John Bitchener, School of Languages

A joint seminar with the New Zealand Tourism Research Institute

Tourist Texts: an Image-Text Analysis of travel brochures for grassroots travel in Mainland China.

This paper presents elements of an image-text analysis of selected categories of printed media, designed and distributed to promote tourism in destinations where English is an additional language. The project is a collaboration between a linguist and an image analyst, Elizabeth Grierson of RMIT University, Melbourne. Our particular focus in this paper is an analysis of the brochures of two tourist companies for grassroots travel in mainland China. Attention will be given to the relationship between language and image selections and the messages conveyed, be they intended or not. In doing so, the paper will present the observations within a critical discourse framework that draws upon theoretical and empirical perspectives. Through an interdisciplinary approach the paper brings together language and art-design perspectives on the politics of representation and prises open critical issues within the discourses of representation and interpretation. By these means, attention is paid to processes of power relations and the way texts (written and image) are constructed, presented, distributed and globally legitimated through discourses of tourism.