

Promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence through Intercultural Tourism Brochures

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Abstract

This paper aimed at promoting intercultural communicative competence (ICC) through designing intercultural tourism brochures. This is expected to raise the awareness of the tourism stakeholders to the necessity of designing the intercultural tourism brochures and the tourists to insist on having pre- intercultural knowledge about the culture they are intending to have an excursion. Consequently, tourism will develop and prosper on a solid ground of intercultural understanding and diversity. The methodology of this paper was based on suggesting some tourism brochures about six different cultures and destinations. Each brochure includes, the culture, a photo of one of the landmarks, a quote from one of the icons of the targeted culture, an ICC concept, the cultural purpose and “Dos” and Don’ts”. This paper is original since it presents new and creative ideas, applies new method of promoting both tourism and intercultural understanding, and even provides a new vision for developing tourism sector. The study came up with sample tourism brochures, which interpret the concepts of intercultural communicative competence alongside promoting tourism. Consequently, the researcher recommends adopting these tourism brochures by both tourism stakeholders and individuals.

Keywords: Tourism brochures, intercultural competence, promoting.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 1st century is called the tourism century since tourism industry has been prospering at an alarming rate; there is an insurmountable increase in the tourism flow (Jovanović, 2016). More surprisingly, the number of global tourists is witnessing the staggering increase of 1, 2 billion (United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2016). With this remarkable increase of tourism together with its various types, i.e. cultural, recreational, religious, medical, scientific, business, etc..., some challenges might arise, which, if not coped with properly, might trigger intercultural misunderstanding, embarrassment, and even stereotypes (Raymond & Hall, 2019, Martin & Nakayama, 2014).

Therefore to keep up the momentum of tourism industry, the intercultural communicative competence should be promoted through tourism, and through the introduction of new intercultural terms into tourism through tourism brochures.

This paper aim at raising the awareness of the travel companies and tourists on equal footing on the importance of incorporating intercultural concepts into the area of tourism through tourism brochures.

1.1 Significance of the study

This study will undoubtedly raise the awareness of the tourism stakeholders to the necessity of designing the intercultural tourism brochures and the tourists to insist on having pre- intercultural knowledge about the culture they are intending to have an excursion. This will, in turn, promote mutual cultural understanding and dispel stereotypes. Consequently, tourism will develop and prosper on a solid ground of intercultural understanding and diversity.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Tourism is solely regarded as a means of recreation. However, this perception of culture should be intertwined with the definition of tourism as a cultural tool.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of tourism

Tourism is defined as:

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008). This definition entails the following concepts:

- Tourism is a cultural concept, which includes beliefs, knowledge, customs morals and all other capacities acquired by individuals as members of this universe (Taylor, 1871).
- Tourism contributes to the economic growth if it is an integral part of an overall development strategy (Du, Lew& Ng, 2016).
- Tourism is a human activity, which transcends everything like color, creed, and belief and builds up mutual understanding and universal brotherhood (Srivastava, 2011).

2.2 Definition of intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

Deardorff defines ICC as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (2006). Byram (2000) and Benett (1986, 1993) suggested some components of ICC, which could be summarized into two major stages: ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. Both Byram and Bennett aimed at building up knowledge, attitudes, and skills so that individuals can move from the stage of ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. More specifically, the individual has to develop certain skills and attitudes to shift from one to level to another in the ethnocentric stage, i.e. denial, defense, and minimization. Similarly, the individuals have to develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills to shift from one level to another in the ethnorelative stage, i.e. acceptance, adaptation, and integration.

2.3 The relationship between tourism and ICC

Intercultural communication helps tourists appreciate other cultures, and understand their culture as well. In addition, tourism is an actual experience of culture. Through tourism, individuals know more about their culture, others’ cultures, and the multilayered relationships between them (Albu, 2015). More interestingly, culture affects the norms and patterns of behavior of various cultures, including the role and importance of culture in the process of creating communication styles. Intercultural communication in this cultural context is considered as an interaction between 'us' and 'them', friend and foe, in which cultural exchange takes place (Dimitrova, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

This paper aims to enhance all the components of tourism together with incorporating the ICC components, stages and levels to achieve the main goal of tourism, which is shifting from the stage of denying other cultures to the stage of integrating into them.

Therefore, the researcher suggests some tourism brochures about six different cultures and destinations.

Each brochure includes, the culture, a photo of one of the landmarks, a quote from one of the icons of the targeted culture, an ICC concept, the cultural purpose and “Dos” and Don’ts”.

RESULTS

After spending some time designing the tourism brochures, the researcher has come up with the following intercultural tourism brochures:

Brochure (1)

Culture: India

Concept: Integration

Purpose of the brochure: When faced with a choice about how I am going to respond to a given situation, I am able to shift between two or more cultural perspectives and consciously make a choice to act from one of these cultural contexts.



Taj Mahal

A quote

"We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. This is the divine mystery supreme. A wonderful thing it is and the source of our happiness. We need not wait to see what others do" (Ghandi).

Dos and Don'ts

- Never point with your index finger, particularly at sacred items or paintings. Instead, motion with your chin or extend your hand, palm flat and skyward, at the object you're referencing.
- Never point with your index finger, particularly at sacred items or paintings. Instead, motion with your chin or extend your hand, palm flat and skyward, at the object you're referencing.
- Avoid touching people with the left hand, as it is considered unclean and will cause insult. Keep this in mind and use your right hand when

giving or accepting any object. To use both hands is even more respectful.

- If you are invited to someone's home, it is customary to bring a small gift such as a box of sweets.
- Don't feel offended if you are asked personal questions, such as "How much do you earn?" "Are you married?" or "Do you have kids?" Questions like these are considered common conversation.
- Sit cross-legged or kneel on the floor while in a temple or holy place. If you must extend your legs, point them away from sacred icons. Never turn your backside to a religious statue.

Brochure (2)

Culture: USA

Concept: Acceptance

Purpose of the brochure: I acknowledge and respect cultural difference. Cultural diversity is a preferable human condition.



Statue of Liberty

"I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character" (Martin Luther King).

Dos and Don'ts

- Remember, whether you're at a restaurant, bar, or in a taxi, it's important to leave a tip, especially if you've received good service.
- Be prepared to pay more than what's displayed.

- Don't visit without health/ travel insurance.
- Turn off your mobile data.

Brochure (3)

Culture: Turkey

Concept: Adaptation

Purpose of the brochure: I am able to temporarily give up my own worldview to participate in another worldview.



The Blue Mosque

• **A quote**

But foremost, I do not subscribe to the view that Islamic culture and democracy cannot be reconciled (Recep Tayyip Erdogan).

Dos and Don'ts

- Be patient during negotiations; they can move slow and encompassing.
- Don't signal "no" by shaking your head from side to side because it means that you didn't understand; a Turkish "no" is indicated by raising the eyebrows and may be accompanied by the sound tsk and/ or looking up.
- Turkish hospitality is legendary; if you do want to host a dinner, make sure to send a written invitation to your guests.

- Always bring gifts when invited to a private home; gifts are often left near the door or presented with excuses regarding the worthiness of the gift.
- Women should not cross their legs while facing another person but keep them parallel on the ground.

Brochure (4)

Culture: Spain

Concept: Denial

Purpose of the brochure: I do really notice cultural differences.



Al- Hambra Palace

• **A quote**

"To make oneself hated is more difficult than to make oneself loved" (Pablo Picasso).

Dos and Don'ts

- Learn Some Local Lingo.
- Expect Quiet During Siesta.
- Expect to Eat Late.
- Greet People Properly.

- Ignore Regional Differences.
- Don't Feel Pressured About Tipping.
- Don't: Expect Punctuality.

Brochure (5)

Culture: South Africa

Concept: Defense

Purpose of the brochure: I am surrounded by culturally diverse people.



- **A quote**

“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite” (Nelson Mandella).

- **Dos and Don'ts**

- Don't Assume the Wildlife is Tame.
- Don't Wander Around Unknown Areas.
- Do Make the Most of the Amazing Food.

- Do Get Out of the City.
- Do Get Insurance.
- Do Eat a Braai.
- Do Shop Locally.

- **Brochure (6)**

Culture: China

Concept: minimization

Purpose of the brochure: I understand that differences exist but believe that we should focus on similarities. We are all human.



The Great Wall of China

- **A quote**

"If a man wants to succeed in his work, that is, to achieve the anticipated results, he must bring his ideas into correspondence with the laws of the objective external world; if they do not correspond, he will fail in his practice. After he fails, he draws his lessons, corrects his ideas to make them correspond to the laws of the external world, and can thus turn failure into success; this is what is meant by “failure is the mother of success” and “a fall into the pit, a gain in your wit” (Mao Tse Tung).

- **Dos and Don'ts**

- Avoid using white, which they associate with ghosts and death.
- Avoid giving gifts like clocks, umbrellas, and handkerchief.
- Number 4 is associated with death.

5. DISCUSSION

Brochure (1) encompasses the three basic components of tourism. That is, the cultural aspect is incorporated through the inclusion of an ICC concept,

which is integration together with the ICC purpose, which is integrating into others' cultures and the ability to act consciously in one or more cultures. In addition, the economic dimension is represented by attaching a picture of India's landmark, Taj Mahal, which is a marvelous touristic attraction. Similarly, this brochure uses "Dos and Don'ts" section to highlight the function of tourism as a human activity, through which people communicate their beliefs, customs, traditions, cuisines, etc.... The icon of India, Ghandi, is also quoted to underline the importance of changing ourselves to integrate into others' cultures.

Similarly, brochure (2) follows the same approach in promoting the American culture. That is to say, the ICC concept of acceptance with the purpose of accepting cultural differences is incorporated. Likewise, the economic motive is also included through pasting the picture of the Statue of Liberty, one America's most eye-catching attraction. For human mutual understanding and avoiding intercultural embarrassment, some guidelines are added regarding tipping, added taxes, health insurance, and turning off mobile data. The icon of human rights, Martin Luther King, is also quoted to underscore the necessity to accept people no matter how they look or believe; it is his dream.

On the same track, brochure (3) highlights the ICC concept of adaptation alongside the purpose of the individuals' readiness to give up their own view for the sake of others. It displays the picture of the Blue Mosque in Turkey as one of the Muslims attractions, which attracts the Muslims worldwide. Some tips are also included to avoid intercultural understanding like the Turkish hospitality, women's specific sitting behavior and some significant facial signals. The icon of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, is also quoted confirm the Islamic culture and democracy can be reconciled.

The Spanish culture is also promoted in brochure (4). The brochure interprets the ICC concept of acknowledging cultural differences as opposed to the concept of denial. This occurs through quoting the legend of the art in Spain and the World, Pablo Picasso, who has disseminated the concept of love as opposed to hatred. The picture of Al- Hambra Palace is attached to signify the tolerance between religions and cultures. Some do's and don'ts are listed regarding siestas, meals habits, greeting, tipping, punctuality and ignoring regional differences.

In brochure (5), the promotion of the South African culture is presented through the photo of the wildlife for those obsessed with safari and wildlife. In addition, the ICC concept of defense alongside the theme of the ability to live with diverse people are included. Similarly, the icon of South Africa, Nelson Mandella, is quoted to pinpoint the innate property of love among cultures. Some intercultural guidelines are also displayed

regarding health insurance, animals' behavior, sightseeing, shopping and eating a Braai.

As for, brochure (6), China is promoted through one of the wonders of the world, the Great Wall of China. The targeted ICC concept is minimization, in which people should focus on similarities though differences exist. Likewise, the icon of China, Mao Tse Tung, is quoted to enhance the idea that individual must bring their ideas into correspondence with the laws of the objective external world. Some do's and don'ts also incorporated regarding the Chinese beliefs with respect to myths and death.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Tourism stakeholders should incorporate ICC to produce more eyes –catching brochures and promotion.
- Tourism stakeholders should consider ICC tourism brochures to build up mutual intercultural understanding.
- Individuals are advised to insist on having such intercultural brochures if they intend to enjoy a more meaningful trip or excursion.

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