

Article

Understanding [...] Ellipsis through Analysis of Haiku in English

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英語俳句の分析を通じた「省略記号」の理解

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the current use of ellipsis abbreviations in English haiku. In the linguistics field, ellipsis means the practice of omitting words from sentences. The ellipsis indicates abbreviation of a missing statement, especially a complex syntactic simplification. In the literary field, ellipsis can refer to [...] punctuation marks. Poets use ellipsis in different ways than writers create prose in English. The rhythm of English poetry can be paused with punctuation marks such as commas, semicolons, hyphens, exclamation marks and dots. The Japanese use of cutting words can be emulated in English haiku using... (dots) at the end of the first or second lines. This study found that haikuists use linguistic and literary examples of ellipsis in unique ways and new styles – differently than novelists or traditional poets.

概要

本調査研究では、英語俳句における最新の省略記号の使用法を分析した。言語学の分野では、省略記号 [...] は陳述（声明）の省略、とりわけ複雑な構文の簡略化を指し示すことが可能である。この記号は日本語の俳句には存在しない。英語の詩では、詩のリズムを一時停止するときには、コンマ、セミコロン、ハイフン、ドット、感嘆符などの句読点を使用することができる。英語の新様式俳句ではドット [...] を使って表現することができる。また、1行目または2行目の最後に切れ字（カッティングワード）を配置できる。俳人たちは、作家たちが英語で散文を作成するのとは異なる方法で省略記号を使用している。この研究で俳人たちが伝統的な俳人たちや作家たちや詩人たちとは異なり、独自の方法で省略記号を使用することが分かった。

Keywords: haiku, cutting-word, abbreviation, ellipsis, dot-dot-dot
キーワード 俳句, 切れ字, 省略現象, 省略記号, てんてんてん

Introduction

In its various forms and uses ellipsis signifies silence—a lapse or pause or textual omission of some kind. In various fields of academic study, the ellipsis has different meanings. In linguistics, ellipsis or an elliptical construction is a stylistic device: the omission from a clause of one or more words that are nevertheless understood in the context of the remaining elements (Heffernan, 1989). In speech an ellipsis may be called “dot-dot-dot.” This punctuation is also referred to as a suspension point, points of ellipsis, or periods of ellipsis. In writing style manuals, three dots in a quotation [...] shows that

a part of the text has been omitted from the original quotation. These three dots can stand in for whole sections of text that are omitted but do not change the overall meaning. A punctuation maven, Truss (2003, p. 166) claimed the proper uses of ellipses “are quite specific, and very few: 1. To indicate words missing ... from a quoted passage 2. To trail off in an intriguing manner...” In the creative writing of prose and freely written sentences, dots can indicate a mysterious or unfinished thought, a leading sentence, or a pause or silence. In haiku, brevity, suggestiveness, and ellipsis form the trinity of its poetic life and soul. Haikuists communicate with readers

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by omitting words as well as by using a range of available punctuation marks. This study will focus in particular on the special functions of ellipses. The grammatical form “noun + verb phrase ellipsis” and “noun + [...] ellipsis” in haiku typically suggest contemplation, or a delay in thought before the next line becomes clear. The three dots of the ellipsis punctuation can be employed by an author to also read like a drum roll... The punctuation prepares the reader to expect something important and worth waiting for.

1. The Problem

English-language haikuists quibble over how to render the pivotal cut (in Japanese language *kireji*) to separate and juxtapose two parts of a haiku. Some writers indicate this with ellipses. For example, verbs and adjectives are often omitted from haiku. While ellipsis punctuation marks may seem routine today, others have long deplored any punctuation in haiku. Henderson (1965, p. 25) noted this hyperbole of opinion, “A few poets prefer to write without any punctuation marks whatever, with pauses indicated only by the ending of lines; others feel this is an unbearable restriction.”

1.1. Purposes

The two main purposes of this paper are to analyze (1) the notion of poetic-ellipsis, the types of ellipsis used linguistically in haiku, as well as (2) the special ways in which ellipsis is used to punctuate haiku.

1.2. Hypothesis

Ellipses are used differently in prose, in poetry, and in haiku. Leaving out part of a sentence linguistically by omission, or substituting it with [...] ellipses punctuation is performed by newspaper columnists to either save time, or by editors as a stylistic element. This contrasts with the usage of the ellipsis in poems to either indicate a trailing off or a building of tension. In haiku, ellipsis is used to indicate contemplation, or a delay—a pregnant pause before the final poetic line becomes clear.

2. Methodology

Through readings of literature and previous research, this study confirmed the historical development of ellipsis in prose, poetry, and haiku. A rich source of empirical data was mined by calling for participants to submit haiku related to ellipsis from contributors to the *Asahi Shimbun* (McMurray,

2021, May 21 & 2021, July 2) which the author collates and from contestants in haiku competitions which the author organized.

2.1. Participants

The annual *Setouchi Matsuyama Photo-Haiku Contest in English* attracts creative, high-quality entries. In its 10th year of competition the contest attracted 4,113 artistic works (McMurray, 2021, March 26). 1,587 photo-haiku in the English language were submitted from 43 countries: 1,186 with photos provided by the contest and 401 with original photos of the sea. The remarkable photo-haiku reveal the imaginative, aesthetic, and skillful accomplishment of their creators. More than 120 haiku and photo-haiku were found to have an example of ellipsis suitable for analysis in this study.

3. Background and Theories of Ellipsis

This section includes a literature review, historical development of punctuation, two theories concerning ellipsis in literature, and the first haiku in English with an ellipsis published in an American haiku journal.

3.1. Literature review reveals first appearance and etymology of ellipsis

One of the earliest examples of ellipsis written as punctuation in drama has been traced to the 16th century (Toner, 2015). Ellipsis marks first appeared in a 1588 edition of the Roman dramatist Terence’s play, *Andria*, translated into English by Maurice Kyffin with 4 hyphen marks representing incomplete utterances by the play’s characters, also known as breaks.

In the 17th century, ellipses were referred to as ‘eclipses’ (singular, ‘eclipsis’) that heralded a brief darkness. Starting from 1753 the English language began to borrow the French *ellipse*, Latin *ellipsis*, and Greek *elleipsis* meaning “falling short.” On May 26, 2021, auspiciously a few days after the completion of this paper, the full moon eclipses. In perigee position, the moon will appear larger than life. To mark the eclipse, John Hamley and Veronika Zora Novak, both poets from Ontario, Canada, respectively, contributed a senryu and a haiku containing ellipses to the *Asahi Shimbun* for publication (McMurray, 2021, May 21). Danijela Grbeija in Sibenik, Croatia, created a poetic-ellipsis without resorting to printing the punctuation marks: readers were left to imagine the additional narrative between writer and reader.

* * *

Em dashes —

ellipses...

eclipses?

* * *

Sowing stars...

my hands stained

midnight blue

* * *

Lunar eclipse

I'm reading from your lips

what you don't want to say

3.2. Editorial control of ellipsis

Over the course of the 19th century, ellipsis marks began to be standardized in appearance and defined by usage. The dot, dot, dot developed its own distinct connotations. Journalists and academicians used ellipses in their writing to indicate that a quote had been condensed for purposes of saving space. Repeated dots consistently appeared in literary works and poetry as impressionistic, a typographical shorthand that Toner (2015, p.3) described as “an infinitude of thoughts and associations.” The creation of a printed text was a collaborative effort between writer, editor and publisher, printer and proof reader with the power of punctuation lying largely in the hands of the printing house. According to Toner (2015, p. 5): “Authors were encouraged to leave punctuation marks to printers because of their expertise in pointing [punctuating] or [...] so that they could implement a house style [...] Ellipsis points are especially vulnerable to alteration.”

3.3. Iceberg theory of ellipsis

Authors use ellipsis in works of literature to indicate an omission of unnecessary words or information. Leaving out part of a sentence or an event by linguistic omission or by substituting it with [...] ellipsis punctuation is often done to either save time, or as a stylistic element. An example of this type of ellipsis found in literature dates back to Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899–1961), who presented the Iceberg theory. It is also called the theory of omission within the framework of relevance theory used to analyze literary text and poetic effects (Arai, 2008). Iceberg theory is a writing technique that emphasizes minimalism. Hemingway was originally a journalist, so he took that field's focus on facts and

incorporated the philosophy into his literary works. He trusted that a reader could understand a story's underlying theme without needing him to explicitly state it. Because of its shortness, the short story often relies on suggestiveness which is often characterized by ellipsis. As a result, the reader becomes an active agent in the creation of the story. This might leave interpretation more open, but might also result in misinterpretation or a less rich interpretation. In an interview for *The Paris Review* in 1958, Ernest Hemingway pronounced what has now become famous in short story theory and can equally apply to short forms of poetry such as haiku:

Surely, if a writer stops observing he is finished. But he does not have to observe consciously nor think how it will be useful. Perhaps that would be true at the beginning. But later everything he sees goes into the great reserve of things he knows or has seen. If it is any use to know it, I always try to write on the principle of the iceberg. There is seven-eighths of it underwater for every part that shows. Anything you know you can eliminate and it only strengthens your iceberg. It is the part that doesn't show. If a writer omits something because he does not know it then there is a hole in the story.

According to Fadhil (2018), in Hemingway's novel, *The Old Man and the Sea*, ellipsis is considered to be a dramatic technique used for speeding up action. Authors also use ellipsis to build tension when it seems as though a character or the narrator is leaving something unfinished, unsaid, or unstarted. The popularity and usage of ellipsis has also changed over time; it used to be more common to find ellipses standing in for proper nouns or expletives.

Poets use ellipses to indicate irony or make the reader consider a certain thought or line. In poetry, an ellipsis is used as a pause for thought or line break at the caesura. Ellipsis is used to highlight sarcasm or make the reader linger with the last points in the poem.

3.4. First use of ellipsis in haiku

The opening haiku printed in the premiere issue (1963) of *American Haiku*, the first English-language haiku journal, was created by James William Hackett (1929–2015) and contained ellipsis points.

* * *

Searching on the wind,

the hawk's cry...
 is the shape of its beak.
 * * *

The first line in the above haiku created the question: what is being searched? The ellipsis on the second line indicated a tailing off of the sound of the bird, as well as the author's contemplation—a collecting of one's thoughts for an answer. Finally, the third poetic line became clear, yet the answer remained elusive.

3.5. Theory of poetic-ellipsis in recited haiku

According to Arai (2008), analysis of poetic effects distinguishes between verse and prose. The shorter forms of literature can inform us as much as, or more than, longer expressions. When haiku is read aloud, aposiopesis becomes a powerful figure of speech wherein a sentence is deliberately broken off and left unfinished, the ending to be supplied by the imagination, giving an impression of unwillingness or inability to continue. This can negate the authorial intent; authors who end on ellipses lose their privileged position of dictating the text's true meaning. Ellipses are used to signify a pause in one's speech, a dramatic pause can be represented by a series of dots. Another common usage of the ellipsis in haiku is to indicate a voice trailing off. It can also effectively build tension toward the final line. Of the 36 different ways that ellipsis can be used according to *Chicago Manual of Style* (2017) the following can be applied to haiku: Ellipsis points suggest faltering or fragmented speech accompanied by confusion, insecurity, distress, or uncertainty.

4. Comparative Analysis of Ellipsis in English and Japanese Haiku

This section is an examination of English translations of Japanese haiku in order to gain insight into the ways ellipsis is used in haiku. The theory of poetic-ellipsis is put into practice to analyze several haiku. A discussion ensues on how to translate the shortness of haiku.

4.1. Cutting words

The use of punctuation by haikuists demonstrates one of the many differences between Japanese and English-language haiku. Japanese essentially has no punctuation. The closest equivalents are *kireji*, or cutting words, such as *kana*, *keri*, or *ya*. Nariyama (2003, p. 34) suggests that haiku is, in its entirety, an ellipsis. "Japanese haiku poetry may be the

ultimate example of subtlety, indirectness and ellipsis." In Japanese haiku, a *kireji* typically appears at the end of one of the verse's three phrases. A *kireji* fills a role analogous to that of a caesura in classical western poetry. In English, however, since *kireji* have no direct equivalent, poets sometimes use punctuation such as a dash, ellipsis, or an implied break to create a juxtaposition intended to prompt the reader to reflect on the relationship between the two parts.

4.2. Three dots and six dots

Haiku books and magazines usually typeset the ellipsis with a space before and after each of 3 periods, and this is the most common and recommended way for haiku in English (McMurray, 2003). The most common character in Japanese that corresponds to an ellipsis is called 3-ten rīdā ("3-dot leaders", …). In Japanese writing, the ellipsis consists of six dots (two 3-ten rīdā characters, ……). Three dots (one 3-ten rīdā character) may be used where space is limited, such as in a header. In horizontally written text the dots are commonly vertically centered within the text. The Japanese word for dot is pronounced "ten", the dots are colloquially called "ten-ten-ten" (てんてんてん , akin to the English "dot-dot-dot"). Note how Teiichi Suzuki borrowed the six dots of the Japanese language for the second line of this English haiku (McMurray, 2021, July 2).

* * *

Counting deaths

.....

covid blues

4.3. Translations of Japanese haiku

Klein (2003, p. 27) claims "It is hard to talk about words that are not there... Native speakers of a language tacitly understand what is missing and non-native speakers generally do not." Non-Japanese readers face difficulty with understanding Japanese haiku that are immersed with cultural references. His research lists 18 different kinds of ellipsis, including the *kireji* "ya" used by Gyomoku Usami (1926–2018) in this haiku: *shirauo-ya namida-ga kami-ni ochishi oto*. Lindsay (2020, June 21) translated it with an ellipsis to draw attention to the existence of the icefish; still raw and translucent. The dot-dot-dot shape of the punctuation was also said to resemble the author's tears.

* * *

icefish ...

a teardrop falls on the sheet
of paper—the sound

4.4. Ellipsis in manga and Social Networking Systems (SNS)

Truss (2003, p. 123) suggested that the ellipsis [...], “is turning up increasingly in emails as shorthand for more to come, actually...” In text in Japanese media, such as in manga or video games, ellipses are much more frequent than in standard prose. The ellipsis by itself represents speechlessness, or a pregnant pause. Depending on the context, this could be anything from an admission of guilt to an expression of being dumbfounded at another person’s words or actions. As a device, the *ten-ten-ten* is intended to focus the reader on a character while allowing the character to not speak any dialogue (Figure 1).

4.5. Contemporary use of ellipsis in English haiku

The vitality of the summer fern, surrounding the stone Buddha, strongly appealed to Kato (2020, p. 28) when she commented on this haiku by Bruce Ross.

* * *

the stillness...
surrounded by summer ferns
stone Buddha

* * *

Kato felt the stillness on the first line was cut off by the ellipsis, yet that enabled her to feel the cosmic expanse within the stone Buddha. The quietness becomes different with an ellipsis. This haiku expresses the tranquility of nature and a prayer. In the next haiku by Yoshie Miyamoto the “mythical country” refers to Izumo, including Izumo Taisha Shrine. Described by Lafcadio Hearn (whose Japanese name was Koizumi Yakumo) the seasonal word “turtle crying”, which originated in China, becomes real with the magic of the ellipsis-pause. The writer’s pride in her hometown is embellished by observing “there is a mountain and river.”

* * *

Turtle cries...
mountain and rivers of
a mythical country

5. Results

The new concept of poetic ellipsis can be illustrated by analyzing literary texts from examples of haiku collected from

contests and from participants in this study.

5.1. Haiku with a “noun + [...] ellipsis” form

Note the placement of “noun + [...] ellipsis” first lines of these four-winning haiku from the Setouchi-Matsuyama International Photo-Haiku Contest, penned respectively by the American composer Marilyn Ashbaugh, Indian Arvinder Kaur, Australian Madhuri Pillai, and Indian Srinivasa Rao Sambangi.

* * *

lost...
I return home
to the sea

* * *

deadlines...
for now, the lullaby
of gentle waves

* * *

village storyteller...
the stretch
of her imagination

* * *

These next haiku with the “noun + [...] ellipsis” form composed by Australian Beverley George (originally published in *Kokako* 33) and American Elinor Pihl Huggett (originally published in *GEPPO* XLV:3), respectively, were long-listed for the Touchstone Awards 2020 by the Haiku Foundation.

* * *

tideline...
a breaker delivers sea glass
to an old sailor’s feet

* * *

moving van...
everything but the growth marks
on the closet door

5.2. Discussion of the results

A gap in the literature has been found through the discovery of the increasing use of the “noun + [...] ellipsis” form in modern haiku. This form was rarely used until 2010. Since

2018, haiku with this form have been recognized as contest winners. In the above examples of haiku, verb phrases were omitted from the first lines. For example, the haiku “lost...” in prose could be rendered as: “I was lost, therefore I return home to the sea.” In the haiku “deadlines...” a prose rendition could be: “Deadlines are looming, however, for now the lullaby of gentle waves.”

This well-crafted haiku with an intriguing photo of a small pond by Djurdja Vukelic Rozic won an award for excellence. It was penned in a pithy six-word format with an ellipsis on the first line.

* * *

fish pond...

a poor boy's

sea

* * *

As prose, the image and thought could be rendered linguistically as: “This fish pond is like a sea to the poor boy.” The insertion of a verb, creating a simile is one way of understanding this poem. A grammarian might render the scene poetically as: “This fish pond; a poor boy's sea.” Insertion of the semi-colon links two independent clauses. Without punctuation, or without the addition of a verb, the words are difficult to understand, ungrammatical, and not successful as a poem. These six words became a winning haiku because of ellipsis punctuation.

The first line's adjective and noun ended with three dots to show contemplation rather than passing time and asks the reader to pause and reflect on the societal issue of wealth. Three dots can indicate a trailing off in thought. In the case of the haiku currently under study, a certain sadness or apology could be inferred about the sorry looking fish pond.

This usage of ellipsis contrasts with the construction of a single sentence by grammar mavens who would rather use a semicolon in prose to link two independent clauses that are closely related in thought. When a semicolon is used to join two or more parts in a sentence, those ideas are given equal position or rank. In prose, the group of words that comes before the semicolon should form a complete sentence, the group of words that comes after the semicolon should form a complete sentence, and the two sentences are logically connected. This corresponds in the case of the haiku's first line equating with its second and third lines. To a little boy, the

fish pond can be as impressive as the sea.

This photo-haikuist reminded us that not everyone can go to the sea. But we are all free to dream of the sea. The author lives in Ivanic-Grad, Croatia. Her viewfinder focused on a railed wooden bridge by a waterhole that was likely located in a forested hilly area rather than a popular tourist destination near the clear Adriatic Sea. She then imaginatively strung a six-word story together. The text was skillfully combined with the photo. The interplay of these two art forms helped us to youthfully imagine what it could be like to sail on the bridge of a tall ship on the open seas (McMurray, 2021, March 26).

The rules of the Matsuyama contest did not require adherence to a 17-syllable format. Some winning entries did follow a 5-7-5 syllable form and others displayed a short-longer line-short line structure. Djurdja Vukelic Rozic's photo-haiku was remarkable for being exactly six words. A six-word story is an entire story told in six words. It is a short narrative that can have all of the emotional themes of longer stories. The winning photo-haiku contained elements of sadness, humor, hope, drama, and excitement. Composing haiku in the form of six-word stories is an excellent way to develop your writing skills.

6. Takeaways for Understanding Ellipsis

In summary, the ellipsis is a form of punctuation that can be used when composing English haiku to show an omission, to show a pause, to create suspense, or to show a break in thought. When words are omitted, but not marked with an [...] ellipsis punctuation it can be difficult for the reader to guess them without the help of context from the other lines. Haiku is the literature of ellipsis and the essential value of this literature form is its shortness. The following list classifies representative examples of ellipsis found in highly regarded haiku and photo-haiku.

6.1. Haiku that lead us down a hidden path...

In exploration of the hidden meanings of haiku with ellipses, the following comment—central to my study hypothesis and my interpretation of the analysis—was raised (Ozment, 2021 personal communication):

“Haiku are best when they are self-contained, or when they lead us down an open path... Either a world is made manifest and transcendent within seventeen syllables, or, the haiku is incomplete but

begs for us to chase it through a looking glass.”

Note the incompleteness of this rhetorical question in this haiku with an [...] ellipsis punctuation by Russian writer Natalia Kuznetsova. She rose to the top of 33,940 entries to the Itoen 2020 haiku in English contest to win recognition from judges at the Haiku International Association.

* * *

Fireflies ...

where have you all gone

my childhood friends

6.2. Incompleteness of haiku

A continuum of thought, a lingering over the written words is best expressed with ... the three dots. A hidden message in a haiku, that the author wants the reader to fill-in, is best expressed with ... the three dots. This haiku was composed by Aaron Ozment (2021, personal communication), in response to a call for haiku in seventeen syllables. The author relinquished his authorial intent by encoding “three dots as neon lights, pointing” as it were to his intended readers—the next generation of young mothers and fathers—and leaving them to determine the way the text should be properly interpreted.

* * *

Nothing ever ends

echoes quake in nascent hearts

calling out to...

6.3. Nuances of haiku

An understanding of haiku is enhanced by noting the poetic effect of haikuists who intend for their lines, their utterances, to have multiple nuances. English language haiku tends to contain more grammar, more punctuation than Japanese language haiku (Henderson, 1965). Ellipsis can “delay” the last line, like a pregnant pause setting up a punch line, as in Garry Gay’s bald tire poem. The verb “is” was omitted from the first line. The [...] does not replace a word, it represents a drum roll... The punctuation prepared the reader to expect something important and worth waiting for.

* * *

Bald tire

still getting good mileage ...

as a tree swing

6.4. Reading between the lines of haiku with ellipsis

Cognitive effects take place during conversations as

interlocutors obtain contextual implications and revise their current assumptions. Marion Clarke from Warrenpoint, Ireland, was honorably mentioned for this timely haiku that matched a photo of tourist rickshaws parked in front of Dogo Onsen, a famous hot spring in Matsuyama. There is a reflective comment and question pattern in this haiku; ellipsis played an important role within the conversation.

* * *

almost noon...

we ask the rickshaw man

to wait for the drums

* * *

American Julie Bloss Kelsey won the 2021 Golden Haiku competition for this haiku with a longer first line noun phrase with a direct object. To understand it, the [...] could be replaced by a semi-colon or the missing conjunctive adverb “thus” or “so.”

* * *

blossoms on the breeze...

I exchange a wink

with a stranger

* * *

Kanchan Chatterjee from Jamshedpur, India, studied the history of a Buddhist monk known posthumously as Kobo Daishi of Monjuin in Matsuyama. Similar to the two above forms, a conjunctive verb “thus I am” or “so I am” can help the reader understand what the [ellipsis] represents.

* * *

autumn begins...

starting my Sanskrit lessons

with the word “Karma”

6.5. A transition or a time lapse indicated by ellipsis

The ellipsis can indicate contemplation rather than passing time, as in Jerry Kilbride’s fog poem (Heuvel, 1999).

* * *

fog...

just the tree and I

at the bus stop

* * *

According to Reed (2002, p. 1) “With the ellipses, the reader doesn’t completely stop ... but slows for a moment. One lingers for a while, like that weightless, selfsame fog. How thick, how far does it reach? Does it envelop the cityscape,

turning skyscraper tops into castles on clouds? The ellipses with their gentleness lead us toward the desired contemplation and wonder, and evoke a sense of mystery, as well.”

6.6. Ellipsis in haiku as a form of Japanese culture

An ellipsis is an effective way of conveying to the reader a lapse into silence. An absence of words usually signals a heightening of emotion or action. The ellipsis acts therefore as a form of Japanese culture. As such, it has proved to be a powerful and extremely useful poetic resource. In speaking aloud, pausing is, after all, a vital aspect of the delivery of meaning: a slight hesitation speaks volumes. Not saying something often says it better. The poetic-ellipsis is a technique best used for suggestion, or to convey a thought is incomplete or interrupted. Ellipsis can convey to the reader a request to focus the narrative camera on the silent subject, implying an expectation of some motion or action. It is not unheard of to see inanimate objects speaking the ellipsis (Figure 1).

6.7. Photo-haiku ellipsis

Photo-haiku which use the “noun + [...] ellipsis” or an “adjective + noun + ellipsis” form, do win contests. Note this one submitted with a photo of a huge wave by American Pat Geyer.

* * *
ocean waves...
the slow time
in between
* * *

Referring to three photo-haiku by authors (Figures 2, 3, and 4 in the Appendix) who employed linguistic ellipsis examples of omitting words, the photos represent, in effect, elided words from the haiku lines. These photo-haikuists did not employ [...] ellipsis punctuation. In the same sense as the proverb, “a picture is worth a thousand words” the active convergence of photography and haiku resulted in synergetic art forms. In all 4,113 talented artists participated in the Matsuyama Setouchi Photo-Haiku Contest created fine art by skillfully composing a haiku and arranging it with a photo taken somewhere in Japan. Some photo-haikuists added elements unseen in the frame of the camera viewfinder. Others helped viewers to feel, hear, smell, and taste what had been experienced. Unique phrases and poetics were crafted to emphasize the focus and lines in their photos.

In figure 2, the photo-haikuist, who goes by the pen name Kai, received an award for excellence in the 10th Setouchi-Matsuyama International Photo-Haiku Contest for three lines that were inspired by pink blossoms in a photo titled “A Glorious Spring Day” taken by the tourist office in the city of Inuyama, Aichi Prefecture. The author has quite likely experienced raising his arm to catch petals floating from a cascading blossom tree. He dreams perhaps of being able to freely embark on a voyage. The ellipsis, the words left out of this imaginative photo-haiku arise from the comforting middle line that borrowed from the Hebrew Bible and literary works such as Nobel Prize-winner Yasunari Kawabata’s “Palm-of-the-Hand Stories” and Tomihiro Hoshino’s “In the Palm of Your Hands” about feelings and what we think we can influence.

In figure 3, the photo-haikuist won an award for excellence in the 10th Setouchi-Matsuyama International Photo-Haiku Contest for a haiku that matched well with a photo of a special observation path alongside the reconstruction site for Kumamoto Castle which was displayed online by contest organizers. The aerial walkway affords a view of restoration work on a beloved relic damaged by earthquakes. The author may have omitted or abbreviated the article “the” from the expression to the moon on the third line. If so, the third line implied a verb which can mean gazing at the site in idle revelry, or more playfully to expose as moonlight. The first two lines described a powerful force. He alluded perhaps to a poem penned in 1688 by Mizuta Masahide who was mollified by the ability to view the moon after a barn burnt to the ground. The photo-haikuist therefore used ellipsis in a linguistic manner to create historical fiction from this photo.

In figure 4, the International University of Kagoshima student who writes with the pen name Ryuto received an honorable mention in the 10th Setouchi-Matsuyama International Photo-Haiku Contest for having composed a poem to complement a photo of the remains of an outer moat at Edo Castle in Tokyo’s Shinjuku Ward. Photo-haiku offers a multi-sensory access to visual perception. The linguistic ellipsis, the elided words, pertains to the nightlife and the traditional lifestyle of the Edo Period.

6.8. Ellipses are used differently in prose and poetry and haiku

Leaving out part of a sentence or an event by substituting it

with ellipsis is often performed by newspaper journalists to either save time, or by editors as a stylistic element. This markedly contrasts with the common usage of the ellipsis in poems to either indicate a trailing off or to build tension.

This next section of prose followed by a poem was excerpted from the *Asahi Shimbun* (McMurray, 2021, July 2) to perfectly demonstrate the difference in use of ellipses to abbreviate a long quotation from a newspaper contributor compared to its use to punctuate the end of a line of poetry to create a Japanese language style break—an aha moment—mid-way through a haiku.

Ashoka Weerakkody felt a gradual change in the spring-like weather of Colombo, Sri Lanka “as a strong breeze suddenly comes ... shaking and bending the lush flowering temple trees and coconut palms in the village ... sprinkling the footpaths ... where the Buddha was born some 2600 years ago.”

month of Vesak
the breeze carries me away...
Enlightened one

To highlight the differences between the grammatically correct usage of the semi-colon to connect two independent clauses, note these two lines penned by Ezra Pound (1885–1972). Appearing in 1913 as 14 words without a verb, it is considered to be the first haiku composed in English.

* * *

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

* * *

Today, the ellipsis is more often used to connect lines of haiku. The following haiku by Nicholas Virgilio (Heuvel, 1999) reveals a very deft usage of ellipsis as a caesura, a pause near the middle of a line. When a person squints into the sun, they shade their eyes and it takes a moment as symbolized by the ellipsis [...] to adjust to painfully bright light.

* * *

into the blinding sun...
the funeral procession's
glaring headlights

7. Conclusion

This research pioneered a new direction for the literary field of haiku literature and expectations for what creates a winning haiku. In this concluding section, suggestions are made concerning the importance of further study of poetic ellipsis.

7.1. Why this research is significant

The purpose of this research was achieved by digging deep into the historical literature. The findings of predecessors and peers in the field helped to form methodology. Analysis of the haiku submitted by participants helped to confirm the hypotheses. This research identified the first published haiku with an ellipsis, as well as classified eight examples of the types of ellipses—literary ellipses and [...] ellipsis punctuation—found in haiku and photo-haiku. Haiku can be referred to as the literature of ellipsis—the essential value of this literature is its shortness. For very short types of literary texts, such as the Japanese short poem haiku, the value of its shortness cannot be wholly explained by its inferred meaning.

7.2. Future research

Forming new hypotheses related to the classification of the “noun + [...] ellipsis” form of haiku may reconcile contradictory findings in previous papers on what makes a winning haiku. The path of haiku in both Japanese and English has at times been dotted with deer prints, or patterned by straw sandals. There are many clever ways to use punctuation in English haiku, even visually. However, it's become a bit predictable to use an ellipsis in an English haiku about rain or snow. Conducting additional studies on punctuation marks used in haiku, such as the long em dash or question mark could further assist in the understanding of haiku and photo-haiku. Perhaps *a dash of bitterns* is in order—or, do you think the long, thin angular neck of an egret (Figure 5) resembles punctuation for a possible poem: *a gathering of question marks?*

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Appendix 1. Illustrations



Figure 1. Clip-shot from LINE open source of Ellipsis ☹️...



spring breeze
on the palm of my hand
a pink ship
(Kaiki Tokudome, Kagoshima)

Figure 2. Photo-Haiku of A Glorious Spring Day (Inuyama City, Aichi Prefecture contest photo). ©Asahi Culture Center used with permission for research.



guarded castle
a tremor opens the door
to moon
(Srinivasa Rao Sambangi, India)

Figure 3. Photo-Haiku of Kumamoto Castle Special Observation Path (Kumamoto City, Kumamoto Prefecture contest photo). ©Asahi Culture Center used with permission for research.



When the sun sets
Another city floating
In the river
(Ryuto Sakamoto, Kagoshima)

Figure 4. Photo-Haiku of Remains of the Edo Castle Outer Moat (Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo contest photo). ©Asahi Culture Center used with permission for research.



Figure 5. Photo: Do you think this long-necked egret resembles a question mark?

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