The Role of Modern Languages in Enhancing Contribution of Romanian Cultural Tourism to Sustainable Development of the EU Economy

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Abstract: In the context of the EU concern to respect the richness of its cultural and linguistic diversity, Romania acts on developing its cultural inheritance and consistently pursues objective 4 (Education), objectives 8 and 12 (regarding tourism) of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development [10], [11]. Multilingualism encourages the intercultural dialogue and promotion of sustainable tourism, stimulates the exchange of ideas, creation and innovation, generates long-term jobs. In this study we will focus on highlighting the need and benefits of using tourism to capitalise on the vast Romanian cultural potential, relying on promoting a communication which should be better adapted to linguistic characteristics of groups and tourism destinations. The goal of the research is to identify the economic value of these processes, both the values outlined in the studies of some specialists within the European institutions and the good practices of some companies and organisations operating in culture and tourism as well as initiatives such as the initiative of “The European Institute for Cultural Itineraries”. The methodology used consists in comparing literature, European regulations and practical activities carried out within the EU to enhance the value of multilingualism and cultural features in the act of communication, as culture is the fundamental factor of the buying behaviour and consumerism in tourism. The research has led us to the following conclusions:

- The EU tourism market is built on the principle of economic intelligence, integrating and harnessing multilingualism and multiculturalism;
- All communication reforms should consider the cultural differences as markets and consumer's behaviour are governed by characteristics of various segments of tourists;
- In economic terms, one should promote a certain type of multilingualism which should be an economic asset capable to enhance the European cultural inheritance, in compliance with requirements of the sustainable development.

Keywords: *cultural tourism; multilingualism; sustainable development.*

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1. Introduction

Cultural tourism is a factor of sustainable development because it facilitates access to culture and diversity of cultural expressions and enables the introduction of the Romanian culture into the international tourist circuit.

The strategy for culture and national patrimony 2016-2020 highlights the need for an environment which should be favourable to freedom of speech, capitalisation of the role of culture in international dialogue, favouring tolerance, getting to know the other and diversity. To reach these objectives one needs skills to use new information technologies and cultural tourism.

The strategy provides for a series of Transborder, Interregional, Transnational Cooperation Programmes financed from European funds, relevant for the culture and the tourism.

For instance, the **IPA Programme on Transborder Cooperation Romania – Republic of Serbia 2014-2020**, involving Timiș, Caraș-Severin, Mehedinți Counties, aims to enhance the attractiveness of a sustainable tourism by “promoting increase of national and international demands for tourism services, creating integrative tourist and cultural attractions, improving attractiveness of transborder tourist networks and routes” [15].

Hungary – Slovakia – Romania – Ukraine Transborder Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 involves Maramureș, Satu Mare and Suceava Counties to promote local culture and improve the tourist function.

The strategy focuses on improving the degree of involvement of local communities in relation to the tourist offer which turns to advantage the cultural resources.

2. Problem Statement

The research aims to increase contribution to improvement of development strategies on cultural tourism which is both an economic resource and a path to democracy, communication, tolerance.

The study of the sources available in the literature on marketing and tourism economics, as well as the EU statistic and strategic documents prepared thereon, helped us to understand that the major role of the communication in international languages is not considered in a one-to-one relation to the development of the cultural tourism. We note that the theme proposed in this paper is not original; nevertheless, we add value by the introduction of the complex activities of cultural tourism in connection with

the need to acquire skills related to communication in international languages by which we also consider the cultural acquisitions specific to the target customer segments. It is our intention to strengthen on the opinions of some specialists according to whom the communication barriers may not be overcome by the ability to speak English alone (already considered to be a panacea) and the true communication-promotion in cultural tourism is ensured if one can speak the language and know the culture of the potential tourists.

3. Research Questions/Aims of the research

Firstly, we answer the question “To what extent is Romania interesting to be included in the European cultural tourist routes?” Secondly, we start from the concept of sustainable cultural tourism and we bring arguments on the place and the role of the national strategies in the context of the EU development policies applicable to this type of tourism. Based on the concepts developed by the literature, we use our own words to define the place of foreign languages in relation to using tourism and its cultural diversity. We substantiate on the necessity to have a pragmatic vision in the education sector of international modern languages.

4. Research Methods

The research was conducted on the basis of scientific sources identified in the literature available in these two fields: tourism (with emphasis on cultural tourism) and linguistics (with emphasis on curriculum and teaching methods). Strategic documents on development of cultural tourism in Romania and the EU were also studied. In terms of reference materials, we further used the strategies in the sector of academic training of specialists in foreign languages created by European and national bodies. The timeframe under analysis is 2000-2030.

5. Findings

5.1. European Cultural Routes and Romania's Involvement in this Type of Tourism

A constant preoccupation of the National Agency for Tourism in Romania is to develop the European cultural routes in our country.

In the system of cultural routes, synergies are created between the cultural patrimony and the contemporary creativity [5] figure 1.

Figure 1. Levels of synergy in the routes system [13]

We are presenting below some cultural routes so as to highlight the importance of ensuring synergy and managing a vast and complex set of issues addressed.

“Jewish Heritage” Route, component of the European history and culture, certified in 2005, included 49 cities from: Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Check Republic, Denmark, Switzerland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Holland, Great Britain, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine.

“The Oldest Corridor of Crossing Europe from East to West” Route, conceived in 2007 to develop the cultural tourism and which involved: Belarus, Belgium, France, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Spain, Ukraine.

The Route of “Cemeteries which Reflect European Customs and Practices on the Death Cult”. In 2011 this route was awarded the “Ulysses” award by the World Tourism Organisation. It involved: Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Great Britain, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

The Route of Saint Olav meant to develop and promote cultural tourism. Certified in 2010, it contains a network of 500 kilometres of itineraries: Denmark, Norway, Sweden and ends in the final point - Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim where Saint Olav was buried.

The Route of the European Megalithic Monuments intended to promote megalithic culture (the monuments symbolise the efforts of the human communities to “tame” nature), to protect the environment by promoting the sustainable mobility (bike riding and walking in nature). Certified in 2013, the route involved: Denmark, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Great Britain.

The Route of “The Architectural Patrimony from the Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th Century”. Certified in 2014, it involved Albania, Bosnia- Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary.

Romania has numerous unexploited resources and will continue to submit the candidacy with the Council of Europe for inclusion in the developing routes and certification.

5.2.Strategies to Develop Romanian Sustainable Cultural Tourism in the European Union

The need for knowledge gave birth to cultural tourism which is also considered as visiting tourism because it implies visiting one or several attractions. Some of the characteristics of cultural tourism are [16]:

- There are mainly specific categories of people who practice such tourism (students, pupils, intellectuals)
- The tourists come from both urban and rural areas
- The length is short, generally three to seven days
- The distance varies within large limits
- The economic efficiency is reduced
- Anthropic attractions are visited.

The international tourism and within it cultural tourism have increased most significantly due to their openness to other civilisations, customs and also modernisation of transport and relating infrastructure which enables rapid and comfortable long-distance travelling.

World Tourism Organization estimates annual average increase rates of approximate 4% (equivalent of a doubling at an 18-year timeframe) for the ratios of the international tourist movement , [12] figure 2.

Figure 2. Prediction on number of tourists by destination areas [12]

The same organisation predicts that in 2020 the number of arrivals from international tourism will reach 1.56 billion. The most sustained growth of this indicator will be in Asia – Pacific. Europe will maintain its position as leader (717 million) followed by Eastern Asia and Pacific (397 million) and the American continent (282 million). The World Tourism Organisation prediction [12] is presented in table no. 1.

Table 1. Prediction on arrivals of international tourists by regions

	Basis Year	Predictions		Annual Growth (%)	Market Share	
	1995	2010	2020	1995-2020	1995	2020
World	565.4	1006.4	1561.1	4.1	100	100
Africa	20.2	47.0	77.3	5.5	3.6	5.0
America	108.9	190.4	282.3	3.9	19.3	18.1
Eastern Asia and Pacific	81.4	195.2	397.2	6.5	14.4	25.4
Europe	338.4	52.3	717.0	3.0	59.8	45.9
Middle East	12.4	35.9	68.5	7.1	2.2	4.4
Southern Asia	4.2	10.6	18.8	6.2	0.7	1.2
Intraregional (a)	464.1	790.9	1183.3	3.8	82.1	75.8
Long-Haul (b)	101.3	215.5	377.9	5.4	19.9	24.2

The exponential growth of online information in a wide range of international languages, the introduction of EURO, the rapid increase of the “low cost airlines” will be the dynamising factors of intraregional travels in relation to which culture represents a component for over 60% of the European tourists.

In terms of anthropic potential, Romania has several strengths: archaeological vestiges, historic art and architecture monuments, cultural and artistic institutions and events, art and folk traditions. Making the most of these resources is the result of a series of events with elements of which some are specific to cultural tourism and some others are non-specific, their consumption being however a required objective [3]:

- promotion campaigns of tourist offers conducted by specialised agencies and tourist information centres which use advertising materials, negotiations and contracting actions;
- setting the programme and contracting the tourist layout;
- transport and transfer of tourists and luggage from one form of transport to another;
- rest and all relating services provided by the hotels and other types of accommodation;
- food and auxiliary provisions;

A powerful twinning with cultural tourism is provided by rural tourism which uses cultural objectives, traditional ranches, cultural and traditional events, consumption of traditional food products. The impact of the cultural tourism on these rural areas exceeds by far the average of the classic tourism because 80 to 90% of the money spent by tourists is used in the area where the tourist programme was organised, mostly in the rural areas. This is the reason why the strategy for this niche tourism is correlated with the Master Plan for Development of National Tourism, with the strategies for development of local tourism and the National Strategy for Sustainable Development [14].

Figure 3. Place and importance of the strategy on development of ecotourism [14]

The implications of the Europe 2020 Strategy are also highlighted in terms of integrating our country in the European priorities on tourism – competitiveness, quality and durability of tourist destinations and maximisation of the financial potential for development of rural tourism.

5.3. Skills in Foreign Languages as Means to Promote Cultural Diversity

In 2007, The European Centre for Modern Languages elaborated the **Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Linguistic and Cultural Approaches** which combines the knowledge, skills and competencies promoted by pluralistic approaches and represents an indispensable instrument for using the **Common European Framework of Reference and European Portfolio of Languages** [2].

The Council of Europe is concerned with communication between citizens of different cultures, tolerance and acceptance of differences, especially with enlargement of the cultural horizon and economic progress [4].

In international activities and institutions languages may not all have the same weight. The value of interculturalism and plurilingualism is recognised and therefore regional languages may not be protected and encouraged to the detriment of official languages and to the need to learn them. In order to learn minimum two foreign languages as early as possible, some balances should be created and starting to learn a language other than English should be encouraged as much as possible.

The document recommends multiplying the opportunities of linguistic and cultural exchanges as early as elementary school.

The premises to develop a sustainable cultural tourism are created by national policies of Member States in the field of teaching and learning modern languages so as to obtain a higher degree of convergence at European level. The needs of a multicultural Europe may be satisfied through considerable development of the Europeans' capacity to communicate with one another and to go beyond the linguistic and cultural frontiers which requires a strategically organised and financed long-term effort at all levels of the education system.

The European citizens will be able to take advantage of the linguistic and cultural diversity provided they are capable to communicate with one another. To determine the role of the (inter)cultural dimension in relation to learning a foreign language means to answer the following questions [1]:

- does the process of teaching and learning foreign languages pursue to prepare for communication in general and for intercultural communication in particular?
- is it possible for a foreign language to be learnt without considering the elements of the target culture?
- in the formation of the intercultural communication competency, may one find the relation between acquisition of the foreign language and its relating cultural acquisition?
- does initial training of the teachers of foreign languages as professional intercultural intermediaries also include an intercultural dimension?

The Bologna Process aims to form some personalities who are socially capable to integrate into the national and international economic system. At present, the diversification of the educational offer is imperative at both pre-university and university level. Training multilingual specialists is a concern within philology faculties as well as non-philology faculties.

“Providing they maintain and carry forward the good traditions in the fundamental research field, foreign languages, literatures and cultures have nowadays all chances to become that extremely complex pilot-science round which the other renewed humanistic sciences will revolve, science which becomes part of the modern far-sighted gearing of the entire Romanian present culture using what it has best about it in the ensemble of the European culture... The future is written in foreign languages” [7].

Analysing the university studio programmes of the faculty of philology within University of Bucharest one may notice an unprecedented increase in the competition for the Applied Modern Languages, especially the combinations English – Japanese, English – German. All majors offer double specialty and the master’s programmes and doctoral schools are internationalised through partnerships with universities from Austria, Belgium, France, Holland, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Greece, Spain etc. The Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures of University of Bucharest is on the 150th – 200th place worldwide for all specialties [8, 9].

In terms of communication and tourism, one should also consider the programmes developed by the academic environment for lifelong training of teaching staff. All Romanian universities which have faculties of Applied Modern Languages provide short-term intensive courses for training or improvement in different languages spoken worldwide

The tourism consultancy company - Turism Market, dedicated to all “actors” playing in this business – tour operators, transport companies, tourism welcoming structures, specialists in tourist marketing and

communication, social media in tourism etc., published an article on 9.02.2012 [6] by which they tried to make a top ten classification of most spoken languages in the world. Although the research methodology may be deficient in relation to analysis of the figures available worldwide, we are offering the results of this endeavour of which basis was the mother tongue and the speakers' official language (Chinese, mandarin dialect, Hindu/Urdu, English, Spanish, Arab, Russian, Bengalese, Portuguese, French, German).

We evidently notice that an extremely demanded language in the specialty education which failed to enter the top ten is Japanese, spoken by over 120 million people. German takes the last place in the pre-university system and in all universities. This is the result of the criteria adopted in classification. Nevertheless, they are meant to indicate us future target market shares where cultural tourism will have a huge boom which will imply a pragmatic vision in relation to linguistic preparation of all persons who play front-office or back-office roles and who may contribute to a great extent to the development of the sustainable cultural tourism throughout European and worldwide.

6. Discussions

The matters considered are ample and this paper may only be deemed to be an incipient endeavour towards drawing the specialists' attention to this newly-emerged connection between the strategies on development of cultural tourism and the strategies on forming skills in communication in foreign languages in the context of the globalisation phenomenon.

The research does not provide immediate solutions or a short-term perspective as it focuses on training the human resources existing in the front-office of cultural tourism and on new methods to create the frame of reference for training teachers of foreign languages. The sources used are not of most significant scientific value; they are the ones to which we had access. This explains why we may not speak of a generalisation of the research conclusions.

The assertions made in this paper are also based on our own professional expertise in training future economists to communication in foreign languages (English language and French language).

7. Conclusions

The Romanian cultural tourism has a remarkable potential and may be a factor of sustainable development of its economy and the economy of the EU.

The National Authority for Tourism in Romania participates through cultural tourism projects to all strategies for development of European cultural routes elaborated by the European Institute for Cultural Itineraries, body which operates within the Council of Europe.

Romania's participation to sustainable international cultural tourism will be further improved by creation of a transport infrastructure which will enable comfortable and long-distance travels of tourists.

In addition, there is a need for firm activities entailing major changes of strategic and operational nature to improve online and offline communication in languages spoken worldwide.

All future experts in this field will have to be prepared for communication, in general, and especially intercultural communication.

The world nowadays is a world of plurilingualism, by which linguistic and communication barriers may be overcome, reaching therefore a level of tolerance in managing and accepting particularities and cultural diversity. The sustainable cultural tourism based on plurilingualism contributes to the convergence, economic development and prosperity in the European Union, to the openness of the European citizens towards the inestimable cultural treasure existing throughout the world. We are adopting the slogan of the University of Bucharest "The future is written in foreign languages".

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