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Book Review

**Stoian Claudia Elena. 2015. THE DISCOURSE OF TOURISM
AND NATIONAL HERITAGE: A CONTRASTIVE STUDY
FROM A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE. Newcastle upon Tyne:
Cambridge Scholars Publishing, ISBN: 978-1-4438-8219-4,
pp. 435**

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Tourism, interculturality and online promotion are current topics in the globalised society we live in, and have been the focus of many studies throughout the years (Buhalis 1998; Calvi & Mapelli 2011; Crișan 2013; Francesconi 2014; Hall 1976, 2000; Hall & Hall 1990; Hiippala 2007; Lewis 2004; Neuliep 2006; Pierini 2008; Șerbănescu 2007; Tomlison 2002; Theobald 2005; World Tourism Organization & the European Travel Commission 2009). Continuing this tradition, the present book brings new insights into these fields and, at the same time, provides practical suggestions to professionals. The study analyses the discourse of online tourism, considering institutional and commercial websites in Romania, Spain and Great Britain that promote their national UNESCO World Heritage Sites on the international market. The multimodal analysis deals with both image and language within the framework provided by the systemic functional linguistics (Halliday 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen 2004; Kress and van Leeuwen 2006). Taking into account the types of promotion, multimodality and interculturality used in the samples constituting the corpus of the research, the author compares the results of the analysis and draws valuable conclusions.

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The present book is based on Stoian's PhD thesis, and is divided in four parts. The first part introduces the study, its motivation and research objectives. It also presents a review of the most important literature in the fields under discussion.

The second part focuses on different topics, such as tourism, promotional tourism discourse, multimodal discourse analysis and culture. It goes into details, referring to cultural tourism, destination branding, online tourism, online promotion, the relation between language, image and tourism promotion, the theory of the metafunctions, visual design theory, cultural variability, culture and discourse. This part concludes with a summary of the ideas presented so far, situating the research in the current context and highlighting its aims.

The third part of the book is the actual study, which begins with the presentation of the methodology of research, and ends with the presentation of the results of the analysis carried on the institutional and commercial corpora. Thus, the author proposes a new way to analyse and interpret websites, by combining systemic functional linguistics with social semiotics. The selected corpora are both studied quantitatively from a three-layered perspective, i.e. linguistic, visual and multimodal, and interpreted qualitatively by linking the national characteristics of web promotion to the national cultural patterns. Apart from adding and reiterating existing concepts and methods in the fields of linguistics, semiotics, multimodality, interculturality and tourism, the author focuses on the construction of the websites, describing their content, layout and design. These are further connected to online promotion and marketing by applying the well-known AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model (OMT 2005) to the tourist websites making up the corpus of the present study. In other words, Stoian analyses the websites, particularly their homepage, by looking at how Attention, Interest, Desire and Action are aroused in the user that might be the potential tourist and/or client. The results of the research are clearly summarised in approximately 60 tables, particular attention being paid to the promotional strategies of the two different tourist agents (institutional and commercial), the national characteristics of web promotion of the three countries (Romania, Spain and Great Britain), and to the cultural differences outlined by the multimodal analysis of the selected websites.

The last part presents the conclusions reached by the author at the end of the research. It summarises the results and emphasises their possible practical implications for online tourism. Thus, the author considers that a better understanding of the appropriate choices in terms of linguistics, visuals, multimodality, culture and communicative style can make the promotion of tourism on the Internet more successful, as they all contribute to the creation of a country's national brand. Different choices lead to different messages, which can be felicitous or not. That is why the book highlights the necessity of websites owners to hire professionals having

knowledge of graphics, online communication, linguistic and visual communicative strategies, public orientation or marketing. Furthermore, it provides professionals with tools so that they can take better advantage of the possibilities offered by the complex website communication.

The book ends with an Appendix, which comprises the linguistic analysis of the texts, reflecting the thorough work of the author.

Linking online communication to the production, transmission and understanding of both the linguistic and visual messages, *The Discourse of Tourism and National Heritage: A Contrastive Study from a Cultural Perspective*, written by Claudia Elena Stoian and published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing in 2015, is a useful book for the professionals in the domains of tourism, promotion and online communication. At the same time, it represents a good reference for the students and the public at large, willing to discover more on the topic.

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