappointed. The hotel is an absolute delight, situated on one of the narrow lanes, it can be easily missed. No problem, the concierge and doorman took our luggage and walked with us to pick up the taxi. In addition to the very friendly and helpful staff the hotel building and interior decorations are exceptional. This is an historic building which has been lovingly restored. It still has many original structural features yet still provides a very modern and contemporary feel with carefully chosen décor. I can't do it justice in a write up you have to see it to appreciate it. The location of the hotel was also ideal, right in the heart of the gothic area it is a short walk to the Barcelona Cathedral, la Rambla and the market (la Boqueria). I have no problem recommending the Mercer to anyone; it is now one of our favourite hotels in the world.

Only You Hotel & Lounge (Madrid)

K. CruisingSwedes: (Reviewer K)

We loved every moment of our stay at this amazing boutique hotel. I chose it based on other fabulous ratings, as well as the location in Chueca, which puts you in a nice area with lots of shops and restaurants, and halfway between the main tourist sites of Plaza Mayor/Plaza del Sol and the major museums. The service is impeccable. Everyone is very helpful and attentive. The room was spotless and very comfortable. The hotel has a wonderful vibe to it - stylishly modern yet classic at the same time. The shower was amazing - like standing underneath a warm waterfall. We even took pictures of the shower as we want to build one like it ourselves. The floor was one solid large piece of marble. Really beautiful. There's a beautiful bar in the hotel that has a great bartender. The bar gets pretty crowded at night as it is a lively area. Very fun. The Plaza de Cibeles is literally around the corner - that's where we hopped on the HOHO bus to tour the entire city. It conveniently brings you right back after you've stopped and seen everything. We will definitely go back here!

L. El Gordo Visitó: (Reviewer L)

Well located in quiet street (we had an internal room - it was very quiet, except for some strange, but uneventful plumbing) - second floor but bright despite internal courtyard. Welcome respite from the beautiful sun of Madrid. The staff are rock stars here - genuinely helpful, friendly - everyone. Design was cool, lots of whites and navies - room perfect size (not too big) - top drawer refurb - comfortable bed, choice of pillow types (ask at reception). AC worked, as did WI-FI - in all parts of the hotel. We tried breakfast on day 1 - plentiful, relaxed - if you're in a hurry or watching your budget - there are plenty of bars/cafeterias within reach of hotel. Chueca easy to navigate; the city highlights are all within walking distance. Madrid is worth a long visit (Museums are world class) - and this hotel provides the perfect antidote to a very lively city. Will come again.

Villa Venecia Hotel Boutique

M. Teeganeb: (Reviewer M)

Having never been to Benidorm we chose a hotel in the Old Town and were so pleased we did. This hotel is small but perfectly formed. The staff cannot do enough for you the rooms are spotless as are all areas. Being in the Old Town gives you the best of both worlds if you want quiet walks along the beach in one direction or the hustle and bustle in the other direction the hotel is well placed for both. If you like eating good food well presented look no further we seemed to spend a lot of the evening being served the many courses on offer everything is waitress served including breakfast so you are really pampered. A lovely stay and we recommend you try this fabulous 5-star gem.

N. Avril M: (Reviewer N)

This is the second time my husband and I have stayed at this beautiful hotel. As soon as we arrive. My husband and I were greeted with a warm welcome. We were offered champagne while checking in. The staff goes that extra mile just to make your stay more enjoyable and comfortable. The hotel sits on the rocks between the Old and New town with spectacular views of the coastline. Bedrooms are compact with very comfortable beds but have everything you need. Every mealtime was something my husband and I looked forward to. The food was

delicious and my taste buds dance through every bite. If you are looking for perfection, look no further. The Villa Vanecia has it all.

Wilson Boutique Hotel:

O. Ben B: (Reviewer O)

First I want to give a shout out to the staff. They were the most friendly and helpful of any hotel I have stayed in. The room was nice and a good size for 3 people. The only down side to this hotel is the location. There isn't a lot of sightseeing or restaurants really close to the hotel. We had to take the bus for pretty much everything. However, I would definitely return to this hotel for any future stays.

P. Paul B: (Reviewer P)

I saw the high rating of this hotel so I picked it for my stay during MWC. The front desk made me go downstairs to get toothpaste, slippers, etc. Basically, whatever I need, I had to go downstairs and get it... And the elevator is tiny, and slow... The elevator is also used as a service elevator so I often had to share it with a mattress, a service cart. you name it... Also they don't seem to understand what "DO NOT DISTURB" means. Consecutive two days the front desk called me when I had the tag on the door and asking if I'd like to have housekeeping. What part of the DO NOT DISTURB they do not understand? I had to make a complaint about it... The 3rd day I was not at the hotel during the normal time they made phone calls so I couldn't verify if my complaint worked. Be aware they serve breakfast only at the hotel. The room service is Japanese food from another restaurant. I found it's funny to serve sushi only in a hotel in Spain... I would not stay at this hotel next time. There's NO service!

5.9 Appendix 4: Interview transcriptions

a) BLAZENA

R: Can you introduce yourself? (*Mohli by ste sa predstaviť?*)

B: Yes, my name is Blažena Horvathová, I am 46 years old and I am working as business assistant. (*Áno, Som Blažena Horvathová, mám 46 rokov, pracujem ako obchodná asistentka.*)

R: Ok, so first of all, we will pass through some general question and later on, we will go to the questions about boutique hotels. (*Dobre, tak najskôr budú všeobecné otázky o cestovania potom prejdeme na boutique hotel. Prečo rada cestujete?*)

B: It is pleasant experience, I like to discover new places and countries and new people. (*Je to príjemná skúsenosť, mám rada nové mesta nové krajiny a nových ľudí.*)

R: Yes, and usually why? (*Áno, a prečo cestujete väčšinou?*)

B: For holiday usually, for holiday usually... (*Väčšinou na dovolenku, Väčšinou na dovolenku...*)

R: And what kind of accommodation do you prefer? (*A aké ubytovanie preferujete keď cestujete do zahraničia?*)

B: Usually, the bigger complexes, when the kids were smaller. (*Väčšinou hotely, komplexy keď deti boli síce menšie*)

R: How do you usually choose your holiday? (*A ako si väčšinou vyberáte dovolenku?*)

B: Mostly, the vacation was close to the sea, so it had to be on one hand hotel which offered all the services, which are expected and mainly in connection to children. All these holidays were concentrated this way. (*Väčšinou sa tá dovolenka týkala pobytu pri mori, takže vlastne aby bol jediná hotel ktorý by poskytol všetky služby ktoré človek od neho očakáva, ale hlavne v spojení s deťmi. Tie všetky dovolenky boli zamerané týmto smerom*)

R: And do you use special tools as a travel agency, or more through the internet. (*A využívate nejaké špeciálne prostriedky ako cestovná kancelária, alebo skôr cez internet.*)

B: We usually used the travel agency, or the internet. (*Tú cestovnú kanceláriu sme vždy využívali, alebo cez internet.*)

R: While choosing, what is the most important for you? (*Pri výbere, čo je pre vás najdôležitejšie?*)

B: Do you mean the holiday or the hotel? (*Pri výbere dovolenky, alebo toho hotela?*)

R: Now I mean the holiday in general. (*Teraz konkrétne pri výbere všeobecne dovolenky.*)

B: While choosing a holiday, when we are choosing the particular country where we would like to go, so the connection, hotel, airport so it is not that far according to access to the sea. Appropriate, so there are rocks or something else. And actually, this direction and also other possibilities, these kind of stuff connected to holiday. (*Pri výbere dovolenky, vlastne keď si vyberáme tu krajinu do ktorej by sme chceli ísť tak vlastne to spojenie, hotel letisko a vlastne aby nebolo príliš ďaleko podľa možnosti, hlavne to miesto, ten rezort alebo ten hotel, aby bol prístup do mora. Taký vhodný, nie nejaké skaly alebo niečo také. A vlastne skôr takýmto smerom a potom ďalej tie možnosti, aby keď alebo takéto záležitosti spojené s dovolenkou.*)

R: And when you choose your hotel, how it can impress you? (*A keď si vyberáte ten hotel, čím Vás dokáže zaujať?*)

B: I personally prefer some kind of cosy hotel, not very huge complex, where one have a feeling that will loose, or some small buildings, more private. *(Ja osobne preferujem skôr taký typ útulnejšieho hotel, nie taký obrovský komplex kde má človek pocit že sa stratí, alebo také tie malé domčeky, ale skôr také privátnejšie.)*

R: It is generally to this hotels, and now we will go to boutique hotels. Have you ever heard this term? And what do you imagine is that? *(To je asi tak všeobecne k tým hotelom a teraz k tým boutique hotelom. Počuli ste niekedy tento pojem? A čo si pod ním predstavujete?)*

B: I know, that these kind of hotels have more intimate atmosphere but I didn't meet with it in practise. *(Viem že to má takú skôr komornejšiu atmosféru tieto hoteli, ale prakticky som sa s tým nestretla)*

R: Boutique hotels are more like smaller hotels. Would you like to visit one? *(Boutique hotely sú skôr malé hoteli sú vlastne malé hoteli, Rada by ste jeden navštívili?)*

B: Certainly. Basically, I like all these kind of small places, they unique as they experienced something rather than the new buildings or hotels. So yes. *(Určite, mám v podstate rada všetky takéto malé miesta, sú jedinečné čo niečo zažili, ... teda skôr ako teda nové budovy alebo hotely také to moderné. Takže áno.)*

R: And what kind of facilities should hotel have according to your opinion? For example restaurant, but in these smaller hotels? *(A aké zariadenia by mal hotel mať podľa vás? Ako reštaurácie napríklad, tieto malé hotely?)*

B: It's always about those people who work there and how nice and helpful they are, so people feel comfortable that that does not burden them And maybe it still is that these people are also adequately dressed and basically it's always about the... *(Reštaurácie, v podstate by boli zaujímavé tak jak je to na nejakých horských chatách, tak jak ľudia sú v miestnych hoteloch. Možno že by to bolo zaujímavé, a možno že to aj tak je že sú tí ľudia aj adekvátne oblečení a podstate je to vždy asi o tých ľuďoch ktorí tam pracujú akí sú príjemní, že má človek pocit že ich nezaťažuje alebo neobťažuje a teda sú tam ich hostia. A potom tie všeobecné také špecifické. Reštaurácie, bazén sauna a masáž také tie malé obchodíky tie sú skôr v tých komplexoch pre nás.)*

R: And when the hotel doesn't have sauna or pool, do you think it's a disadvantage? *(A keď nemá hotel nejakú saunu alebo bazén, myslíte si že to je jeho nevýhoda?)*

S: I think it's not a disadvantage, because when it comes to boutique hotels, it would fit there. But I would not consider it as a disadvantage. One chooses according to criteria and then in this way something else, but I would not see that as disadvantage definitely. *(Myslím si že není to nevýhoda, pretože keď sato týka boutique hotel, všetko v podstate sa hodilo do toho, ale nepovažovala som to za nevýhodu, človek si vyberá podľa iných kritérií. A potom si v týchto smeroch vyberá niečo iné, ale určite ako nevýhodu by som to nevidela. Ak t je nejaký historický objekt tak je to v poriadku)*

R: When it comes to employees, everybody expects that some professional behaviour from them. How do you imagine a professional employee in hotel? *(Čo sa týka zamestnancov v hoteli, tak každý očakáva sa nejaké profesionálne správanie od nich. Ako si predstavujete nejakého profesionálneho zamestnanca v hoteli.)*

S: I would prefer basically the humanly rather than professional. Or, some fusion one with another. But that person try to... should help if there is some problem, when the person see that people at least try. Some willingness and helpfulness that they can take care of those people in every way. *(Ja by som v podstate preferovala skôr takéto ľudskejšie pred tým profesionálnym, alebo skĺbenie jedného z druhým, aby ten človek dokázal vždy nejakú sa snažiť pomôcť aj keby tam vlastne vyskytol nejaký problém, keď človek vidí že sa tí ľudia aspoň snažia takže skôr takú tu ochotu a ústretovosť že sa dokážu postarať o tých ľudí v každom smere.)*

R: What kind of compensation would expect from the hotel? If there is a noise or something is not working in the hotel... *(A ako by ste očakávali od hotela, že Vám to vynahradí? Ak tam je hluk, alebo sa vám niečo pokazilo...)*

B: We personally are not such conflict personalities, and so we don't deal with that loudly. However, it would be nice to get some drink or something in the dinner or something like that. But, it is not about dealing with problems, because that feels stupid but the person is on holidays and it is nice to get something like that. So, *(My osobne nie sme také konfliktne typy že by sme tak riešili vehementne, ale ako potešilo by nejaký drink alebo niečo pri večeri alebo možno niečo také ale nie tak že by sme riešili nejaké sťažnosti, síce nám to je hľúpe, keď ide človek na dovolenku, ako by to je nejaké strašne tak partí s ! Takže, ak keď by sa niečo pokazilo alebo rozbilo, tak aby to odstránili a bolo by to v poriadku.)*

R: A v týchto malých hoteloch je výhoda málo izieb, a tí zamestnanci poznajú lepšie tých svojich klientov, ako by ste sa cítili keď Vás oslovujú menom, a vedia nejaké informácie o vás, že vám môžu ponúknuť nejaké zájazdy na príklad

B: It is very nice, One has a feeling that they are interested in their visitors and they try to meet the needs and some kind of estimate and make people happy with some recommendations what we can do. That's very pleasant! *(Je to také príjemné, človek má pocit že tí ľudia sa zaujímajú o svojich hostí a že sa aj snažia vyjsť v ústrety a nejaké odhadnúť alebo tak sa snažia urobiť radosť s nejakým návrhom a všetko môže človek absolvovať určite je to príjemné!)*

R: More about the history. Would you be interested to hear from the employees more about the building, or do you expect privacy, to not be disturbed by them. *(Skôr o tej histórii. Zaujímalo by vás aby vám zamestnanci povedali niečo o tej budove, alebo skôr očakávate súkromie aby vás nezaťažovali)*

B: No, I would be interested to know, from which century is the hotel and in which style is built in or what happened there and what is related to what. I somebody does this as well... I would welcome that. *(Nie, ja by som bola rada, keby som vedela z akého je to obdobia alebo v akom štýle je to postavené, alebo čo sa tam udialo a s čím to súvisí, keby teda oni boli vlastne aj na toto, nikto prístupne, určite ja by som to privítala)*

R: How would you describe welcoming in hotel, when you come and the first moment you meet on the reception What do you expect that they will tell you? *(A ako si predstavujete to privítanie v hoteli, keď pridete v ten prvý moment a stretnete sa vlastne na recepcii, čo očakávate od toho že vám povedia)*

B: Something nice, if somebody was living in the hotel, who is in charge to welcome the incoming guests, and they give them some information where is what and how can one get there, some of these basic information. So I am no on the reception waiting to get the room ready. I want to see that they are really taking care of me. *(Niečo príjemné, že keď tam niekto býval v tom hoteli, kto je poverený privíta tých hostí ktorí tam prídu a dajú mu nejaké tie informácie a kde sa čo sa nachádza, jak sa tam človek dostane, také tie základné informácie. Nie je len keď ten človek je na tej recepcii a čaká kým mu pripravia tú izbu. Ale teda že sa tam niekto tých ľudí ujme)*

R: Good, this was the basic information about boutique hotels and now we will talk more about Spain Do you have any travelling experience with Spain? *(Dobre, tak toto by sme mali tak všeobecne o tých boutique hoteloch a teraz by sme sa trochu o Španielsku. Máte nejakú skúsenosť s cestovaním do Španielska?)*

B: We have been on holiday in Spain on Mallorca and Ibiza long time ago, when the kids were small. *(Áno, boli sme na dovolenke v Španielsku na Malorke a na Ibize dávnejšie keď boli deti malé.)*

R: Have you feel that Spanish employees are behaving differently than in other countries? *(Pocítli ste že španielsky zamestnanci by sa správali nejakو ináč ako statní v iných krajinách)*

B: I think that people working there are more pleasant, I don't have any negative experience or it would be somehow different, it was on normal level. *(Myslím, že nie, ako tí ľudia ktorí tam pracovali boli príjemní nemám nejakú negatívnu skúsenosť že by to bolo nejaké iné, alebo normálne úrovni bežnej.)*

R: Spanish people are known to be open, did you feel something like that in positive meaning? *(Španieli sú skôr známi tým že sú otvorení, nepocítli ste niečo také ako pozitívne.)*

B: I mean it in positive sense that people should no to have. *(Ako v takom celkom pozitívnom zmysle že človek nemal s tým nejaký nepríjemný pocit že tí ľudia sa snažili vystupovať príjemne lebo sú taký zrejme snaživý takže ako aj to Španielsko je to južanská krajina takže. Áno vtedy sme boli v tom v hoteli, zo všetkým)*

R: Do you think that Spain is the country was the bigger hotels have an advantage in comparison to the smaller ones? *(A myslíte si že Španielsko je taká krajina kde sú tieto veľké hoteli výhodnejšie ako tie malé?)*

B: Well, I don't have an experience with the smaller one, but if i have an opportunity to go, I would prefer the smaller one. I don't like the megalomaniac huge building in any sense. I prefer the smaller ones. *(Keď nemám skúsenosť, ale keby sme mali možnosť, tak ja by som skôr ten malý. celkovo nemám rada tie veľké megalomanské stavby v nijakom smere, tak celkovo mám rada tie menšie)*

R: Ok, that's all. *(No tak to je všetko)*

B: Yes, we made it! *(Tak sme to zvládli)*

b) FABRIZIO

R: Can you please introduce yourself

F: I am Fabrizio Giuseppe Negretti, I come from Italy, I am 30 years old

R: We will start by general questions and then we will come to boutique hotels. So, Can you tell me why do you usually travel?

F: Usually I travel for pleasure for tourism or for visiting friend. And also for going back to my country and that's it.

R: What kind of travel do you prefer? What is your favourite kind of?

F: Usually when i am with the one friend or alone and like to spend the 4 or 5 days in the city and the just to enjoy the city. And, I travel usually with the flights or train or buses or car sharing. I like to visit capitals in Europe for example.

R: During your travel, where do you usually stay?

F: I usually stay in cheap hotel or hostel or sometimes, mostly with my friends

R: Have you ever stayed in more luxurious.

F Last time when I travelled my friend wanted the beautiful place and I wanted the cheap place, so we arrived to compromise and we took almost luxurious place.

R: And where do you usually choose your accommodation.

F: Usually I use sites as booking.com so it is like that and also Airbnb.com

R: And do you use TripAdvisor?

F: Sometimes yes, to check reviews yes. I use this

R: And what do you like about hotels?

F: I like, when there are cheap and where there are not insects inside and there are in good locations, because sometimes I took some hotels where cheap but they were very far from the city and then I had to pay me train buses, and I lost time to going to the center

R: And when you that's the general part and now so i am going to talk about boutique hotel, which are small more luxurious hotel and they are built in some historical building, so you not only staying in the hotel but you also have some experience Amazing place. It's more specific because there is small number of room and the employees they know your name because there is not that many people staying and they can offer some specific packages and some specific trips because they know some the information and your preferences. Do you understand?

F: Yes. From your description, it seems similar to where I said last time, because it was old building. The person who was in garage was very friendly. He called s by names and he was telling us lot of the history of the life and he was trying to recommend us things in very personal way, Maybe it was boutique hotel but it wasn't written anywhere.

R: Yes. Because I think is not specific category, sometimes hotels are boutique but they don't present them as boutique

F: But boutique doesn't mean shop?

R: Its coming from the shop name, applied for small hotel. Boutiques are small shops you know, some specific small shops. Yes, the name is coming from the shops. What comes to your mind when you here boutique. What did you find out about boutique hotels?

F: That they were old places and different from like commercial places and I thought there were for rich people. But where I stayed was boutique hotel, I am not reach and I stayed there. And then anything before to do this interview

R: And so, you already know somehow the concept. It is more luxurious place. What do you expect when you pay for such experience? What facilities should offer you such place?

F: For example the beauty in the room like beautiful bed, curtains, beautiful window a, where I can see the city, very clean trays maybe personalized breakfast. Maybe I don't know maybe they can wake me up, whenever I want. But I don't know they did not do it last time.

R: And what is your perfect location for hotel?

F: I like when is in the center,

R: Center?

F: Yes. And also when is I like high floors so I can see the view of the city. That's pretty cool

R: How many rooms the hotels should have?

F: Actually I don't really care. I care there is my rooms, I don't care about others

R: Do you have any preferences if there are many rooms or fewer rooms?

F: As long as I have a like a bathroom inside my room I don't care how many other rooms are ther. But what I understand from the concept of the boutique hotels, hotels have a smaller rooms. So maybe the owner can give more time to each guest. Or something like that

R: Yes. And what about hotel restaurant? Have you ever tried to eat in hotel restaurant?

F: not relay. Once I had a lunch in a hotel restaurant but I was not a guest of the restaurant (meaning hotel). I just saw the menu outside and friend asked if we could have our Christmas lunch there. Even if we are not a guests and they said yes. It was very luxurious but good. But other times I only had breakfast in the hotel where I stayed.

R:What do you expect from the breakfast in the hotel?

F: I like when they offer like buffet. That I can have whatever I want because I like to eat a lot in the morning. than when I run the city I am not that hungry and I do not spend lot of money. This might be fresh fruit or fresh juice and bread or something like butter, nothing specific

R: Let's talk about the employees. Can you describe a professional employee according to your perception?

F: Last time this friendly man that was there was very professional I think, he was very careful to your needs. he was asking us for example if we are going to come back soon, because we wanted to know when the cleaning people could enter to our room and then he was recommending us places where to eat or what to do or what to buy, he really spend a lot of time talking with us. He sends also mails, during my stay with list of places. I also guessed he had some deal with some restaurant, because he was a little insisting with these places. His recomendations were good.

R: And when you sometimes maybe happen that you don't have any common language between you, how do you think it should be handled.

F: it happened to me once in Rome. I took a really, very cheap hostel but the owner was like from India or maybe Bangladesh. Na the, he didn't speak Italian nor English, he only spoke some Spanish and fortunately I speak some Spanish, we could managed it. But my Spanish was not very developed. But we didn't really communicated. It was not necessary. He was just hostel for one night. I just gave him document. I know how it works. We didn't really need to say anything. B

R: But in the luxurious hotel, would you expect to speak?

F: Yes expect to at least they speak English, but usually I did not have problems, apart from this experience, everybody speak English... I speak a lot of languages; at least one language we share is always. When I went to Japan, it was big problem. Cause their English is not very high

R: And did you ever have any problems in the hotel? That you remember.

F: The only problem is cleanliness and noise during the night. I don't like when I can see that the room is very dirty and I can see for example some insects. I can't stand it. Or for example when I open the bad cover, the bad and I find some hair or dirt. If I don't like .But when I am in cheap place, I can expect that

R: And how should employees handle the problem when you complain?

F: Actually I am not a person that complaints, so I don't like to complain or to but if the people that complain, I think they should apologize and solve the problem. They can offer you discount. Chocolate for free

R: And, so when you stated in this historical building, did they tell you something about?

F: I was not really interred, I was not really listening. But my friend was listening more, they said something like that something about that all the owner of this place would and the offer something about when they renovate the building I guess. But I don't really remember.

R: So you are not interested in

F: Not that much. I just arrived and I want to explore the city, which cares about the history or the hotel

R: And how do you feel when the employees remember your name?

F: It was good, i felt like I was important and I am important. So

R: And so can you imagine going to holiday just for to see the hotel?

F: No. Unless is for example Spa, big Spa hotel, where i want to go. Usually the hotel is where I stay for sleeping; it is not a main goal of holiday.

R: And do you also... Do you remember the atmosphere of the hotel? Is it important for you, the music and the decoration in the hotel?

S beautiful, if there are beautiful

F: No if it I expect something better, I have better mood I am more relaxed. The inside of the room. I can remember this luxurious cover and curtains, it felt so good. When I was very tired I go back to the room I felt very comfortable.

R: So let's now just the last part it's more about Spain. When do you think is the best time to travel to Spain?

F: From my experience I like hot Spain, maybe the winter is not. When I went there twice, was a spring and spring was very hot. Spring was perfect. So I recommend spring. But, I experience from other people I know that in summer sometimes is very, very hot in some cities. So maybe spring is the best season.

I. And what are you interested to see in Spain?

F: I like to try allot of food and to talk with people, because Spanish people are very warm. And I just like to go random in the city and to find a little streets or little bar for example where to enter and there is coffee and little tapas I think.

R: This was actually my question, what is the difference between Spanish employees and employees in other countries?

F: I would say that both, that Spain there were friendlier like in general Spanish people. I liven Denmark and I can say that that it's very different the attitude of people. I prefer the Spanish Attitude, i would say

R: Why?

F: Because it is very similar to me, because I come from south of Italy and characterise very similar to the Spanish one.

R: What kinds of hotels are interesting for you in Spain?

F: Hotels that are close to the center or if I go to same cities near the sea like near the sea that i can open the window and watching the sea and looking at the sea. Maybe if I go alone, I would not choose the luxurious place, I would go to cheaper place, just because I don't have money. Maybe in future I would be rich and important person I would prefer some boutique hotels or luxurious places

R: And the last question is, how do you imagine the perfect introduction in the hotel when you arrive, welcoming by the employees

F: I would expect the Mr. Negretti, welcome to our hotel, he shakes my hand, smiles to me and offer me chocolate and he brings me with a smile to the room ,like this very friendly, not just ah you are Negretti, ok, document please, that's bad!

R: ok, that's it! Thank you very much

c) GIORGIO

R: Can you please introduce yourself?

G: Yes I am Giorgio, I am 24 years old and I am from Italy. I am student of innovation economics in AAU in Denmark

R: Do you like to travel?

G: Yes a lot

R: Why do you like to travel?

G: Mostly, because either its exploring new countries where I have never been or meeting friend if they are living somewhere else, threat are the main reasons for

R: What kind of holiday do you like?

G: It depends basically on my mood, I would say sightseeing or cultural holidays to go visiting places or cities or also if I am going back to place where I have already been it just nice to go there for partying. Depending on the place where I just can go for festival, or whatever just fun

R: and, do you have any travelling dreams?

G: Yes, I would like to go to South America

R: Ok, So project is concentrated on the hotels, specifically, so how do you usually choose your accomodation in foreign country

G: I think, now I am student definitely the price that I am looking at but I guess, when Ill have played job, I would look also for the quality of the accommodation. I guess it also depends on the type of the holiday. If I am going to European country I guess I am looking more at the price. If I am going too faraway country, I would look less at the price I look lees on the price, more at the quality. It really depends on the type of the holiday, if I am going to venture camping to Argentina probably its fine if i am going to Spain, yes

R: Do you have any experience with the higher class hotels?

G: Yes, I do. What do you mean exactly, for how many stars?

R: Like five-star hotels

G: Yes one time

R: Yes? Ok, and what do you like about the staying in the hotel?

G: That specific one?

R: Any hotel

G: I like that you have all the services basically, so you have starting from the facilities with compare to hostels there are in the room, then you entering the room and everything is tidy, clean they are changing your towels every day, bed sheets every day, so that it really nice, and also of course you have breakfast so its really reliable and you can also ask to the receptions for everything so that's definitely fun!

R: Yes, can you imagine to travel somewhere for the hotel?

G: No!

R: No, why is it so?

G: For now when I travel mostly because I want to go to the place then the hotel it's important but it's not really relevant. But I guess that maybe in the future if I am going to. N sorry no, I don't thing even in the future, I would just travel for the hotel.

R: So where do you check the hotels, what kind of sources do you choose?

G: Specifically, Expedia or this kind of website, where you can find discount and promotions

R: Do you use TripAdvisor?

G: I use TripAdvisor, if I am googling first and then to check the review of the hotels. I check TripAdvisor

R: What kind of reviews do you check? The negative o positive?

G: Both. I want to know what other users experienced and dealt

R: So, that was kind of general questions, but your travel preferences and we would moved to boutique hotels. So, this is kind of establishments which are built not only for the accommodation, but also to give you some experience, they are usually building in the historical building.

G: Did you ever heard about boutique hotels?

R: So can you

G: I have never been inside. But I think it looks really nice, but also really expensive

R: Can you describe it with three words that you...

G: Ok. Expensive fancy and stylish.

R: And do you know, why there are so special?

G: Why? Because I guess they the details are very like well polished. And I guess even the personnel is very welcoming. As you said, I guess they want to have very high class experience.

R: This is exactly, I would present you a visits boutique hotels are special establishments with the specific kind of service, which is customized to your preferences because there is small number of rooms usually not more than 100. So then the employees can remember the names of employees. They also kind of know what you like, because you are talking to them in the begging what you like. They can offer use some just fitting to your needs. Ok? So let's talk about them, like them, when you already know little bit about them. What kind of facilities boutique hotel should provide you with?

G: I guess it depends on the size, but probably I don't know the Spa or swimming pool, it would be nice to have roof top swimming pool, it depends on the area, where it is located, but maybe small chain Wellness area. Yeah

R: Hmm, so do you consider, when there is missing this kind of very big disadvantage.

G: But I guess I am expecting if I am paying a lot I am definitely expecting it

R: What do you think it's the biggest is advantage of the hotel, why would people go rather to boutique hotel, rather than to big chain hotel

G: Because as you said, they want more like inclusive experience. So that that know that actually when they go there the personnel would be really friendly and welcoming, they won't be rude for instance, and that's. There would be also smaller amount of guests, probably the rooms are very tidy and yeah. Everything in order so you have like the personnel and everyone as cares more about you that then you are if in the big chain.

R: Yes, exactly. And what kind of service should employees offer you?

G: What kind of service? probably it would be nice to guided tour , this would be I guess very cool, or also like general information if I am asking ok, do you know where is this place how can I get there. How can I get the bus card, the metro card all this particularly information for moving around. Yeah

And do you usually ask yourself the information about the direction or do you expect them directly to tell you

G: I guess it would be nice if there would tell me just in general do you have any questions about transportation. It would be better they ask me about restaurant?

G: No,

R: No do you have any expectation of this kind of restaurant, what they should provide you with

G: Actually, like considering 5-star boutique hotel, well I don't know, because sometimes I have the feeling that it would be better to going. Or they don't really, I don't know just and expectation if i am 5-star boutique hotel maybe yes. I guess the restaurant would be good as well, but on the other side, you are staying that environment that its really like nice, inclusive but it is that environment but if you are in the new place, you want to experience somewhere else. It would be call for instance, if the restaurant is open also for people from outside to go inside. So they are more like atmosphere from the place because if it just like from the guests that can go there than its like I don't want to come to the place, just to stay 24-hours in the hotel.

R: Yeah, that's what actually it is like that usually. And so in general, not only in for example reception, but in the restaurant how would you describe some professional employee of the hotel?

G: I would say fist of all of course welcome here, and they show you the table they come to the table worth you than they give you the card, the menu and the most importantly they let you time to decide, that they are not coming every 5 seconds, that's very annoying. the second thing is that if there is a after you order the food, if thanking to long time they come to you and take listen there is problem, it will take little bit more time for you, maybe we can bring you something else, so that I know I am paying a lot I want to be sure that the food is great. That time is not taking longer or less, that's important as well. And also at the end that there are not pushing you to go out, ok, do you want the bill, so no! So that's you decide when

R: Yeah, and did you had any problems in the hotel that you can remember?

G: No. Sometimes what is that if I meet some who from the outside like even a friend and I want friend in the hotel it's so complicated, I guess it's their business. There for instance when I was in Berlin, I had a friend of mine who was coming to visit me, and they stop him at the reception asking a lot of questions, that was kind fine, but on the other side I understeand because is better , otherwise, everyone would come to my room, so its from my safety, that's fine.. so now I get it, so that one this example, probably only one, but at the same time understeand that. It's like that

R: But when imagine, some more situations that something happens in your room for example you have something broken or you had noise during the night because of the hotel. What so you think is the best remuneration for that?

G: What?

R: The best kind of remuneration or something will give you or some service they will provide you with

G: I would say yes, some kind of money compensation, I don't know how exactly to make it, but yeah.. I am paying I am expecting a good service so I want, I don't know, maybe a discount or something or depending of course on the what happened, but some kind of remuneration terms of.

R: Ok. And how do you think, it should be handled if you don't have common language with the employees?

G: That's really bad I think, yeah that really really bad. I mean. It's bad probably if they don't speak like the basic one the English. That would be really really bad. Because, if I don't speak English, its still bad I am the guests, is still bad if I don't speak English, but its even worst if I do speak English and they don't speak English.. so they should definitely speak English at least, and let's say if I don't speak English, but they do speak English, I am not expecting them to know my language but I am expecting to be really patient to try to somehow explain me things.

R: Ok. What do you thing about employees calling you by your name or surname of course.

G: It's really nice I think. It's very, very nice. Because you feel that, you are more welcomed, and that's not really like you are a one this big chains or one person there are and more polite.

R: Do you expect them to explain you something about the history. Would it be interesting for you?

G: It depends if I am in the historical building, yeah It would be nice. Or maybe they just give me flyer written there like ok, here is history is totally if you want to have a look at this

R: Mhm, ok. So, that we passed boutique and now just some questions about Spain. Do you have experience in Spain?

G: Yes, I had like I went to Spain 3 times.

R: What is your experience in general?

G: I experience that I think it was very very good in I don't remember exactly where I was in the first time, but the other two times it was very good like the service, the hotel were nice. And I was two times in Barcelona and one time in Seville and Cordoba. And Granada sorry, like the two times Barcelona were very nice and the in Seville I was staying one of this hostels but it was like fancy hostels and it was very very nice. The one in Granada was not great but it was still ok

Where did you stayed in Spain.

Like Barcelona Seville, which kind of accommodation did you used?

G: It was hotels, yeah... hotels in Barcelona and hostels in the south of Spain

R: When do you think is the best time to travel to Spain,

G: I think I like during the summer little bit warm, even if its hot, I very like during summer but the south of Spain maybe its better around spring or autumn

R: Is there any difference in the approach of the Spanish employees in compare to other European countries?

G: Specifically about Spanish employees I don't think so. It's quiet the same approach that. Yeah because you still feel that it's their duty and their task. They are acting like everyone else. But there want expecting it not critique it, its just ok. G:

R: Yeah, but you didn't thing that there personality, the Spanish people is warm more in compare to Germans for example or French or influenced their attitude.

G: Because the place where I was staying were not either boutique or bed and breakfast, where you have closer relation with your guests. It was kind of big , big hotel or even the hostel, it was kind of big so you really didn't have this kind of feeling that there person cared about you that much but it was ok, I mean. I wasn't expecting that kind of accommodation.

R: Spain is known for this kind of big chain hotels, everybody imagined that that when you sees Spain some kind of coast in Spain, but do you think that boutique hotel in Spain have a change to attract the tourists?

G: I think so, because there are lot of historical building and buildings and probably you will , want to go to one of this. I see these boutique hotels more in cities like Madrid Barcelona, or Seville, in this kind of cities. People, who go there, go there for visiting cities, with historical and cultural, nothing this in the places along the coast. I don't see the point in there

R: So you think the coast would be

G: Apart from Valencia, like in this big cities, but i don't know, Marbella or the

R: You don't see the boutique hotel there?

G: No, not that much. I expect big chains of hotels. You just go there for partying so you don't care about anything else.

R: Ok that's it thank you very much

d) ISKREN

R: Ok, Can you introduce yourself

I: Yeah, My name is Iskren , I am from Bulgaria . I study here in Aalborg University- Computer vision and graphics.

R: Ok, so do you like travelling?

I: Yes. I can say I really like it.

R: And why?

I: To visit new places mainly, but also to study abroad. I study here Aalborg and I have been studying in Barcelona.

R: Yeah. And what kind of travelling do you usually prefer?

I: I prefer for example to go to short period of time and go sightseeing , I can bein city or some villages in mountains.

R: Do you have any travel dreams?

I: No I cannot say, I like to go around. But

R: No? Ok. So, when you travel, what kind of accommodation do you usually prefer?

I: Usually, i stay in guest houses, but you go to big city , is not that common to find such places, but I prefer this houses

R: Do you have any experience with hotels or hostels?

I: Yeah, I have been in hostels and hotels

R: And what do you do you like about staying in the hotel?

I: Maybe because you can find hotels in the central area and it is close to destination you want to find. And also there are many other guests, and find some friends or people help you with the sightseeing.

R: Yeah, when you choose your accommodation when you travel somewhere what is important for you?

I: For me, it is important, where the hotel is situated. It can be close to interesting places. For instance, to find this places not very far from the center. About the thing, I am not very critical, I am very adaptive.

R: And how do you choose the accommodation? Do you use any webpage?

I: Yeah, Usually I go to the internet and search for the hotel, and search for comments from other guests to see and make my choice

R: And what kind of reviews are you interested in, negative or positive?

I: Maybe both, I usually look for the positive points, I as I said I am not very critical and. It is interesting to see the hotels from different views.

R: ok. This was kind of general question. Let's talk about boutique hotels. Do you have any experience with more luxurious kind of accommodation? Have you ever been to 5-star hotel

I: No, i haven't been.

R: Or 4-star?

I: Yeas, I have been.

R: And you have already read some things about boutique hotels. So what do you know about them? How would you describe them in three words?

I: Maybe small, but fancy and with unique atmosphere.

R: Ok. So, let's talk about employees, because the boutique hotels are very specifically concentrated on employee approach, so how would you describe a professional employee. What he needs to do to seem like professional?

I: Maybe, I can be always access by any time o the day to help you with problems. I was thinking that these boutique hotels are small with some unique atmosphere, in old structures; I don't think it should have some room service. Maybe it should have a restaurant where the waiter serves. If, with the atmosphere to help. Maybe to stay to feel the atmosphere to sit down. And maybe that's way I prefer just receptionist and from time to time, if you have some problems.

R: And did you have any experience that employees didn't speak your language? Or English?

I: In the hotel I have visited? No I haven't. They always spoke English at least

R: And if you can imagine the situation if they don't speak your language, how would you handle the situation as a employee?

I: Maybe I would ask another guest, I don't know if I am employee.

R: That's ok I don't know if you know, but boutique hotel are also as they are small, they usually remember guest by name. How do you feel about that?

I: Yeah, this is nice. I prefer this more familiar way. They would make you feel more friendlier, the atmosphere will be more friendly.

R: As you said, lot of times they are historical buildings, reconstructed into boutique hotels, or some palaces or design places. Would you be interested in history. That employee tell you something more about the history or the construction.

I: Yeah, it would be interesting for me. Especially if it some kind of palace, or some castle. Yeah, it would be interested also, if there were some pictures how the building looks in the old times.

R: And when you come to hotel, what do you expect that they tell you like first moment, you just enter the hotel. First contact with the employee. You don't even have to ask them. What they should automatically tell you?

I: Maybe to greet me well, And to provide me with service. What kind of rooms are the best.

R: Do you know facilities, like what kind of facilities do you expect to have this kind of luxurious places.

I: Maybe a restaurant with a nice atmosphere that. I don't know if the gym or swimming pool would be in place in such hotels. It just more common for big hotels. Its not in place if the building is old. It make unique ancient

R: can you imagine to plan your trip only to visit such hotel as a main attraction?

I: It depend, maybe if the city I am planning to see doesn't have many opportunities or many places to see, but usually not I would not go for hotel, i usually g for the city.

I: You told me you been to Spain, how would you describe the services in Spain or in general?

R: I would say the staff was very friendly. Usually they are not that familiar with English but they do as much they can. So it was not a problem to communicate with them. They are ready to help you to provide you with needed information. For example, when I was in Barcelona, I ask which the best places I can visit are and they were very helpful.

I: And when you imagine Spain, what kind of accommodation would you imagine in your mind?

R: This type of boutique hotels, I think they are in place, not big and fancy hotels. Because cities like Madrid Barcelona, they have unique atmosphere and this hotels are more like being more like on island or beaches.

I: Yes.

R: And did you have any direct experience with hospitality with the hotels in Spain?

I: What do you mean?

R: Have you been to some hotel in Spain, or hostel?

I: Hotel, no, one hostel. It was nice. It was in the center of the city. It has , it didn't have many rooms, but guest very, very friendly there, and the stuff. The rooms were quiet it helped me to help.

R: Do you think is different to stay in hostel in Spain, than in other countries?

I: Maybe. I am not sure. I haven't been to hostels in other countries.

R: What do you think, when is the best time to travel to Spain?

I: Maybe in the spring, the summer is very hot. And spring is warm and you can see and go to visit different cities without being annoyed by the heat.

R: How should they support to create some atmosphere in the hotel? Is it important for you some details, or decoration or music.

I: Yeah it is important, how they arrange the hotel, pictures the general atmosphere.

R: When the hotel have... How do you perceive such hotel? Does it influenced your image about the hotel?

I: When I never heard it before, I looked it what exactly is boutique hotel; I imagined its something like mixed with shopping and hotel. So yeah, maybe it will influence but maybe if the people would know what exactly is boutique hotel it will influence them for example to search when they are looking in the internet if they search this kind of hotel, maybe it would chose this, this type of hotels.

R: Would you be interested to visit boutique hotel? And why?

I: Yes. Because of the atmosphere, is made correct, for example if the building is old, I would be interested to see, how it would be to spend the night in the hotel.

R: Thank you very much

e) PETER

R: Can you please

P: My name is Peter, I am 21 years old, I am from Hungary. I am a student

R: Do you like travelling

P: Yes I do!

R: Why do you usually travel?

P: I guess to see the world and to see new culture, new customs and to see the most famous sites in the world

R: And what kind of travelling do you prefer?

P: Mostly the sightseeing kind, but I also like the relaxing holidays.

R: And when you travel, where do you usually stay?

P: I usually stayed at hotels.

R: And how do you choose your hotel?

P: Depending on word-of-mouth, what I hear from friends. I also tend to choose chain oriented hotels, because I found them more reliable but it is also important to look at pricing and if I heard any passed experiences from friends and family.

R: And what do you like about staying in the hotel?

P: I like I think is a lot more comfortable like sitting in the camping, because of having prepared meals that you can choose to eat and then also having your room cleaned. I think its just more pleasure feeling and comfortable experience to stay in the hotel.

R: So this was kind of general question, let's talk about boutique hotels

P: Have you ever hear about boutique hotels?

R: Can you describe them in three words?

P: Yes, I would say unique, design oriented and customer oriented.

R: And what kind of facilities do you think boutique hotel should provide?

P: I think the general hotel facilities like for example the restaurant, the bar, maybe the spa treatments. I do not think it needs to have anything special, It needs to be extra guest oriented it needs to pamper the guests, but need to be relaxing experience for them. It needs to have general facilities that the hotel does, but they need to spat up the customer service.

R: What would you say for some special services in boutique hotel?

P: For example, I think is a very nice touch as boutique hotel have smaller number of rooms, is very nice that staff know the guest by name or at least remember their language preferences and to greet them how way our name. For example if the last day recommended some restaurant, the other day surrounded by joy. To be recommended by other guests and to let the guest feel they are appreciated.

R: So, so you think number of room is important for the the boutique hotel.

P: Yes. Certainly. If there would be more than 100 rooms, I do not think that front office staff would be able to recognize each guest and remember maybe the name or at least what language do they speak.

R: When some of the relaxing facilities are hotel missing, as if you said some wellness for example, is it big disadvantage for hotel?

P: I do not it is a big disadvantage, but it can certainly be a disadvantage. It depends how the hotel market itself, and for example if the hotel is very close to the beach. It does need wellness facilities. It depends on their location and how they make out from the situation.

R: When they take about the restaurant? What do you expect from the restaurant in the boutique hotel? What do you expect there?

P: What expect from the restaurant is also to be a bit on the same page with the hotel, to be design oriented, to be something extra something special, but I would as foreign, chef to expect them to introduce me to local cuisine. But doing this in luxurious and more unique way as possible

R: What do you think is a boutique hotel targeted for?

P: I think it's mostly targeted for people first and foremost the quite high prices. I would say people who are looking at most the relaxation. I think if they choose a really good boutique hotel, then there will be every need and every desire will be. Every desire will be cared for. Like people who can afford it, but also people who would be pamper in this unique setting and design, everything with the atmosphere.

R: And did you ever have any experience with the Spanish boutique hotels?

P: Yes I did, I was the front office intern, in Spanish hotel in Valencia, its called Palau de la Mar and I really enjoyed it.

R: And how would you describe the differences between Spanish hotel as any other. It don't have to be specifically boutique hotel.

P: I think as Spain is very gastronomy oriented, I would say that their hotel are also aiming very much on providing good gastronomic experience for the guest. For example one boutique hotel in Valencia, it really introduces its guest to Valencia cuisine. And they even advertise that they have won awards, that the chef had won awards, for the dishes they provide in the restaurant. I would say that Spanish hotels are more gastronomy oriented.

R: When you are in hotel, can you imagine the situation that the employees don't speak English, how would you handled that, how would you expect as a guest to be handled?

P: I would say that is a bit unprofessional, especially regarding the service I expect from the boutique hotel, because for example me as a guest I don't think speak their language. People travel to every single country they cannot speak every single country. That's why they use English because its universal and global language. So, I would say that it would certainly make me bit satisfied with the service, but I guess I would go.

R: And, when you have any problems in the hotel how it should be handled like regarding happening in the room ?

P: I think I would need to also feel, even if I have problem as a guest, I would still expect employees make me feel appreciated to make me feel yes I have a problem and they will help look it to it, and its not that hassle. Just to see my point of view as a guest to try to understand why am I complaining and why I want a change and also be sufficient about it.

R: Ok, do you know that boutique hotel is specific also for the history of the building?

P: Yes, I think that's also quite important, especially as they all are design oriented. It's very interesting to look how they incorporated into the historical building. Its design, certain design to like to have within the premises.

R: Would you be interested to know something about the history?

P: Yeah certainly. Like did the boutique hotel come to exist? I would certainly be interested. Maybe not at the check in time, or something but to have the informational valuable on the website. The people interested could look it up, if they want to know the they came to visit. I would be more. But ones that are not interested can just ignore it.

R: So, do you think the hotel employees should not tell you that information?

P: I think they should be a bit cautious with it, because I think if they go into very long history, like 30 minutes, some guest don't like it. Some guests are kind of annoyed by that. I think the front office staffs have the power actually access the situation. To see that guest who arrived is very, very tired. They would like to hear 15 minutes history. They would just to go to their room. For example if you can see on the guest that they are eager to know something about the place and they have time, they are not tired I think it the little chit-chat just incorporating it in that, I think it would be nice.

R: So, can you as you said like when the guest is tired in the evening, so how would you describe in general welcoming to the boutique hotel?

P: I think its very important because it sets the tone for the whole visit. Even if the hotel has great facilities if the front office staff did not made very good impression the beginning, they can not very much recover from it. I would say they have to be attentive and, also offer some kind of great and kind welcome for the guest and to provide all the information that is needed, but to not go into such details because the guest is not that interested anymore.

R: Ok, how important is the hole atmosphere inside the hotel for you?

P: I think it's also very important when it comes to boutique hotel aspect. Its the whole setting and design atmosphere. And I think the employees need to be aware from the atmosphere and play to the strength of the

place. Because, then the guest feel attentive experience an when they enter the boutique hotel and they see the boutique hotel. Lately is very important to provide with the we experiences for the guest, because that is what they appreciate what they pay for.

R: And some of the hotels don't have the boutique in the name, of the hotel do you think its changes the image of the place?

P: I think so. I think its better to be stated beforehand so every guest is aware that it is a boutique hotel. Maybe look at if they know what it means, because if they don't know, maybe they complain about some of the simple me and basic characteristics, like for example the design or different lay out of the rooms or the number of the rooms. I think its better to get ahead of the problem by staying and explaining what the boutique hotels is.

R: Do you think that boutique hotel have a chance in Spain to be successful?

P: I think so, I think they are attracting Spanish and international guests as far as I have seen and I think that people who have the amount of money that is required to stay in the boutique hotel, I think they appreciate the certain extra mile that the employees go for them and appreciation is provided in boutique hotel. So I think that these people would not go back to standard 5-star hotel, something that is chain oriented and very much standard and some procedures and very cold because they have four hundred and five hundred room and I don't remember their name and depends on the language they speak on previous days from this aspect. I do believe they have chance to survive.

R: And the last question is, can you imagine to plan your trip only for boutique hotel?

P: I think so, I think it could be a possibility, it depend on the boutique hotel itself, how much I am If I look at the website, if I am satisfied and I see if it convinces me to go there then I would go to the boutique hotel, just boutique hotel. So, I think it depends very much on my first impression, that's what I think its important to have very interactive and very user-friendly webpage with lot of pictures, lot of description, so the guest can get familiar with the hotel and maybe its also a good idea if the hotel have good reviews on TripAdvisor and other social networks, so we can be. Lately, guests are leaning on other guest for their experience for their experience. It is important if the hotel have a good reputation on these sites, that's also a big plus, when looking at Booking.com.

P: Do you have any more comment?

f) SHAGUFTA

R: Ok, Can you introduce yourself

S: My name is Shagufta, I am from Pakistan, I have been in Denmark in Europe for last two and half years and I am studying at AAU. My education is business innovation and entrepreneurship.

R: So Shagufta, why do you like travelling?

S: A lot. I guess it gives you a perspective life, and you can a lot you meet different types of people, hear different languages that you don't understeand. You are begging to see a lot of varieties and world and the people. That's what I like about travelling

R: And do you have any travel dreams?

S: Travel dreams? Yes. My husband and I have a lot of travel dreams about going to for example to Iceland or going to ,somewhere like really wild, not a places that are too crowdie and where everyone likes to go. Places that are adventurous. That's where I like to go

R: I think you prepared less mass tourism, what kind of specific tourism types do you like. Why do you travel usually? What do you want to see in the destination?

S: quiet places, I really like to go to some far away beaches, where that are not part of the summer destinations, or thing like that, or maybe some places for hiking for mounting biking. Think like that

R: And when you travel where do you usually stay?

S: If we have friends or someone, we know, than we stay or we stay in hotel and sometimes in the hotels. Another time we were staying in the hotels

S: And how do you choose your hotel, when you travel somewhere.

R: It depends when you are going, we travelled a lot in Pakistan as well, so it was very different but there cheaper hotels that always mean good facilities as well so there you mostly you end up choosing expensive hotels. Stick with quality.

S: But here in Europe, sometimes you get a cheaper hotel with good facilities so it depends where you are going

R: And where I you going to stay in hotel, what are you looking for in the hotel?

S: Yeah, we don't completely expect, we are not luxury loving people, we really like experience that we are going to have and concentrate less on where we are going to stay not a royal place or very good room or some , we just look for the minimal actually ok clean at least and like a separate toilet and not shared with the for example with to go for a hostel or youth house, you sometimes have to share to room with bigger rooms when you don't go for hard, ... for two people

R: And Can you imagine to go somewhere just for the hotel, hotel that amazing for you to go there just for it?

S: Another nice location?

R: Just for the hotel?

S: I don't think so, No!

R: Why? Did you ... no we had some general question and now we want to talk about hotel, because that's what my thesis concentrated on? Have you ever heard about hotel?

S: No.

R: How do you imagine

S: It's quiet a new term for me. I think I can't guess.

R: Is there any association

S: The boutique I have normally known is for shop. Mostly the shops for clothing, specifically. That's why I cannot associate the boutique hotel with something else.

R: Do you think it will be interesting for you to visit boutique hotel?

S: Yeah, if it's a historical building, if its a and old castle or like building from old times, i would like to go and stay there and to also for the sake for its historical importance.

R: Would you be interested more about the history and building. And what happen there?

S: Yes of course I would like to.

R: Some luxurious what kind of facilities should hotel have for you? Do you know facilities?

S: Like training room or swimming room?

R: Is this important for you?

S: Not really, I guess because those are the things I can easily get when we are home. And we are only at the hotel and we want to have some outdoor experience or an exotic place, we will not stay in the hotel. to go the other thing like. We will, like most probably, Like I am sure we would go there for sleep and then spend the rest of the time out exploring where we actuall want to go

R: Yeah, and have you tried the hotel restaurant?

S: Yes, many times

R: so what is the difference between hotel restaurant and restaurant which is not in your hotel?

S: I guess the hotel restaurant have less variety to offer or sometimes they have very limited menu, like a fixed breakfast and the same foods for lunch or dinner, you really don't have a lot choose from , if you go out for other restaurant you can really choose which kind of food you really want.

R: Let's talk about employees of the hotel, how would you describe a professional employee

S: Professional? Yeah, I guess the one who are prompt in their response. Who actually understend the problem and then are willing to solve the problem, that would be professional. There were not even clean towels. It was a works ever I guess.

R: And did you get any remuneration, how was the problem handled?

S: There was no problem handling at all. And besides, we were only there for some hours. It would be making any differences. We would go to the huge argument with someone or because weren't there for long time. Actually, as we actually needed. There was no point getting into long discussion as we were already checking out in the morning. They did not seem to find solution.

R: But, when you imagine a perfect hotel how the problem should be handled?

S: Maybe, right thing that could do would be to solve the problem right at the spot when you are travelling you already have limited time. When you are travelling somewhere for two days, you cannot make it three days because you have plan. Even if they say you can stay one extra night free of charge, I cannot take because it is not in my plane and I don't have enough time to take anything like that. In a faraway place you can really get some kind of remuneration in that. yeah, but if they want to refund your rent then that would be maybe that some compensation but experience still the bad experience remains in your main years and years. You can never happen to forget that.

R: Yeah, as I told you the boutique hotels they have this kind of nice approach to the guest, they usually call them by name. How would you feel when call you by name and they remember you.

S: I would really like that, because who doesn't like the personalized experience. It gives you kind of more association with the place and you were you want to come the next time as well. That's... that would be good experience

R: Ok so, I know you've been to Spain, do you, can you describe your experience with the services in Spain? Did you've been to some restaurant?

S: Yes I have been to the restaurant, I haven't stayed in hotel

R: It's ok

S: I have eaten in restaurant mostly because in the tourist cities, so there was a lot of variety and it was and I like generally I like Spanish food so it was good experience.

R: Do you think that their, the culture influence the way how they approach the guests? Because people is kind of characteristics for the warm, they are warm and more open

S: Yeah, I guess it does a lot of difference, because certain values in your culture then you also bring it. If you have very dominant cultural hospitality, then of course it would also go to your businesses if you are running the

hotel. That you would definitely include it to your hotel, because people are coming to hotel, from all around the world and you want to show them what's your values are. So, I guess it does have a lot of influence, which culture you come from and what you have been offer as a guest. And if really relates to your generic culture it could also be your another value to your business.

R: And did you had any experience that they didn't understand you language, or English or any language in common?

S: Every time"!

R: Every time?

S: Every time, no one speaks English. Some of my friends had to travel and they had lot of troubles, they checked quiet late in the hotel and nobody understood English, so it Spain it would be problem if you don't understand English.

R: When do you think is the best time for travelling to Spain.

S: I guess it's when you have winters in Denmark, it's like in December, in January, I was there in February was really pleasant and nice. So yeah, I guess in winter time its quiet pleasant its still like 17 and 18 degrees temperature, of course it depends which part you go, but still its ...I would like to go there when there is winter in Denmark and have some, a lot of sun and warm experience

R: And when do you, when you look at Spain what kind of hotels do you imagine, what is your association with Spain?

S: Hotels? I guess those should be nice but also there lot of people have a lot of summer houses and I have been tourists that was all about the summer houses. And it is nice to go there, and of course there was a lot of hotel as well, but I guess hotels should be nice and Spain because tourism is one of their meaning represent , it should be run in the ways yeah. Y

R: You said there are a lot of big hotels; Can you see a boutique hotel in Spain? Do you see it as successful?

S: I think, I and because I didn't know about what it is, so I cannot recall if I have seen one. But I didn't notice

R: Yes, but when you see like small hotel, do you think it has a chance in Spain? Because there are big hotel and big chain on the beach

S: I guess it really depends, how the brand sell themselves, if they... which ...which marketing techniques they adopt, if they go for direct marketing, if they go for really creative marketing strategy, then they could definitely have a chance because people are already there for an experience and not for a business, it would be another experience if they are staying, if they are not very important .. Really add the experience. And they stayed in very historical building. And it does have also of done in certain way. I am a business woman so maybe I am thinking too much business, but I still it could really depend how they position themselves. And how they go about marketing themselves

R: That's it for me. Thank you very much.

g) SOHAIB

R: So can you please introduce yourself?

S: My name is Sohaib and I am from Pakistan, I studied business and engineering from...I am living in Denmark and I am looking for job. I like travelling as well. In Europe I visited Germany Spain...Australia and many more locations as well

R: And, why do you travel?

S: It's because its probably make people relax and also for you feel like exploring different cultures, different people, different food. So that's why like travelling.

R: And what kind of travels do you prefer, summer or more sightseeing

S: Actually it depends a lot on type of people you are moving with. but I prefer sightseeing. And I really like travelling during summers.

R: Ok, And what kind of accommodation do you usually stay in?

S: Also, because travelling is sometimes very expensive, then you need to picture that you are in your budget. So I prefer staying at my friends, but I can find any I prefer some cheap, but good one like bed and breakfast.

R: So have you ever stayed in hostel for example?

S: Yeah, I have been staying like for example, I do not remember the name like Danhostel here in Aalborg.

R: I know which one, but I do not know the name

S: I was staying in Youth hostel as well. All over the Europe and Scotland, Yeah I was there I have some experience with staying in hotels. Mostly I prefer to stay to my friends, mostly because of the company. I feel different. In addition, I have my friend all around, so it makes sense to stay at their place.

R: Do you have also some experience with more luxurious hotels? Four or 5-star hotels.

S: Honestly speaking not in Europe. Not in Europe, but I have been staying in some high-class hotel in Australia. Some 7-stars hotels. Like for example Hilton hotels and Marie time hotels. But in Europe the best time I have stayed is Holiday inn and Premium Inn, it was very good hotel but not 5-star hotels I think it was just 4-star hotel.

R: And what do you like when you stay in the hotel?

S: First the location of the hotel and second the convenience of the hotel, the cleanliness. I prefer clean room and

S: Depends on, I never actually think so much about that, but of food for example what kind of food do you offer in your breakfast so I can categorize like location first then how clean is the hotel. And of course the hospitality of the staff it really matters to me, the behaviour

R: So you mentioned some kind of categories you concentrate on while choosing the Do you check them online, these kind of cleanliness or

S: Yeah, I really use to read a lot of reviews before I just go to any before I make any booking, so there are like couple of websites that I like TripAdvisor and couple of more websites.

R: And do you like to buy your hotel through some pages or do you go straight to page of the hotel and do you buy like that

S: Actually, I never actually..For example one of the hotels in UK, I actually find the name of the hotel in TripAdvisor but I did not book it through TripAdvisor, but I booked directly through hotel website. OK. Because, you were so much concerned about Spain I think Spain is your area, I wanted to add about Spain, In Spain I did not have a good experience. The hotel weren't so good, some of them very costly and some of them were very reasonable price but very shitty. So you know I didn't get some good reviews from most of the hotels, I went there and I spent two nights in the hotel. My friend left and I actually visited two or 3 hotel to try to analyse that's one look apparently.....!!!!

R: So, did you have any straight experience with Spanish employees, how you would describe the Spanish employees in general in hotels.

S: Actually, honestly speaking I have never had any bad experience with any of the staff. Wherever I went they are always polite. This is what you expect from hotel staff. Yes one time I have this negative experience but am from employee site, because she cannot communicate in English. She was only speaking Spanish. It was difficult for me to explain for how long I want to stay in your hotel and what kind of meals I would prefer and what kind of accommodation I would like to prefer, but that was just language barrier not rudeness.

R: This was kind of my question like, how do you think it should be handled when they doesn't speak your language? Or when you don't have any language in common? As English for example.

S: As a visitor when you go somewhere you need to prepare, you need to do your homework and just to make clear if you just come across the street where there is a language barrier I think the best way is to use Google translator just try to explain something that you want, maybe to draw some figures and pictures, like maybe for example there is no interpreter nearby, or just try to find somebody who can speak a little bit of language in common. So it makes sense if you just look for someone who speaks both languages. I have to figure out my problems

R: And how would you describe professional employees?

S. Professional employees? They greet you with a smile, they are always polite whether it's their fault or not. Professionalism even demands to tell you each confidential charges, no livestock they say... this is the cost. This has to be included in final cost as well. This is not professional it is like just you are cheating. Professional demands that you are polite, you are honest each, and everything up front and I would say if you ask for something, if you can show me way around on the map or something like this. It is a very common question from a tourist side, so if you are on the in the lobby, any hotels lobby if ask ok can you show me where is on the map something, blab ballad...I you are being curious you should have done this as well. Although this is not your job, this is professionally demanded that you are nice to your guests. That is all. Last thing I would like to add is especially the room service. They should be on time and they should make sure they are using right things. I heard so many stories where the room service are washing dirty dishes in the hotel washroom. This is of course not acceptable, and I saw so many videos scandalised videos. This is not acceptable, this is not professional attitude! Yeah

R: So you have been introduced to the term boutique hotel. There are also known to be calling their guests by name. How do you feel about that?

S: I would feel very special. It would feel like very nice, if he or she know my name. That very nice for me it sounds like they are giving individual attention to people. I would like that

R: And what kind of this kind of high quality hotels?

S: From high quality hotels I would prefer a big living room a nice internet connection very comfortable beds some chocolates coffee staff a good one not a crap one in the kitchen shops. A lobby with a coffee table outside a lobby, and facilities like sauna, bath, and access to gym swimming pool. Yeah and I would expect from some luxurious hotels that they come that they clean your kitchen and bathroom regularly. Every day they should not skip anything Yeah and lastly that is my preference along. I would like to have a TV in my room and every bedroom. For example if I can tell you my... I rented a 7-star hotel in Australia, I had a good TV in a lounge in the living room, and I had ok TV in the bedroom. However, it was not unacceptable for me because I was paying so much I demand each and everything perfect in each room. That's why I am paying so. Lastly, the location of

the luxurious hotel matters a lot. I would for example rent a room that faces a seaside so that is an oceanic room hotel; I prefer that as well as windows

R: And when they are missing some of these facilities as you unmentioned, is it disadvantage for you to choose a hotel.

S: I would say not so much, they are not so much of high priority to me, but of course I would like ok, If I have to evaluate between two hotels A And B in often all these hotel, of course it would prefer

R: These kind of boutique hotels they have a smaller number of rooms. What do you think is the advantage of the smaller hotel in compare to big chain hotels?

S: Small hotels? I think would say the price, because smaller hotels. Most of the smaller hotels are worth for money. For example if I want to pay 30 Euros per night, I think its worthiest going for. I would have to spend like 150 euro for night. I think its big difference, I am saving lot of money, and I would put that money somewhere else. Maybe same eating. Some food you know some nice places like bars asleep, things like this that is a big disadvantage. And second thing is in small hotels for example in hostels you know like, when you are visiting some small hostels, you make some kind of community as well will meet some new people you can make some friends, this is from that part of world you can just enjoy it more, that you would enjoy in luxury hotel

R: And when we talk especially about this luxury boutique hotel, do you think is targeted for everybody? Ors it for some special group of people?

S: If you look for this luxury yes. I do not think everybody would like to go for that because is very expensive yeah. So for me I think is for particular segment not for everybody. something interesting in some certain budget rate that is good and affordable and really makes me feel happy as wee that price value for money you know , so like for example in y thesis I was reading one terminology disruptive innovation means like, As a business man you are offering to your clients three different things. One: customized things like for example want one double bad instead on two single beds, they can say it. Customizable for anything I want. Cheap price, not cheap price means very affordable price not like very cheap and good price, and thirty quality of service. When you combine three different things in one object or one project, actually people will come to that. This is the thing this is like disruptive innovation. In addition, if you are working on that people welcome to you of course. In addition, I alas look for these things, like value for money. Hotel should be always worth for these things

R: But is it the worth it for money, because boutique hotels are built in some historical building or some castles renovated for hotels. Is it interesting for you? Would you pay money for that experience?

S: I think so yeah. It really depends, because I really dontlike travelling alone, I prefer travelling with someone, and it depends on that kind of company you travelling. Yes. Maybe yes. I remember staying in France, there is a palace, it is beautiful, and I really do not remember the name. &like for example if I would have a chance like for example to stay in the palace, in historical building, that would be nice. Of course, I would pay for that. I think Europe if full of historical unique architecture.

R: But would you be interested to hear more about design and the history from the employees?

S: probably yes, if I am staying in that hotel, and that is my reason for the stay in that hotel yes, I would love to hear for example some history regarding that. However, honestly speaking, I would like to employees of the hotels to be not so much intervening in my... So like ok, to some extent. However, not like ok, this is that thing, thesis that thing. That would be very annoying for me: Just for some extend, I am going to chcek in and they really need to do like just three, four quick lines, this is the hotels this is the history of this building. I you would like to hear more about that, that I can should you at your preferred time. You know. That would be good for me. Grabbing me when I am

R: Yeah. O.k. has let us talk about little bit about Spain. What do you think is the best time to travel to Spain?

S: Summers are hot and winters are not so Gouda well, i would prefer to be there in January.

R: Yeah

S: January in Spain is not so cold and not so warm, because summers are very hotel. I went to Barcelona and Madrid, and one more place. In addition, Barcelona was ok, but sometimes it was very hot. So Warm

R: And what do you think the Spain has to offer for international travellers?

S: oh, cheap food, very cheap city, especially Barcelona, some crazy people very different culture they are full of life, some good beaches of course, and water is very beautiful also in Spain the ocean wirer. Yes, history. The Spain is full of historical architecture, that is also main sea site and their bull fighting is very famous, I am not interested in that that is the bigger attraction for most of the tourists. These are the few things like climate o food heap shopping options and historical architecture. Also, is there a culture influencing how they behave as professionals.

S: Their culture? I have no idea. I am just

R: I mean because they are more vivid and more open like personality, personnel, and personally Spanish people. So do you think is this kind of culture differences influencing, how they behave in professional work, so you feel that Spanish employees are different from the world?

S: I do not think so. Yes but they apparently answering nice, like for example was in one of the Alicante, and is very close to Barcelona, I went to in one of the pizzas shop and the guy was like, you are new here. He was very nice to me, he was kind of extrovert. He had had this extrovert quality. And telling me like: Ok, so have you explore this area of Alicante, and ok, what kind of pizza you prefer, and then like you know, while making pizza told me which places you should go. That's kind of things are very attracts you appeals you. However, from practise, I do not think so. They really maintain professionalism as well.

R: Ok also, when you imagine Spain, what kind of hotels is typical for Spain? Or according to you

S: typical. What kind of? I think some bed and breakfast they are good for me. Therefore, do you think these kind of small hotels have a chance in Spain: the boutique hotels the luxury?

S: Yes, think so, because Spain is a wonderful city, and always full of tourists so there is no doubt that people would stop do this thing, And now people have some money, so there are many thing is Spain. Some many reasonable accommodations, so you are tired after a one day, so if the hotel is good providing good service like big hotels, they have some good business opportunities Spain. However, would say, that there is very tough competition.

R: So now, after this discussion. How old you describe them in three words?

S: Ok, I would be with words: It should be value for money, means like cheap, good location and polite staff.

R: Ok, and my last questions, do you thing that because some of the hotels are boutique and they don't put it in the name that they are boutique do you thing, how this name influence all the image of the hotel? When you put there or not.

S: For me, it does not matter. If the reviews are good about the hotel. I don't care. It is a boutique hotel, it is just like no, and it does not matter. However, for some people likely friends for some friend not i know they do care about the fancy words. It makes a difference for them. For me it does not matter, I would definitely go for reviews, in stated of name of the hotels.

R: Do you have any more comments?

S: Of course not

h) VIVIEN

R: Can you please introduce yourself?

V: My name is Vivien Bodnár, I am 22 years old and I was working as receptionist in hotel before, but now I am looking for other work

R: And why do usually travel, what makes you to consider to go abroad?

V: I really like and want to know other countries, cultures, people.

R: And when you choose your hotel, how it can impress you? What kind of holiday do you prefer?

V: I usually prefer active kind of holidays; I like to go to some sun and sea places.

R: Do you have travel dreams?

V: Ha-ha, I would like to... Yes. I would love to go to Caribbean islands and also maybe Niagara Falls when I will have more money.

R: And, where do you usually stay during your holiday?

V: As student, I proffered low-cost hotels, or I used to stay in friends' house. But know I am looking also, or sometimes for better accommodation as well.

R: And when you plan your travels, how do you usually choose your accommodation in foreign country?

V: I use internet a lot, I think the best way is to look with... by searching on booking.com and TripAdvisor and it's very easy. You can also see some comments and negative reviews to hotel you want to go actually.

R: What do you like about stay in hotel?

V: In my opinion, it is comfort.. That's very important for me actually.

R: And according to your perception what are the main elements you concentrate on while choosing the hotel?

V: In good situation, because sometimes I took some plaices there were far and it's not very good when you want to see a lot of things. Also price with value, comfort of the room. And also, when I thing the inside the hotel i would say tidiness is important.

R: What comes to your mind when you hear boutique hotel? How would you describe them in 3 words?

V: Familiar, quality service, small number of rooms

R: Have you ever visited boutique hotel in Spain? If yes what is your experience? Would you visit boutique hotel again?

V: Only where worked. It had quality service, comfortable rooms and familiar atmosphere

R: How important is atmosphere in any hotel for you?

V: I would say, it's very important because it can help me to feel like home: I really like to by comfortable and not be, not feel welcomed. You know what I mean.

R: Yes, yes I know, understead .And when it comes to other thing, how many rooms should hotel have?

V: Depends on the business goals. Sun & sea resorts should have more rooms; city and boutique hotels should have less rooms.

R: Well, And when we talk especially about these luxury places, what do you think, what facilities should boutique hotel have?

V: It would be very nice, very comfortable if the hotel have Wi-fi, which you can use gratis anytime, also the reception should work without stopping. Maybe the better room service and breakfast, concierge, It always depends on the stars that the hotel has.

R: What facilities should not boutique hotel have?

V: If it is a 5-star hotel, it should have all facilities possible

R: And what do you expect from the hotel restaurant?

V: For me it's important to have room service, food that fits into the type of the hotel, regional food if possible, quality service, comfort.

R: Lets talks about the employees, what do you think... what role etiquette and protocol plays in success of boutique hotel segment?

V: I think as i understead that, politeness, patience with the guest mainly

R: And, can you imagine a situation, what is your hotel impression, when the employees do not speak your language or English?

V: For me it's a negative point, because they should speak English at least, that's kind of expectation these days, you should not work in tourism if you don't speak English.

R: So, can you as you said like this is one of the disadvantage for hotel, when we talk more about them, how would you describe a professional employee of a boutique hotel?

V: Polite, willing to help the guest, kind with the guest as well as with his or her colleagues, knows the city and its attractions, nice appearance

R: So, when there is a situation, could you imagine some problems that happened to you during your stay...how the problems in hotel should be handled?

V: Depends what kind of problem it is, but all of them should be handled professionally

R: How do you feel about calling you by name by employees?

V: I think it makes a good impression in a guest, feels like he is important

R: How big of importance, do you put to hotel choice when you travel abroad?

V: Hm, I would say... It depends on my travelling goals, if I am planning to spend more time in the hotel, using its facilities like spa and pools, it is very important to be a good hotel. If I am going to visit the city, only use the hotel for sleep, it is not that important

R: But would you be interested to hear more about design and the history from the employees and also design, structure, and location?

V: Yes, it is always interesting know some background info

R: When you travel to Spain, what are you looking for in hotel?

V: What do you mean, ok. So, I would say, maybe kindness, tidiness, and willingness in the employees to help me in any question I have.

R: And when we are talking about the holiday in Spain, Vivien, when would you say is the best time to travel to Spain?

V: I prefer summer, because I love sun... to lie on the beach, and getting sun. That's what I prefer, but sometimes I go also to visit the city and see the history so that's better in spring, because it's not that hot at that time.

R: And, what do you think, are the advantages in choosing boutique hotel instead of big chain hotels?

V: when I travel to Spain Familiar atmosphere, sometimes can be cheaper

R: What are the disadvantages in choosing boutique hotel instead of big chain hotels, when you travel to Spain?

V: If it is not a well-known chain, you cannot guarantee the quality

R: Do you see differences in approach of employees of boutique hotels in Spain and other countries?

V: No, I don't think so. I have only good experience and I haven't see anything different.

R: D you think that boutique hotels are successful idea for Spanish tourism.

V: I would say, for visitors of the well-known cities yes. From my experience in reception, visiting boutique hotels were coming back, I mean they been there before. So it means they like it and they want to visit the places again. It's kind of different for them. The rather stay there because they know the service is good and the place is beautiful, so is kind of prestige as well.

R: Ok, thank you very much. That was my last question.

V: Ok, good luck!

5.10 Appendix 5: Recordings