

A Stylistic Analysis of Tourism Communication at Japan's World Heritage Sites from Cross-Cultural and Environmental Perspectives



July 15, 2023

Masayuki TERANISHI (University of Hyogo, Japan)

teranishi@shse.u-hyogo.ac.jp

Azumi YOSHIDA (Okayama University, Japan)

azumiy@okayama-u.ac.jp

Contents

1. Background: Problems in Tourism
2. Seminal works
 - 2.1 Tourism and communication (1) EFL/ESL
 - 2.2 Tourism and communication (2) Translation
 - 2.3 Tourism and communication (3) Stylistics
3. Research Questions
4. Method
5. Analysis
 - 5.1 (In)appropriate representation of cultural buildings and places
 - 5.2 Raising awareness of beauty, nature, and environment
6. Conclusion

1. Background: Problems in tourism

Cross-cultural problems

- food (Seo et al 2021)
- tattoos (c.f. Sekiya 2022; Nootbaar 2023)

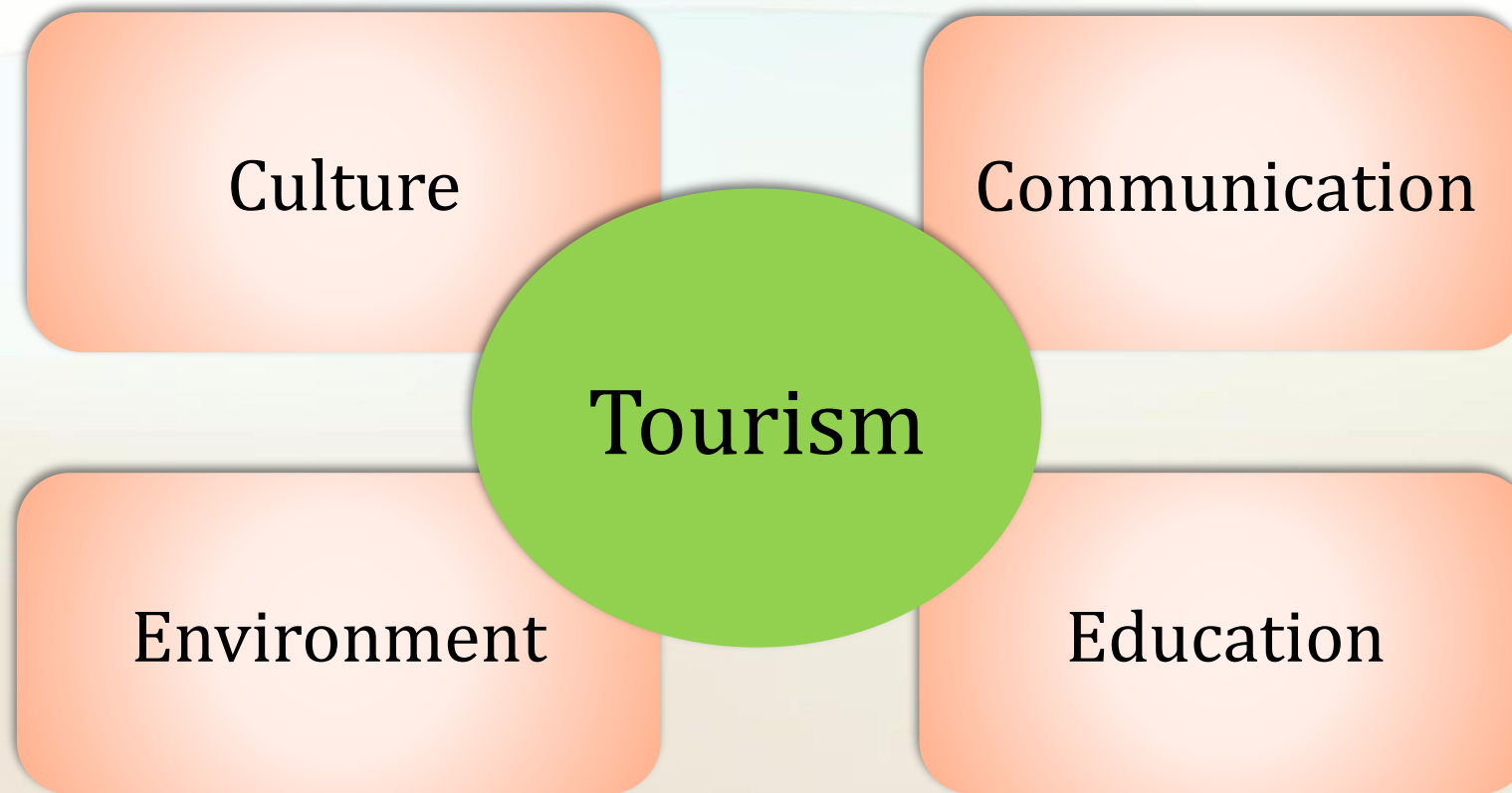
Communication

- Signs in stations, bus services, public toilets, etc.
- Errors in translations for visitors

Development and environmental destruction

- Construction of hotels, roads, etc.

Tourism as interdisciplinary study



2.1 Tourism and communication (1) EFL/ ESL

- Authentic (teaching) material
= Things that exist in reality, not artificial materials intended for English language learning (Shirahata et al.2019)

(Cf. Takahashi 2015; Burton 2016; Kuze 2019)

2.2 Tourism and communication (2)

Translation

- Yamakawa (2019)
- Matsuura et al. (2020)
- Li (2021)
 - error analysis, syntax, pragmatics
- Hamaguchi (2021)

2.3 Tourism and communication (3) **Stylistics**

- Stylistic analysis of landscape in literary works
(Douthwaite et al. 2017)
- Stylistic analysis of landscape, place, and environment
(Virdis et al. 2021)
- Ecostylistics
→ ecocriticism, ecolinguistics, ecostylistics, etc.
(Zurru 2017)

Inspiration and assumption

- Effective communication is essential to develop tourist spots and preserve environment there.
- Raising awareness of nature is critical to tourism communication.
- Tourism communication is worth studying from stylistic and narratological perspectives.

3. Research questions

We will clarify:

(1) How (in)appropriately cultural buildings and places are represented as attractive sightseeing spots.

We will also examine:

(2) What narrative and stylistic devices are employed to raise awareness of the beauty, nature, and environment of Japan's World Heritage Sites.

Simulation of a foreigner's visit to World Heritage sites in Japan

1. Check websites
2. Visit the locations
 - World Heritage sites in Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Hyogo and Hiroshima prefectures
3. Collecting texts
4. Stylistic and narratological analysis
 - Translation (e.g. Saito 2007)
 - Foregrounding
 - Narrative structure, cohesion, evaluative devices, etc.

Representation of Himeji Castle (1)

世界遺産・国宝 姫路城

(1) 姫路城は、慶長年間に建てられ、日本独自の城郭建築の技術が最高潮に達した時期の最も完成された城とされています。(2) 昭和26年には国宝に指定、平成5年には日本ではじめてユネスコの世界遺産（文化遺産）に登録されました。

(3) また、白漆喰で塗り込めた優美な姿は、飛び立つ白鷺に例えられ、白鷺城とも呼ばれています。(4) 平成21年から約5年半、約50年ぶりとなる改修を終え、一層白く美しく生まれ変わりました。

Representation of Himeji Castle (1): Literal translation

World Heritage and National Treasure Himeji Castle

(1) Himeji Castle was built during the Keicho era (1596-1598) and is said to be the most complete castle built at the height of Japan's unique castle building techniques. (2) In 1951, it was designated as a National Treasure, and in 1993, it became the first castle in Japan to be inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List (Cultural Heritage). (3) The castle is also called Shirasagi-jo (White Egret Castle) because of its graceful white-plastered appearance, which is compared to an egret in flight. (4) **in 2009, the castle was renovated for the first time in about 50 years, and was reborn even whiter and more beautiful.**

(4) Is omitted in leaflet.

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version)

Representation of Himeji Castle (1): Leaflet

Himeji Castle

(1) Himeji Castle was built at the beginning of **the 17th century**, when Japan's unique castle architectural techniques had reached their peak. (2) It was the first site in Japan to be registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, in 1993. (3) It was also designated a National Treasure, in 1951.

(4) It is called Hakuro-jo ("White Heron Castle") for its brilliant white exterior, and is thought to resemble a white heron on taking flight.

*Reference to renovation is omitted.

Summary (1)

- English leaflet is concise.
- Japanese calendar → Western calendar
- In English, 'World Heritage' comes first.
*In the original, explanation is chronological.
- No information on renovation

Representation of Himeji Castle (2)

大規模な構造と構成美 螺旋（らせん）式縄張り

(1) 姫路城は大天守と3つの小天守が渡櫓で結ばれた連立式天守が完全な姿で残されており、幾重にも重なる屋根、千鳥破風や唐破風が、白漆喰総塗籠造の外装と相まって、華やかな構成美を誇っています。(2) 場内の数ある建造物のうち、8棟が国宝に、74棟が国の重要文化財に指定されています。

(3) 天守閣を中心に、内曲輪、中曲輪、外曲輪が螺旋状の堀で区分され、本格的な螺旋式縄張りを構成しています。(4) 外堀に囲まれた城下町は合計233ヘクタールの広さを誇ります。

Representation of Himeji Castle (2): Literal translation

Large-scale structure and beauty of composition: spiral-shaped turrets

(1) Himeji Castle boasts the complete appearance of the castle tower, which consists of the main tower and three smaller towers connected by a series of turrets. The castle boasts a gorgeous composition of beauty with its multi-layered roofs, staggered gables and Chinese gables, combined with the white plaster all-nurikago structure on the exterior. (2) Of the many buildings on the site, eight are designated as National Treasures and 74 as Important Cultural Properties of Japan. (3) Centered on the castle, the inner, middle, and outer wards are divided by a spiral moat, forming a full-fledged spiral-shaped rope line. (4) The castle town surrounded by the outer moat covers a total area of 233 hectares.

(4) Is omitted in the English leaflet.

Representation of Himeji Castle (2): Leaflet

Beauty of Overall Structure

(1) It retains the complete form of the combined keeps, with the Main Keep being connected to the three small keeps by means of four connecting corridors. (2) The gables and roof layers create a brilliant structural beauty, in combination with the flawless appearance of the exterior, covered entirely in white plaster.

What are Japanese Castles?

(3) The keep was a symbol of authority and power for the Lord. (4) At the same time, Japanese castles built during the Warring States Period were infused with the wisdom and techniques required for use as military facilities. (5) Despite its graceful external appearance, Himeji Castle was built with a robust structure that also thoroughly considered defensive and offensive aspects.

(6) Please enjoy to the fullest every detail of its powerful and magnificent appearance.

Representation of Himeji Castle (2): Leaflet

Beauty of Overall Structure

(1) It retains the complete form of the combined keeps, with the Main Keep being connected to the three small keeps by means of four connecting corridors. (2) The gables and roof layers create a **brilliant structural beauty**, in combination with the **flawless appearance** of the exterior, covered entirely in white plaster.

What are Japanese Castles?

(3) The keep was a symbol of authority and power for the Lord. (4) At the same time, Japanese castles built during the Warring States Period were infused with the wisdom and techniques required for use as military facilities. (5) Despite **its graceful external appearance**, Himeji Castle was built with **a robust structure that also thoroughly considered defensive and offensive aspects**.

(6) **Please enjoy to the fullest every detail of its powerful and magnificent appearance.**

Summary (2)

- No reference to land area
- English leaflet has more appraisal expressions
(e.g. brilliant, graceful, magnificent)
- Reference to practical aspects
- Dialogue with visitors

Representation of Ryoanji

石庭

- (1) この石庭は、東西25メートル、南北10メートルの空間に白砂を敷き詰め、15個の石を配したものです。(2) 極端なまでに象徴化されたこの石庭の意味は謎に包まれており、見る人の自由な解釈に委ねられています。
- (3) 室町末期(1500年ごろ)、特芳禅傑などの優れた禅僧によって作庭されたと伝えられています。
- (4) また、石庭は菜種油を混ぜた土で作られた油土塀によって囲まれ、時の経過による油の変化が独特な風合いを醸し出しています。

Representation of Ryoanji: Literal translation

Stone Garden

- (1) This stone garden measures 25 meters from east to west and 10 meters from north to south, and is paved with white sand and 15 stones. (2) The meaning of this extremely symbolic stone garden is shrouded in mystery and left to the viewer's free interpretation. (3) The garden is said to have been created in the late Muromachi period (around 1500) by outstanding Zen priests such as Tokuhō Zengetsu. (4) The stone garden is surrounded by an oiled clay wall made of soil mixed with rapeseed oil, and the change of the oil over time gives the garden a unique texture.

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version), revised by presenters

Representation of Ryoanji: English leaflet

The Rock Garden

- (1) This **simple and remarkable** garden measures **only** twenty-five meters from east to west and ten meters from south to north. (2) **The rectangular Zen garden is completely different from the gorgeous gardens of court nobles constructed in the Middle Ages.** (3) **No trees are to be seen; only fifteen rocks and white gravel are used in the garden.** (4) The walls are made of clay boiled in **oil**. As time went by, the **peculiar** design was made of itself by **the oil** that seeped out. (5) This **internationally famous** rock garden was said to be created at the end of Muromachi Period (around 1500) by a highly respected Zen monk, Tokuhō Zenketsu.

Summary (3)

- Japanese version takes a detached perspective, by focusing on its symbolic meaning, for example.
- English version explains the garden with stronger evaluation.
- Reference to rapeseed oil may be ecologically important but is not reflected in the English version.

Representation of Kiyomizudera

四季

音羽山の中腹に建つ清水寺は豊かな自然に恵まれています。四季折々の伽藍の風景は、観音さまの慈悲の心そのものです。

(<https://www.kiyomizudera.or.jp/>,
accessed on 02/06/2023)

Representation of Kiyomizudera: Literal translation

The Four Seasons

Kiyomizu-dera Temple, located halfway up Mount Otowa, is blessed with abundant nature. The temple's seasonal scenery is a reflection of the mercy of the Goddess of Kannon itself.

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version), revised by presenters

Representation of Kiyomizudera: English website version

LANDSCAPES SEASONAL COLORS EMBELLISHING THE KANNON REIJO
Halfway up Mt. Otowa, one of the peaks in Kyoto's Higashiyama mountain range, stands Kiyomizu-dera Temple, which is **abundantly blessed with nature**. It provides landscapes to match each season, including cherry blossoms in spring, lush green in summer, colored leaves in autumn, and snowscapes in winter. **The mountains**, which **surround the temple buildings**, **reveal many different views** from dawn till dusk and create a **stunning** landscape **in harmony** with the **beautiful** scenery of the ancient city. As the **pure** water constantly wells up, **the scenery also changes its appearance** every moment. Through the regular Buddhist events and special viewings, visitors can feel Kannon's compassion and acquire an even better understanding of the deity.

(<https://www.kiyomizudera.or.jp/en/learn/>, accessed on 02/06/2023)

Summary (4)

- English version
 - • more detailed/emphatic description
 - frequent use of appraisal expressions
 - highlights the solemnity of the surrounding natural environment

6. Conclusion

1. The comparison between Japanese (original) and English versions highlights the importance of cross-cultural understanding.
2. Tourism communication is frequently intended to raise the visitor's awareness of nature, but the style is different between the languages.
3. Tourism communication is worth studying from stylistic and narratological perspectives.

References

- Burton, S. (2016) An overview of English-language literature study in Japan. *Lit Matters: The Liberlit Journal of Teaching Literature*.
<http://www.liberlit.com/new/>
- Douthwaite, J., Viridis, D. F., & Zurru, E. (Eds.). (2017) *The stylistics of landscapes, the landscapes of stylistics*. John Benjamins.
- Kuze, K. (2019) *A reexamination of the role of literary texts in EFL classrooms through case studies*. Hituzi Syobo. (published in Japanese)
- Hamaguchi, J. (2021) The policy and its features of linguistic landscape and signs in Kyoto. *The NIU Journal of Tourism Studies*. 16: 21-30.
- Li, X. (2021) Crosslinguistic influences upon Chinese language sightseeing signage in Japan. *Journal of OKAYAMA SHOKA UNIVERSITY*. 56(3): 77-93.

Matsuura, F., Li, X., Seo, Y., Zen, K., & Tan, W. (2020) Pragmalinguistic failure in the plilingualization of sightseeing signage. In A. Ijiri, H. Osaki, & H. Miyoshi (Eds.). *Yoriso-i-gata-shakai niyoru chiiki-kachi no kojo*. Daigaku-kyoiku-shuppan. 90-102.

Nootbaar, J. J. (2023) No tattoos in the bath: An exploration into the histories of tattooing and bathing in Japanese culture and why the two don't mix in contemporary Japan. *Bulletin of Oita Prefectural College of Art and Culture*. 60: 47-56.

Sekiya, D. (2022) Current state and issues regarding the availability of public baths for customers with tattoos : A qualitative consideration based on interviews with public bathing facilities. *The Tourism Studies: The Journal of Japan Institute of Tourism Research*. 34(1): 5-16.

Saito, Y. (2007). *The art of translation*. Tokyo University Press.

Seo, Y., Matsuura, F., Li, X., & Kan, U. (2022) Inbound tourism and readiness for vegan: a study on labels at restaurants and retailers. *JAILA 10th Conference Proceedings*.

<https://jaila.org/activity/taikai20220319/proceedings20220319/jaila-proc-010-04-20220319.pdf>

Shirahata, T., Tomita, Y., Muranoi, H., & Wakabarashi, S. (2019) *A guide to English language teaching (3rd edition)*. Taishukan. (published in Japanese)

Shishido, M., Murphy, K., & Takahashi, M. (2017) *AFP world focus: environment, health, and technology*. SEIBIDO.

Takahashi, K. (2015) Literary texts as authentic materials for language learning: The current situation in Japan.' In M. Teranishi, Y. Saito, & K. Wales (Eds.). *Literature and language learning in the EFL classroom*. Palgrave Macmillan. 26-40.

Viridis, D. F., Zurru, E., & Lahey, E. (Eds.). (2021) *Language in place: stylistic perspectives on landscape, place and environment*. John Benjamins.

Yamakawa, K. (2019) Development and prospect of language policy in Japanese inbound tourism policy: Awareness of progress in Multilingualism. *The Japanese Journal of Language in Society*. 22(1): 17-27.

Zurru, E. (2017) The agence of The Hungry Tide: An ecostylistic analysis. In J. Douthwaite, D. F. Viridis, & E. Zurru (Eds.). *The stylistics of landscapes, the landscapes of stylistics*. John Benjamins.