



Teaching English for Tourism in Higher Education: from the exoticism of the Western gaze to the emergence of a global citizenship

Dr. Zoi Antonopoulou

University of Piraeus, Greece

Abstract

The presentation will discuss the challenges of teaching English as a *lingua franca*, permitting communication between different parties, none of which is necessarily a native speaker, to university students of Tourism whose future lies on the forefront of this global exchange. As language is the means of promoting values and attitudes, rather than a neutral entity, it needs to reflect the reality of the post-pandemic and rapidly changing world, which is constantly more accessible in terms of geographical distance, and more obscure when it comes to human interaction. Concepts such as individuality, affinity to an idea, loyalty to a group or a political party are in a constant state of negotiation and re-shaping. The rapid growth of Internet and social media, as well as the phenomenon of globalization, with different communities ascribing different meanings to the same symbol, have totally changed traditional hierarchies and perceptions of the world. In the traditional, euro-centric worldview, travelers used to be perceived as a unified crowd, with no internal differentiation based on background, aim of traveling and preferred activities. The conscious traveler of today moves between cultures with ease and is bearer of more than one identities which are not mutually exclusive; English for Tourism needs to prepare students for endorsing local, sustainable, ethical, non-damaging and non-intrusive practices, advocating ideas such as equality, democracy, youth empowerment and peace- in other words, a global citizenship in the making.

Keywords: globalization, intercultural communication, lingua franca, socio-political context, tertiary education