Crafting Language Coursework Exemplar:
Commentary

For my original writing pieces, I crafted a travelogue extract and a blog post both treating the subject of Japanese culture. Text One, "In the Kitsune's Mouth", is a book excerpt intended to entertain a mature audience with a considerable amount of knowledge about Japan; Text Two, "Avoiding a Faux-Pas in Japan? You Can Do It!", is a blog post written to both inform and entertain a young-adult audience that is interested in learning more about Japan to travel there and would be found in an online blog about Japanese culture.

The titles are telling of their purpose and themes; "In the Kitsune's Mouth" references the fox god of the Japanese mythos, appealing to the epistemic knowledge of those who know Japanese folklore and mirroring my style guide "Hitching Rides with Buddha". The noun "mouth" also foreshadows the semantic field of gastronomy included in the text ("food kiosks", "okonomiyaki", "takoyaki"). On the other hand, my blog post's title uses an interrogative and an exclamative sentence: the former immediately creates interaction with the reader and establishes an interaction like that created by my style guide "What's It Really Like to Travel Japan?". The latter sentence mimics an excited intonation, mirroring prosodic features of speech and appealing to the reader's positive face (Brown & Levinson) through the encouraging expression "you can do it!": by expressing ability with the modal verb "can", the author makes the audience them feel appreciated and included in the content of the post. Although Text Two is a blog post, it includes article conventions from my style guide "10 Common Mistakes Travelers Make in Italy", such as a title followed by a subheading, to give a synopsis of the text and allow the reader to be drawn in by the content overview.

Both the texts are in the written mode, but Text Two is multimodal due to its electronic nature as a blog post: evidence of this is given by the presence of embedded links throughout. This is also clear due to the prosodic features of spoken language throughout the text: informally beginning a sentence with the conjunction "so" showcases how technological text mimics colloquial speech (Crystal) to build rapport and a sense of community with the reader. This interaction is also created with the synthetic personalisation of the pronoun "you", which addresses the reader directly and includes them in the writer's narration. A rapport with the audience is present in Text One too, where synthetic personalisation is also employed: furthermore, the text bolsters the interaction by alternating between present and past verb tenses. The former is used when directly addressing the audience to give a sense of immediacy ("you can't escape pachinko parlours") while the latter is employed to recount past events ("I stepped towards"), which mirrors the structure of a real-life conversation between two friends. Both texts employ a semantic field of taboo language ("goddamn", "Jesus Christ" in Text One, "ass", "moron" in Text Two) to further push the informal tone and conversational nature of the texts.

Although they both interact with their respective audiences, Text One and Text Two do so from different perspectives. In Text One, these is a semantic field of Japanese words ("pachinko", "ojisan") which are assumed to be known by the audience: the reliance on epistemic knowledge creates a discourse community with the intended audience of the text (Swales). On the contrary, Text Two has an informational aspect to it, which is why every piece of Japanese lexis is followed by a definition – like "kaikei-bon (literally, "settlement tray")" – to avoid assuming knowledge and imposing on the audience, threatening their negative face (Brown & Levinson). There is however epistemic knowledge of Christianity ("Judas Iscariot... and you know how the

rest went down"), which conveys how the author might assume that their audience is either Christian or was brought up with a Christian background.

Both texts create humour, although through different techniques. In Text One, Freud's repression and release theory creates a comedic effect through the author's inner monologue ("*Let me guess* […] *ojisan?!*") contrasting Japanese societal norms of politeness: this technique also showcases more of the writer's personality through the mention of their "social anxiety", which produces a feeling of sympathy from the audience. Short, simple sentences at the end of the text ("y'know", "I braced myself", "called it") also create a sarcastic tone through their pauses and fast pace. Text Two creates comedy by using the incongruity theory (Schopenhauer): when using the adverb "obviously" and the adjective "all" when speaking about business cards, the effect produced is comedic since business cards are, in fact, not commonly used. The hyperbole "traumatic events" when speaking of embarrassment also produces humour by exaggerating reality and creating incongruity. Furthermore, the writer's repetition of "I never did this" and "not me" in the text uses a triadic structure to create humour, which is also elicited by the author implicitly exposing their own shortcoming and evoke sympathy from the readers, similarly to Text One.

Text One uses a variety of paragraph structures and sentences to create a varied and engaging narrative flow. The introduction is split into two very short paragraphs, which visually communicate the change in subject from a general overview over Japan to a focus on Osaka: this split allows the reader to understand what the text will cover without being overwhelmed by a large amount of text. Compound sentences are also separated from simple sentences by colons (…"On the other hand, the locals most likely shrugged it off as "a gaijin doing the bare minimum", and I don't blame them: my standard of fluency is that of a Japanese grade schooler") to ensure that the syntax wouldn't be over-ornate. Text Two also presents the same short paragraphs to ensure clarity: these are also each preceded by a title ("...Is Scared of Numbers", "... Doesn't Like Money", "... Loves Business Cards") to enhance the blog post's intelligibility. This feature allows the reader to quickly see what each paragraph is about, making the content of each section straightforward.