

Heritage Interpretation

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Why interpretation?

Story

WHAT IS HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Freeman Tilden, 1957
"an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first-hand experience and by illustrative media"

Don Aldridge, 1975:
"the art of explaining the significance of a place to the public who visit it in order to point out a conservation message"

WHAT IS HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage:
 • „is the **process of explaining** to people the **significance** of the place or object they have come to see, so that they enjoy their visit more, **understand** their **heritage** and **environment** better, and develop a more **caring** attitude to **conservation**.”

Centre for Heritage Interpretation (Scotland):
 • Interpretation is the **process of communicating** messages about our cultural and natural heritage and **inspiring** audiences with a **wider understanding** of their environment.

National Association for Interpretation (USA):
 • Interpretation is a **mission-based communication process** that forges emotional and intellectual **connections** between the interests of the **audience** and the **meanings** inherent in the resource.

WHAT IS NOT HI - INFOTAINMENT





GLIMPSES OF HI HISTORY

prehistoric times, different cultures	shamans, priests, scholars
Antique Greece	first written account of travels, first record of guided interpretation
Antique Rome	travellers paying for guides
Medieval times	accounts from journeys, 1st printed travel book: Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam by Bernhard von Breydenbach, Codex Calixtinus – 12th century AD
Renaissance	noblemen travelling around Europe with their teachers involving local guides; some of them published accounts of their journeys (e.g. Harant, K. z Polžic a Bezdružic (1608) Putování aneb cesta z Království českého do Benátek a odtud po moři do země Svaté, země judské a dále do Egypta. Praha: v. nákladem)

GLIMPSES OF HI HISTORY

Romanticism	outburst of travelers seeking the ideals of romanticism: solitude, wild natural scenery, bucolic life in the countryside (e.g. journeys of Karel Hynek Mácha)
1841	Thomas Cook organizes the 1st commercial trip and prints a travel handbook in 1845
1800s	historical buildings and parts of land are set apart as a valuable heritage
Late 1800s	late 1800s Maori women earn money providing guided tours farmers in the Moravian karst are guiding tourists in the caves and sell them dripstones (Stephen Bishop does the same in the Mammoth Caves) 1879 – Elisabeth's cave near Sloup, CZ is electrified tourist guides and local history books make a distinctive genre
1902	Enos Mills starts making living on guided tours in Colorado
1907	quality standards of guiding introduced in New Zealand
1916	National Park Service founded (education as part of mission)

GLIMPSES OF HI HISTORY

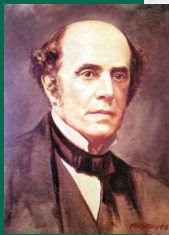

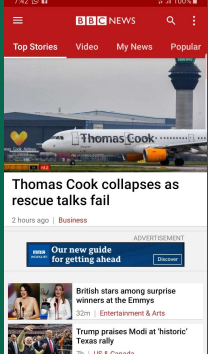
1957	Freeman Tilden makes foundations of interpretation as a discipline
1960s	visitor centres built, guides are trained with unified methodology (Harpers Ferry NPS training centre starts operation)
1970s	interpretation is acquiring theoretical background of an academic discipline (Grante Sharpe: Interpreting the Environment).
1980s	evaluation of quality in HI => Interpretive planning unified National Association for Interpretation
1990s	environmental interpretation, thematic interpretation interpretive consultancies take over large part of the market (from governmental agencies) interpretive plans, interpretive strategies established as standard documents Journal of Interpretation Research
2000s	Wider interlinking between HI & exhibition design and practice HI perceived as a tool for social change and inclusion (UK) over 150 universities and colleges offer HI studies SE Asia is becoming dynamic market 2010 Interpret Europe established

Czech Republic

Heritage interpretation is moving toward recognition as a field. It is often confused with environmental education.	
1960s	1st educational trails (Medník).
1970s, 1980s	Interpretive panels planted by conservationists, interpretive brochures, 1st (and the last) educational nature reserve Na vyhlídce near Prachatice
1990s	Cooperation with Western countries Visitor centres in national parks
2000s	1st methodological text published (translation of Carter) along with trainings delivered by James Carter => closely connected to community planning the House of Nature project starts
2010s	Czech Association for Heritage Interpretation found Training of visitor centres' staff (UK, US, D know-how transfer) first Czech book on heritage interpretation Czech Institute for Heritage Interpretation Interpretive planning becomes obligatory for EU funded projects
23. 9. 2019	Thomas Cook travel agency files for bankruptcy

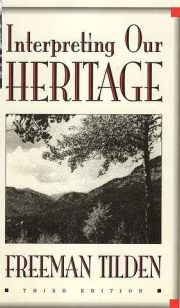
Thomas Cook case study

- Why Thomas Cook company got bankrupt today?

HI Methodology Born

Mission 66
National Park Service
1955-1966



Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or being described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.



Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

"... it should also be acknowledged that once a certain idea of landscape, a myth, a vision, establishes itself in an actual place, it has a peculiar way of muddling categories, of making metaphors more real than their referents; of becoming, in fact, part of the scenery."

Shama 1996, Landscape and Memory

Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 3. Interpretation is an art which combines many arts whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.



Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
- *Education is process of deliberate and purposeful influencing of conditions that enable optimal development of an individual to become authentic, integrated and socialized character. (Pelikán, 1995)*

Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- provoke – relate – reveal



Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.



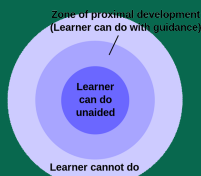
Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 6. Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.



Refining Tildens's classification

- **sensori-motor (0-yrs)**
 - touch of nature
- **pre-operational (2-6 yrs)**
 - intuitive thinking, fabulation plays important role
 - activities, exploration, hands-on, limited ability of classification and categorizing
- **concrete-operational (7-11)**
 - enormous ability to gain information
 - ability of classification
 - limited ability to consider alternatives
- **Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development**



Broadening of the principles Beck & Cable (2002)

- Interpretation for **children, teenagers and seniors** – when these comprise uniform groups – should follow fundamentally different approaches.
- **High technology** can reveal the world in exciting new ways. However, incorporating this technology into the interpretive program must be done with foresight and care.
- Interpreters must concern themselves with the **quantity and quality** (selection and accuracy) of information presented. Focused well-researched interpretation will be more powerful than a longer discourse.
- Before applying the **arts in interpretation**, the interpreter must be familiar with basic communication techniques. Quality interpretation depends on the interpreter's knowledge and skills, which should be developed continually.

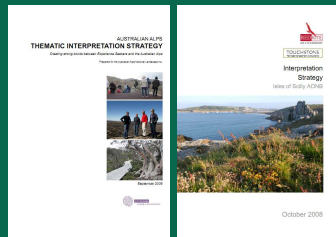


Broadening of the principles Beck & Cable (2002)

- The overall interpretive program must be capable of attracting support – financial, volunteer, political, administrative – whatever support is needed for the program to flourish.
- Interpretation should instill in people the ability, and the desire, to **sense the beauty** in their surroundings – to provide spiritual uplift and to encourage resource preservation.
- Interpreters can promote optimal experiences through **intentional and thoughtful program** and facility design.
- **Passion** is the essential ingredient for powerful and effective interpretation – passion for the resource and for those people who come to be inspired by the same.

TOPICS IN HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

- Aims and quality
- Accessibility
- Authenticity
- New media
- Manipulation
- Follow-up relationship with a visitor



SPECIFICS OF INTERPRETATION

- Works in the field of informal education
 - voluntarily participation in the programme,
 - different level of knowledge and experience among participants,
 - visitors quickly move their interest elsewhere,
 - highly competitive free time market,
 - is neither infotainment nor edutainment, it has got clear mission (protection of natural & cultural heritage)

DISTINCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

- HI is focused on authentic objects and places
- HI is not set of activities but turns phenomena into experiences (provokes mental processes)
- intensionally and intensively works with emotions
- most of HI is aimed at adults above 12
- EE educational programmes are focused on school groups:
 - same age,
 - expectable level of knowledge and skills,
 - captive audience,
 - social group with own rules, topics, roles and history,
 - behaviour is framed by school settings (though subliminally).

CAPTIVE vs. NONCAPTIVE AUDIENCES

Interpretation and Communication | 13

Differences between Captive and Noncaptive Audiences	
Captive Audiences	Noncaptive Audiences
Involuntary audience Time commitment is fixed External rewards important Must pay attention Will accept a formal, academic approach Will make an effort to pay attention, even if bored	Voluntary audience Have no time commitment External rewards not important Do not have to pay attention Expect an informal atmosphere and a nonacademic approach Will switch attention if bored
Examples of motivations: grades diplomas certificates licenses jobs/employment money advancement success	Examples of motivations: interest fun entertainment self-enrichment self-improvement a better life passing time (nothing better to do)
Typical settings: classrooms job training courses professional seminars courses required for a license (e.g., driving)	Typical settings: parks, museums, zoos, aquariums, etc. informal education programs at home watching television, listening to radio, reading a magazine

Figure 1-2. Typical characteristics of captive and noncaptive audiences.

Ham 2013:13



QUALITY INTERPRETATION

- has a **strong theme**,
- is well **organized**,
- is **relevant**,
- is **enjoyable**.

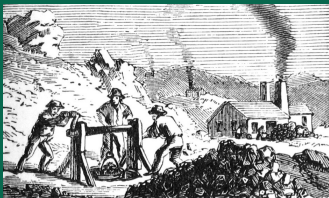
I call this a TORE model.



Ham, 2013

TORE - THEME

Speedwell Cavern was not only the most unprofitable lead mine in the world, but it also reminds us of industry that brought death to many poor families



TORE - MAIN THEME

- simplifies preparation of interpretive programme
- eliminates fragmented experience (supports concentrated attention)
- eliminates information overload
- creates logical frame for visitors' experiences
- **strong main theme**
 - high probability to adress programme participants (=> provoke thinking)

MAIN THEME – CZECH EXAMPLES

Předmět	Hlavní sdělení (1)	Podrobnější sdělení (může jich být více, zpravidla 5-9)
NPR Jizerskohorské bučiny	NPR Jizerskohorské bučiny je nejrozsáhlejším a ekologicky nejceněnějším souvislým komplexem lesa s převahou buku v Čechách.	Horní hranice výskytu buku lesního je ohrožena vitěm odlesnění náhorní plošiny Jizerských hor. Přemnožená vysoká zvěř je vážným problémem při obnově lesa v NPR Jizerskohorské bučiny. NPR Jizerskohorské bučiny je jedním z mála míst, kde hnízdí čáp černý.
Užovka obojková	Ačkoli je užovka obojková našim nejhojnějším a nejnámějším hadem, patří mezi ohrožené živočichy.	Užovka obojková zřídka kdy kouše, ale snaží se útočnicka zahnat prudkými pohyby těla a nepříjemným zápachem. Patří mezi hady s nejsevernějším výskytem – můžeme ji najít až za polárním kruhem! Výskyt mokřadů a kosení rákosin ohrožuje výskyt užovky obojkové u nás.
Průrva Ploučnice	Průrva Ploučnice je starým technickým dílem a kulturní památkou.	Průrva Ploučnice patří k nejromantičtějším místům na celém toku řeky. Záměr, který budovatelé umělého koryta sledovali, se nikdy nepodařilo naplnit. Již v 19. století byla průrva Ploučnice turistickou atrakcí.

TORE – HI IS ORGANIZED

- we are more reactive to information we understand,
- new information are much better retained, if within logical structure (= are easy to follow)
- we are not able to make sense out of more than **4 ideas**



MENTAL CAPACITY

- George Miller (1956): „on average people are capable of making sense out of only five to nine separate and new ideas at one time“
- Nelson Cowan (2001) – revised to 3 to 4

TORE – RELEVANT

- Interpretation is meaningful
 - resonates with my knowledge = is within my context,
 - I can understand the message.
- Interpretation is personal
 - touches my emotions = uses universal concepts = extreme emotions (love, heroism, friendship) & basic biological



TORE - ENJOYABLE

- Enjoyable programme does not mean funny or lighthearted, it must be entertaining within the context => meet expectations of the audience.
- passion and genuine interest are the cornerstones of quality interpretation.



QUALITY INTERPRETATION

- has a **strong theme**,
- is easy to follow,
- is **relevant**,
- is enjoyable.



Ham, 2013

I call this a TORE model.

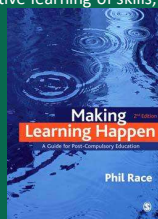


WHY WAS THE PROGRAMME IN SPEEDWELL CAVERN SUCCESSFUL?

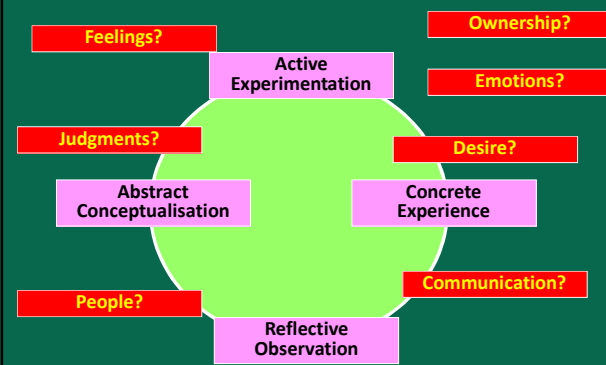
- Concentrated visitors' attention to only one topic: led mining.
- Used simple language and logical storyline.
- Narrative touched personal themes: success/failure, health, death, hard work.
- The guide was able to moderate visitors' expectations.

What Tilden did not know? How we learn

- Peter Jarvis (1998) – response to experience
 - Non-learning (prejudice, disinterest, rejection)
 - Non reflective learning (learning of a skill, memorization)
 - Reflective learning (contemplation, reflective learning of skills, learning by experiment)
- Phil Race (2010)
 - focus on emotions in learning
 - learning process is affected by:
 - Motivation
 - Feedback
 - Meaningfulness and ownership
 - Mentoring, support



Phil Race – emotions in learning





What Tilden did not know? How we learn

Popular learning models in CZ:

- Experiential learning (Kurt Lewin => David Kolb)
 - experience – group reflection – generalization – planning
 - concrete experience – reflective observation – abstract conceptualisation – active experimentation
- E-U-R
 - spontaneous learning
 - Evocation – Acquiring knowledge – Reflection of learning (content & process)

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