Digital storytelling in English for tourism: a new way of bridging the gap between the university and the professional world

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The purpose of this article is to describe the experience achieved when implementing the practical classes of English for tourism so as to bridge the gap between the professional world of the tourism industry and what students learn at the university. The purpose of this article is threefold. First we will introduce the concept of digital storytelling (Lambert (1997), Gregori-Signes (2007-2010), Alcantud-Díaz (2007-2011) and briefly describe some of the projects that have already been developed at the University of Valencia as well as the use of digital stories in the promotion tourism products. We will then proceed to argue that digital storytelling can be considered as a productive type of activity which fits the demands of the CEFL (Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning) with regard to implementing the use of new technology within the curriculum at the same time that it helps to improve traditional skill development, mainly speaking and writing along with researching, collaborative tasks and working with computers. Thirdly we will describe and discuss actual examples of digital stories produced by undergraduate students registered in the subject of Communication in English Language in Tourism. The students were asked to develop an original product related to the industry of tourism and to promote it in two ways: by means of a digital story and a brochure.

Tourism, language and representation. A linguistic and semiotic-anthropological approach to analyze six mini-guides of European destinations

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Tourism phenomenon today implies many kind of languages, depending on aims and needs of the communication context. Tourism industry uses natural and visual languages, creating a kind of shared and accepted metalanguage. The latter includes too specific uses of the natural languages for the communication of tourism products. Languages used to describe a destination are particularly interesting because they build a powerful representation of the place able to direct choices of the travellers. Touristic guides usually use a mix of languages and also from this point of view they offer an interesting field to investigate. This study proposes a comparative analysis of six touristic mini-guides contained in a Lonely Planet magazine in Spanish language. These pocket guides present six European cities and each one has short summary sheets with basic informations and suggestions for the travellers. Through texts and pictures the guides create a “synthesis” of the destination. It means a representation that includes or excludes linguistic and cultural elements. This paper will analyze these mini-guides using a mixed approach, both linguistics and semiotic-anthropological in order to understand how the representation of the place is built. On one hand the cognitive
linguistics approach can analyze linguistic choices (linguistic loans, figures of the speech, technical words, etc.) of the authors and paratextual elements. On the other hand a semiotic and anthropological approach can analyze the texts and the pictures finding symbolic aspects and cultural elements implied in the way to interpret and represent a destination. This analysis let understand better not only the system of representation of some European destination used in tourism communication. It is also possible to identify the “ideal reader-tourist” to whom the authors of the guides are talking. Furthermore a comparative analysis of six mini-guides can be useful to understand some dynamics typical of the modern cultural tourism.

AULA MÀSTER / MAIN ROOM

Der Unterricht von Deutsch für Tourismusstudenten in der Auslandssituation: ein Beitrag zum Unterricht der gesprochenen Sprache

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De turismo por Mallorca: al (re)descubrimiento de la historia y cultura portuguesas

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A lo largo de esta última década el turista portugués ha venido descubriendo en Mallorca un destino seductor para sus vacaciones por varios motivos pero, partiendo de una muestra muy representativa de las ofertas turísticas que encontramos, nos damos cuenta de que, por norma, se intenta captar la atención del cliente mediante dos modalidades concretas: la oferta masiva de sol y playa, o la promoción de una Mallorca exclusiva, con hoteles paradisíacos, y una naturaleza diversificada y seductora. En estas ofertas falta una componente que motive al turista portugués a redescubrir en Mallorca una relación íntima y estrecha con su propia cultura, ya sea a través del contacto cultural con una lengua –su lengua propia, el catalán- apenas conocida por la mayoría de los portugueses, de la gastronomía o del paisaje. En suma, el viaje turístico a las Baleares puede transformarse en una aventura que nos permitirá descubrir algunos puntos de contacto entre Mallorca y Portugal.
China as an Outbound Tourist Market and its national spoken language Mandarin

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Having taught the Chinese language and its culture to non-Chinese for more than 12 years, and having had students from different regions of the world, I would like to share my opinions on the evolution of the importance of the Chinese language to the world, and particularly to the context “International Tourism”. Tourism in China has greatly expanded over the last few decades since the beginning of its economic reforms. The emergence of a newly rich middle class and an easing of restrictions on movement by the Chinese authorities are both fueling the travel boom. No one will deny that China is now one of the world's most-watched and hottest outbound tourist markets. According to the WTO (World Tourism Organization), in 2020 China will become the largest tourist country and the fourth largest for overseas travel. In terms of total outbound travel spending, China is currently ranked fifth and is expected to be the fastest growing in the world from 2006 to 2015, jumping into the number two slot for total travel spending by 2015.

So how is language to do with the Chinese tourism? When we want to attract the Chinese outbound tourist market, one of the most important things to do is to be able to communicate with them our attractions. Why is it worth the money to come to visit our countries? What can you benefit? Is it safe to visit our countries? Can you get help easily if unfortunately you are robbed or have accident in our countries?

All these are the concerns that affect the Chinese to choose an outbound trip, and to a great extent “a common language” is the first step of everything. Even though English is becoming more and more popular in China, most Chinese people do not understand English very well. Due to the educational system many Chinese near and in urban areas can read and write but they may have difficulty with spoken English. If we must use a Western language to present ourselves in websites or in any publicity, English is definitely the first choice, although as I have said, it is not the best. The best to me is Mandarin, our national spoken language. Despite the fact that we Chinese may speak different dialects in different provinces, Mandarin is known by almost all of the Chinese, and is virtually universal in Mainland China. To grab the Chinese market, either you wait till the Chinese population reaches the communicable English level which might take years or decades, or you humble yourself to learn a bit of their national language.

In the conference, I will sum up the characteristics of Mandarin, and give a hint of how to learn it in a fun way. By learning the language, we also benefit by understanding more about the Chinese people and their culture, and that is one of the beauties escorted by tourism.
Con idiomas por el mundo: claves para el avance profesional y personal

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El objetivo de esta ponencia es ponderar las ventajas de una estancia en el extranjero, ya sea por trabajo o formación, para lo cual es imprescindible el dominio de idiomas, no sólo como vehículo de comunicación sino también para la adaptación al país y para la promoción profesional.

Actualmente, en este mundo globalizado, de crecientes relaciones económicas internacionales y empresas más competitivas, están muy valorados los profesionales que han ejercido su trabajo en el extranjero. El conocimiento de otras culturas y costumbres, el nivel de idiomas, las diferentes perspectivas, la interrelación multicultural con otros profesionales del sector y la formación en sectores directa e indirectamente relacionados, son habilidades que tienen gran valor para las empresas y que serán claves para el avance profesional. Estos profesionales llegan a establecer una relación de compromiso con la empresa que debe considerarse una inversión de futuro.

En una segunda parte, la comunicación trata las bases para la adaptación personal de los expatriados en el país de destino, analizando diversos comportamientos, como la actitud positiva ante lo diferente, el espíritu de aventura, el tener una mente abierta y respetuosa e incluso la importancia de una buena gestión personal del tiempo de ocio.