

ORAL AND LITERATE STRATEGIES IN SPOKEN AND WRITTEN NARRATIVES

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Comparative analysis of spoken and written versions of a narrative demonstrates (1) that features which have been identified as characterizing oral discourse are also found in written discourse, and (2) that the written short story combines syntactic complexity expected in writing with features which create involvement expected in speaking. Quint-essentially literary devices (repetition of sounds and words, syntactic structures, and rhythm) are shared by written literary language and ordinary spontaneous conversation because both are typified by subjective knowing and by focus on interpersonal involvement. In contrast, expository prose and content-focused oral genres, such as lectures and instructions, may be typified by objective knowing and by focus on content.*

Linguistic research too often focuses on one or another kind of data, without specifying its relationship to other kinds. In order to determine which texts are appropriate for proposed research, and to determine the significance of past and projected research, a perspective is needed on the kinds of language studied and their interrelationships. Moreover, as Lakoff 1981 observes, discourse analysis needs a taxonomy of discourse types, and ways of distinguishing among them.

Through close comparative analysis of spoken and written versions of a narrative produced by the same person, two dimensions crucial to discourse types will be addressed here: (1) spoken vs. written modes, and (2) the relationship between literary language and the language of ordinary conversation. Following background discussion of related research, recent studies by Ochs 1979 and Chafe 1979a provide initial inventories of features associated with informal spoken and formal written discourse. The relevance of such features for these discourse types was verified by comparison of a large number of spoken and written versions of personal narratives. Examples from a typical pair are presented. However, one pair of narratives thus compared did not exhibit the expected features. The written version of this aberrant pair turned out to be more like a short story than like expository prose. Analysis of the two versions of this narrative demonstrates that the written story combines some features expected in informal spoken discourse with others expected in formal writing.

Specifically, this written story exhibits typically written features which Chafe 1979a calls INTEGRATION and which Ochs calls compactness, along with features

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which Chafe associates with spoken language and characterizes as INVOLVEMENT. I suggest that these are two different orders of phenomena. Integration (and its opposite, FRAGMENTATION) is a surface feature of linguistic structure. Involvement (and its opposite, DETACHMENT) is a deeper dimension, reflecting what Goffman 1979 has described in face-to-face interaction as FOOTING, i.e. the speaker's stance toward the audience (and I would add, toward the material or content). Therefore, features of integration and involvement, which Chafe finds characteristic of writing and speaking respectively,¹ can be combined in a single discourse type. The story analysed here—and, I suggest, literary language in general—uses features of involvement to create the kind of knowing that Havelock 1963 shows to be basic to oral performance: subjective knowing, established through a sense of identification between audience and performer or audience and characters in the text. (I would extend this, following Ong 1977, 1979, to the sense of identification among interactants, as a dynamic which underlies communication in ordinary conversation.)

The written short story, then, takes advantage of the written medium to achieve integration, to create maximum effect with fewest words; but it depends for its impact, like face-to-face conversation, on a sense of involvement between the writer and the audience or characters in the narrative. It is for this reason that literary discourse (short stories, poems, novels), rather than being most different from ordinary conversation, is, in fact, most similar to it: those features which are thought quintessentially literary (repetition of sounds and words, syntactic parallelism, rhythm) are all basic to ordinary spontaneous conversation, as is demonstrated in the spoken version of the narrative analysed here.

1. BACKGROUND: RESEARCH ON SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE. A growing body of research compares spoken and written language, but far more is to be found in journals concerned with speech (e.g. Greenfield 1972, O'Donnell 1974, Poole & Field 1976) than with linguistics. In other cases, the focus is on writing and/or reading, with a comparison to speech undertaken as a heuristic (Nystrand 1981, Rubin 1978, Stubbs 1981, Vachek 1973).² Anthropologists examine the social meaning and uses of literacy (Heath 1980; Jacob, ms; Philips 1975), and psychologists explore the cognitive consequences of literacy (Cole & Scribner 1981, Greenfield 1972, Scribner & Cole 1981).³

¹ Although his analysis focuses on speaking and writing, Chafe ends his paper with the observation that features he finds in his written data are also found in oral ritual language of the non-literate Seneca Indians.

² For example, an excellent summary of changing attitudes toward spoken and written language as data is presented by Vachek as an introduction to a study of written language.

³ Most research on the cognitive consequences of literacy has reiterated that literacy permits abstract and 'logical' thinking, whereas non-literate people can only think concretely. One of the most influential sources of this hypothesis is Ong (1979:2) who cites Havelock as his source when he asserts that 'writing is an absolute necessity for the analytically sequential linear organization of thought ...' Others frequently cited are Luria 1976 and Olson 1977. However, as has been consistently demonstrated by Cole and Scribner, we cannot assume that literacy leads to significant cognitive differences. Rather, they say, work by such scholars as Havelock 1963 and Goody 1977

An older and larger body of related research has focused on oral vs. literate tradition, or orality and literacy as frames of mind (Goody 1977, Goody & Watt 1963, Havelock 1963, Olson 1977, Ong 1967, 1977). This research is significant for linguists interested in discourse (see Tannen 1980a,b, 1981d for discussions of the uses of this research in discourse analysis). But we are only beginning to look at linguistic analysis of actual spoken and written texts with a view toward understanding their relationship. The findings of such research suggest that some differences are indeed related directly to the spoken vs. written modes; but in addition, many features that have been associated exclusively with one or the other mode, upon closer analysis, are found in both.

The ensuing narrative analysis will examine some of these lexical, syntactic and discourse features. But first, what are some of the BROAD strategies that have been associated with speaking and writing?

Two recurrent hypotheses are (1) that spoken discourse is highly context-bound, while writing is decontextualized (cf. Kay 1977 and Olson 1977, as well as many educators in the field of composition theory who have built on Olson's work); and (2) that cohesion is established in spoken discourse through paralinguistic and non-verbal channels (tone of voice, intonation, prosody, facial expression, and gesture), while cohesion is established in writing through lexicalization and complex syntactic structures which make connectives explicit, and which show relationships between propositions through subordination and other foregrounding or backgrounding devices (Chafe 1981, Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz 1981, Gumperz et al. 1981). The first of these hypotheses, I suggest, indeed taps features often found in spoken and written discourse respectively, but these result not from the spoken or written nature of the discourse as such, but rather from the genres that have been selected for analysis—casual conversation, on the one hand, and expository prose, on the other. The second hypothesis is indeed a necessary concomitant of spoken and written modes. (For more detailed analysis and discussion leading to this conclusion, cf. Tannen 1981c.)

Keeping in mind the differing sources of these generalizations, we may consider oral strategies to be those aspects of discourse which make maximal use of context, by which maximal meaning and connective tissue are implied rather than stated. In contrast, we may consider literate strategies to be those by which maximal background information and connective tissue are made explicit.⁴ Similarly, typically oral strategies are those which depend for effect on

about the historical effects of literacy cannot be applied to individual cognitive ability. Or, as Bruner (1978:88) explains in an important review of Luria: 'Most of what has emerged from studies of Africans, Eskimos, aborigines, and other groups shows that the SAME basic mental functions are present in adults in ANY culture. What differs is the deployment of these functions: what is considered an appropriate strategy suited to the situation and task.'

⁴ This is the cumulative thrust of papers collected in Tannen 1981f.

⁵ It is easy to see therefore why the literate or decontextualized form of discourse has been associated with Bernstein's notion of elaborated code, and the oral or highly context-bound form with Bernstein's restricted code (cf. Kay).

paralinguistic and non-verbal channels, while literate strategies are those that depend on lexicalization to establish cohesion.

There is mounting evidence of literate strategies used in oral discourse. Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz 1981 demonstrate that oral discourse in early primary classrooms can be seen as preparation for literacy; and Michaels & Cook-Gumperz 1979 and Michaels & Collins 1981 illustrate this in a first-grade oral discourse genre called 'sharing time'. Kochman 1975 observes class-related oral and literate styles in black and white communicative patterns. I have shown (Tannen 1979, 1980b, 1981e) that conversational styles among highly literate speakers can be seen as conventionalizations of oral and literate strategies.

Work by Labov 1972 on evaluation in spoken narrative, although not so intended, reflects oral vs. literate strategies in spoken discourse. Labov observes that narrators must make clear what the point of a narrative is and how its parts contribute to that point; this is evaluation. It can be accomplished externally, by stepping outside the narrative events to lexicalize the point (*And this was the best part or, Boy, was I scared!*), or internally, making clear from the way material is presented what the speaker thinks about it (and consequently what the hearer is to think). Thus external evaluation uses a literate strategy, lexicalization of meaning; and internal evaluation uses an oral strategy, meaning implied through paralinguistic cues.

Labov finds that middle-class speakers tend to use more external evaluation, while working-class (particularly black) speakers use more internal evaluation, and consequently are better storytellers. My own research (Tannen 1979, 1981a) shows that this division is not adequate; middle-class white speakers of East European Jewish background prefer internal evaluation. But the notions of internal vs. external evaluation, and the observation that the former makes for better storytelling, are crucial. They indicate that the nature of storytelling in conversation is based on audience participation in inferring meaning. This supports the hypothesis that the effect of conversation is subjective knowing, created by audience involvement (i.e. by being *MOVED*), as opposed to objective knowing, created by intellectual argument (i.e. by being *CONVINCED*).

This makes clear the close relationship between literary and ordinary language, a phenomenon supported by other recent research. Bright 1981a,b, following Hymes 1977 and Tedlock 1972, discovers poetic form in an oral Karok myth. Polanyi 1981 shows, in conversational storytelling, complexity of viewpoint, reference, and meaning. Green 1981 finds subject-verb inversion in colloquial discourse. All this research shows that what has been thought literate or literary is found in spoken discourse.

Somewhat less work has been done on the use of oral strategies in written discourse. Lakoff 1981 shows that features of ordinary conversation have found their way into popular contemporary written style. Rader 1981 demonstrates that a short story written by a novice writer is not decontextualized, but rather is maximally contextualized, requiring significant filling-in by the reader. In this spirit, I would like to investigate more closely the mixing of oral and literate

strategies in a written narrative, showing that written discourse can be based on features previously associated with spoken language.

2. THE CHOICE OF DATA. In addressing the question of spoken vs. written language, researchers typically choose one oral genre but a different written one; they then proceed to report their findings as reflecting spoken vs. written modes, rather than other facets of the genres chosen.⁶ For example, O'Donnell uses transcripts of television talk shows for spoken data, and published newspaper columns for written data. This is a fairly typical choice; the spoken data are relatively informal, and interactive rather than content-focused, whereas the written data are relatively formal and content-focused.

Poole & Field use, as their spoken data, interviews with university students about high-school and university life. They contrast this with written data in the form of university students' 'life-forecast essays' about their lives from graduation to retirement, within the 'framework of reasonable expectation'. Thus Poole & Field compare relatively formal and content-focused spoken discourse with written personal narrative. This may account, in fact, for their finding that spoken language contains more 'structural complexity' than written—whereas Chafe 1981, Ochs 1979, and O'Donnell 1974 find more complexity in written than spoken.⁷

Generalizing findings based on narrative data is particularly problematic. As the work of Labov consistently demonstrates, and as he puts it, 'Narrative as a whole contrasts sharply with ordinary conversation, which shows a much more complex structure' (1972:377). Narrative, at least in English, tends to follow the temporal sequence of events reported, with cohesion established by mere juxtaposition or the minimal conjunction *and* (Chafe 1979a,b), at least in speaking. (There is some evidence that written narrative tends to follow a spoken model; this is explored in Tannen 1981g.)

Narrative has been a common topic of study for a number of reasons. For one thing, it is a relatively common genre, and comparatively easy to elicit; many people seem to like to tell stories. In addition, narratives have easily recognizable boundaries. For the purpose of comparing multiple versions of a text, or texts produced by different people about the same material, narratives are again particularly apt. Thus narratives comprise the data in Chafe 1979a

⁶ Susan Philips has called to my attention the relevance of Goffman 1964, who points out that the structure and processes of interaction, though expressed in language, are often social rather than linguistic in nature.

⁷ The question of complexity is particularly thorny. Thus the findings of Poole & Field are impossible to evaluate, not only because of their choice of data, but also because they present their findings in the form of quantification of their codings. They give only two sample sentences from their texts, and do not discuss how they have determined categories for coding. Halliday (ms) also asserts that spoken language has more complex sentence structure; but as evidence, he simply presents extended, unglossed samples of conversational transcripts. (My best guess is that he sees complexity in the chaining of clauses which is common to speech.) Current research comparing spoken and written narrative about the same film should shed a little light on this issue (Beaman 1981, Tannen 1981g).

and in the present study, as well as in related preceding studies (papers collected in Chafe 1980b; Tannen 1980c), and are a major source of data for Ochs 1979.

These observations about the confusion of findings by choices of data do not mean that all researchers are unaware of the special contexts of their data (some are and some aren't); rather, I want to point out that it is impossible to determine whether such findings reflect the spoken vs. written modes or other aspects of the data—such as genre, or context and associated register.

The two scholars whose work forms a starting point for my analysis, Ochs 1979 and Chafe 1979a, are well aware of the special nature of their data. In fact, Ochs' study was not primarily concerned with spoken vs. written modes, but rather with unplanned vs. planned discourse. She asserts that there are four kinds of discourse: unplanned spoken, unplanned written, planned spoken, and planned written. However, for her analysis she chooses samples from only two types: unplanned spoken (casual conversation and personal narratives) and planned written (personal narratives).⁸ Thus her study turns out to be similar to those focused on spoken vs. written discourse.

Chafe also cites four types of discourse; indeed, in connection with the project from which his data are drawn, Chafe 1981 gathers discourse of all four types: informal spoken (dinner table conversation), informal written (letters), formal spoken (academic lectures), and formal written (scholarly prose), all from the same people. His preliminary study (1979a) gathered renditions in all four conditions of the same narrative by the same speaker/writer. However, Chafe too has so far analysed only the most distant styles: the informal spoken and the formal written.

3. FEATURES OF FORMAL WRITTEN AND INFORMAL SPOKEN LANGUAGE. Most previous research has focused on conversation or narrative as spoken discourse, and on expository prose or narrative as written discourse. Keeping in mind that features thus isolated probably grow out of the genres chosen, it will nonetheless be informative to consider what those findings are, and to test

⁸ The terms 'unplanned' and 'planned' seem less apt than those Chafe uses, 'informal' and 'formal'. Ochs' important essay clearly identifies significant distinctions, but they seem to be more a matter of register than planning. Planning may account for some linguistic phenomena, e.g. stumbling, hesitation, and repair; but even repair mechanisms have been shown to serve purposes in interaction (Polanyi 1978, Schegloff 1979). Lakoff 1975, 1979 shows that all such phenomena can be seen as stylistic choices of self-presentation, rather than evidence of mental processing. Moreover, differences in features of the type which Ochs attributes to planning seem to be far more responsive to changes in genre and context than to changes in planning time. For example, if one is about to deliver a formal lecture, one indeed has time to plan. However, one may just as well plan to have a talk with a spouse or friend; yet endless planning time will not result in a discourse that sounds like a lecture. Similarly, following a formal lecture, one may be asked an unanticipated question and be required to answer on the spot, producing discourse that sounds much more like the lecture than like yesterday's planned talk at home. Some people, at least, are able to produce prose that sounds either academic and 'planned', or informal and spontaneous, in the time it takes them to pass a pen over paper or hit typewriter keys. What seems to determine their choice of words and structures is their sense of what is appropriate to the context.

them in spoken and written narratives produced by the same speakers about the same material.

Ochs identifies the following characteristics of informal (in her terms, unplanned) spoken discourse:

- (A) Dependence on morphosyntactic structures learned early in life.
- (B) Reliance on immediate context to express relationships between propositions.
- (C) Preference for deictic modifiers (*this man*).
- (D) Avoidance of relative clauses.
- (E) Preponderance of repair mechanisms (following the terminology of Sacks and Schegloff).
- (F) Use of parallelism: repetition of
 - i. phonemes (Sacks' and Schegloff's 'sound touch-offs').
 - ii. lexical items ('lexical touch-offs').
 - iii. similar syntactic constructions.
- (G) Tendency to begin narrative in past tense and switch to present.

In contrast, planned written discourse is typified by

- (A') Complex morphosyntactic structures learned later in life.
- (B') Lexicalization of relationships between propositions in formal cohesive devices and topic sentences.
- (C') Preference for definite and indefinite articles (*a man, the man*).
- (D') Use of relative clauses.
- (E') Absence of repair mechanisms.
- (F') Less use of parallelism.
- (G') Tendency to use past tense in narrative.

In general, Ochs notes, planned written discourse is more compact.

These features reflect several levels of phenomena. The use of deictics vs. articles seems to be a matter of register conventions. Repair mechanisms and topic sentences may reflect register conventions, individual style, or relative processing-time available. The use of complex constructions, relative clauses, and formal cohesive devices reflects what has been called the literate strategy of establishing cohesion by lexicalization.

Particularly intriguing is Ochs' observation, following Sacks and Schegloff, of the preponderance of the oral strategy of increased parallelism or repetition in speaking. The use of syntactic parallel constructions may also be associated with reduced planning time: by repeating a syntactic construction, a speaker can stall for time, while planning new information to insert into the variable slot at the end. But what seems most significant is that syntactic parallelism establishes a mesmerizing rhythm which sweeps the hearer along; hence it is perfectly geared to knowing through involvement (as discussed earlier), which underlies both oral performance and conversation. This will be seen in the narrative analysed below.

In comparing spoken and written language, Chafe 1979a identifies many of the features noted by Ochs. He explains their occurrence by observing that written language is characterized by a high degree of integration—made possible, he says, by the slowness of writing and the speed of reading. Spoken language, in contrast, is characterized by fragmentation, resulting in part from the spurt-like nature of speech which probably reflects the jerky nature of thought (Chafe 1980a). However, spoken language exhibits a high degree of involvement, in contrast to the detachment of written language.

Involvement, according to Chafe, is created by a number of devices:

- (a) Devices by which the speaker monitors the communication channel (rising intonation, pauses, requests for back-channel responses).
- (b) Concreteness and imageability through specific details.
- (c) A more personal quality; use of 1st person pronouns.
- (d) Emphasis on people and their relationships.
- (e) Emphasis on actions and agents rather than states and objects.
- (f) Direct quotation.
- (g) Reports of speaker's mental processes.
- (h) Fuzziness.
- (i) Emphatic particles (*really, just*).

Features which Chafe identifies as serving involvement build, I suggest, on the interpersonal involvement between speaker and audience, to foster the subjective knowing discussed earlier. This is closely related to what Scollon & Scollon 1980 call non-focused interaction, in which communicator and audience collaborate in making sense of a discourse.

Integration, as Chafe describes it, is achieved in writing by:

- (a) Nominalizations.
- (b) Increased use of participles.
- (c) Attributive adjectives.
- (d) Conjoined phrases and series of phrases.
- (e) Sequences of prepositional phrases.
- (f) Complement clauses.
- (g) Relative clauses.

Chafe also notes that spoken discourse presents propositions without overtly marking their relationship to each other, or with the minimal cohesive conjunction *and*; written discourse, by contrast, uses subordinating conjunctions, subject deletion, and other complex morphosyntactic constructions to achieve cohesion.

4. COMPARING SPOKEN AND WRITTEN NARRATIVES. To verify and build on this research on the relationship between spoken and written language, students in my Discourse Analysis class recorded spontaneous conversation and transcribed narratives which occurred in the conversations. Each student then asked the person who had told the story to write it down.⁹ In almost all cases, the written narratives were much shorter than their spoken counterparts, in keeping with Ochs' assertion that writing is more compact, and Chafe's that it is integrated. Furthermore, the students found, in their pairs of stories, features that Ochs and Chafe identified as associated with spoken and written language. A typical such pair, presented here, is 'Registering kids in school'.

The spoken narrative was recorded by a class member as she chatted with her roommate, who was washing dishes.¹⁰ Earlier in the evening, the roommate

⁹ A number of critics have commented, rightly, that it would be interesting to have some people write first and then tell what they wrote. Perhaps an effective way to approach this would be to start with a narrative related in a letter.

¹⁰ The speaker, a native Virginian, is 36; she is a former English teacher currently in media administration. She was not aware of being taped, but subsequently gave permission for the tape and transcript to be used.

had received a telephone call from her friend Nanette; the question that triggered the following narrative was *How's Nanette?* In response, the roommate recounted information which Nanette had told her, including the section transcribed: Nanette's experience registering her children in school in their new neighborhood.

The spoken version of 'Registering kids in school' was much longer than the one which the speaker later wrote. The spoken story contains 340 words distributed in 61 idea units (Chafe 1980a), i.e. spurts of speech determined by a combination of prosodic and intonational cues. The written story contains 76 words in 4 sentences and 12 clauses (phrases separated by punctuation).

The following excerpts demonstrate the differences between the spoken and written versions of 'Registering kids in school':¹¹

[Spoken: Units 2-27 and 36-46 of 64]

... A:nd u:m ... Dale is going to go to A ... júnior high school. Shé's going into the ninth grade. But they put the ninth graders in with the ... all right. The way they've got it, they're in a period of transition at their school system now, OK? [Yeah.] U:m ... They've got an el- elementary school in every project. But junior highs um ... there isn't one in every project. They ... you know, [Uh-huh.] ... develop ... développement I mean, rather than project. ... Community. [Yeah.] And ... the ninth grade ... is with, because the high school's overcrowded I guess they're building a new high school? So they're ... they're putting the ... eighth ... and the ninth ... in ... the júnior high, [Hm.] (portion omitted) ... U:m ... Dale ... is going into the ninth grade, and shé is supposed to be going into ' high school nórmally, ... But shé, because of this situátion, will be ... in júnior high. This is a schóol, thát is ... séventh ... uh eighth and ninth graders only, ... two thousand. ... Out in a little sticky place like Willingboro New Jérsey. (Laugh.) ... Two thousand. It's only eighth and ninth graders.

Almost the same information is expressed in the written version in the following sentence:

[Sentence 3 of 4 sentences]

Dale, in the ninth grade, will go to junior high school, which for this academic year consists of only the 8th and 9th graders, for a total of 2,000 students.

There is slightly less information in the written version, but the written text is far shorter than the decreased information accounts for. The most striking difference is the increased integration or compactness of the written text.¹² In contrast, the spoken passage is fragmented, as a result of numerous pauses,

¹¹ The following transcription conventions are used:

- ' indicates primary stress.
- ˘ indicates secondary stress.
- : following a vowel indicates elongation, as in *a:nd*.
- . indicates sentence-final falling intonation,
- , indicates clause-final intonation, signaling 'more to come'.
- ? indicates rising intonation, as in *wh*-questions.
- ... indicates measurable pause of 5 second. Each additional period indicates another half second of pause.
- ¹ indicates high pitch on word.
- ˆ indicates high pitch on phrase, lowering gradually as phrase proceeds.

¹² It is interesting, therefore, that the spoken is the more elaborated—giving more background information, contrary to what has been suggested as characteristic of expository prose.

false starts, fillers, repetitions, and backtracks. In general, the sequence of information seems to follow the speaker's thoughts, whereas the written version combines ideas in a single sentence.

Other features noted by both Chafe and Ochs abound. The written version uses more complex syntactic structures. In the spoken version, the relationships between propositions are not overtly marked; the speaker relies on juxtaposition, or on the basic conjunctions *and* and *but*. The spoken version uses the present continuous tense, whereas the written uses the more formal *will*.

Consider also the following segments from the same pair of narratives. (Here and hereafter, S indicates 'spoken' and W indicates 'written'.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>[S] I guess they had to go over for ... to take their medical ... records, make sure they had their own ... their inoculations and stuff like that.</p> | <p>[W] Medical records were required for registration,</p> |
|--|--|

The spoken segment uses the active voice (*go over for ... to take*); the written uses the passive (*were required*). The spoken, furthermore, is more particular or imageable, following up the general reference to *medical records* with the specific reference to *inoculations*. The spoken segment reports action (*take their medical records*); the written reports a state (*records were required*). The spoken text, finally, contains false starts (*go over for ... to take*), internal pauses, and what Lakoff 1975 has called 'empty language' (*stuff like that*). All these features combine to make the spoken text more fragmented and longer than the written.

Finally, the spoken version shows the speaker's attitude toward her material—i.e. the point of the story—not explicitly, but through paralinguistic cues and repetition:

- [S41–47] This is a school, that is ... seventh ... uh eighth and ninth graders only, ... two thousand. ... Out in a little sticky place like Willingboro New Jersey. (Laugh.) ... Two thousand.

The way the speaker delivers these lines shows her surprise that there are so many students in just two grades of a small-town junior high school. This is seen in her pauses, intonation, pitch, and amplitude; in her slight laughter; in her lexical choice (*little sticky place*); and in her repetition (*two thousand*). In the written version, the information is presented, but there is no hint of how the speaker feels about it—it is unevaluated:

- [W] for a total of 2,000 students.

In transferring her spoken story to writing, the speaker necessarily lost the option of showing her attitude, or evaluation (cf. Labov), through paralinguistic cues. Hence she had a number of options: (1) to evaluate through lexicalization; (2) to try to capture the paralinguistic cues through use of such diacritics as exclamation points and underlining; or (3) to leave the information unevaluated—as she did. In this sense, her written version is more content-focused.

The spoken and written versions of 'Registering kids in school' were fairly typical of the pattern that emerged in thirty-five such pairs of narratives which were collected and analysed. The written versions were significantly shorter

and more integrated, and they exhibited the features which Ochs and Chafe observed.

5. AN ABERRANT PAIR OF SPOKEN AND WRITTEN NARRATIVES. One pair of narratives collected was not typical. First, the written version was not shorter, but rather much longer than the spoken one. The spoken version contained 383 words distributed over 64 idea units; the written 693 words contained 51 sentences and 85 clauses or phrases. Furthermore, the written version did not seem less personal or imageable; if anything, it seemed more so. The reason is that it was not expository prose, but a short story.

Before presenting the analysis of the two versions of 'Fernandez', I shall present both in full, to give readers a sense of their over-all impact. The story was recorded as part of a conversation involving the speaker, Della Whittaker, and two other women, one of whom was a member of the Discourse Analysis class.¹³ The narrative was sparked by Della's spontaneous comment to her husband who walked through the living room where the three women were sitting. Della said to him, *Honey, is that the latest attire, with one shirt-tail out?* Returning to her conversational partners, she said, *You know that two buttons open at the chest, and now one shirt-tail out*. She continued with the following narrative:

- (1) Oh, I have to tell you about this guy at work, Fernández. (2) Hé is só funny. (3) Hé is from South América, (4) from ... Chfle. (5) ... And hé knows Spánish, (6) and hé knows Frèñch, (7) and hé knows Ènglish, (8) and hé knows Gèrman, (9) and hé is a géntleman. ... (10) He must be about fifty-nine years old. (11) And théy're not doin' right by him. (12) Only, I think ... because (13) with his assórtment of foreign lánguages that he knows (14) it takes him longer (15) to say ... what it is on his mind. (16) And álso ... hè thinks cárefully. ... (17) And álso I think with his assórtment of foreign lánguages (18) when people speak fast (19) it takes him a while ... (20) to understand what they're sáying. [Friend: Even though he is in America and everybody's speaking English.] (Laughing) (21) Yeah, so I, (22) the other gúys, ... (23) théy're just not nice to him. (24) He comes upstáirs, ... (25) to Tech Repórts, ... (26) and hè wants hélp with this, (27) or hélp with that, (28) he wants to understand (29) well can this be done, (30) and can that be done, (31) and I just have a good time with him. (32) I say, 'Aaaaaahhh, Monsieur, ... comment ça vá:, (33) because I can't think of how to say it in Spánish. (34) Or he walks in, (35) and I say, 'Grácias ... señór Fernández, ... [Laugh.] (36) and he says, 'Búenos días, ... señóra Whittaker. (37) So thé:n, ... I sée: ... that hé has on sùch a nice sùit one day, (38) and I say ... héy: Ráy:, (39) yóu're really dressed to kíl, (40) dóncha know you're working for the Û.S. Góvernment? (41) You gotta dréss like a góvernment worker, (42) and he says, hòw is thát? (43) So just then some young guy passes through the hall, (44) with his two buttons undone, (45) and his hair all stickin' out, (46) I said, héy, you gotta un ... (47) you gotta take off your jácket. (48) So he takes off his jácket. (49) I say gotta take off your tie. (50) He takes, (51) right there in the hall, (52) he takes off his tie. (53) I say, you gotta undo your first two búttons. (54) Meanwhile, two or three other guys are comin' through (55) with théir two top buttons undone (56) and their háir stickin' out. (Laugh) (57) so he un ... (58) he's got his jácket on this arm (59) and his tie over hére, (60)

¹³ Della is 44; a native of Washington, DC; and a former English teacher with an Ed.D. degree, currently working as a technical editor. She was aware of being taped, but the recorder had been going for some time when this story was told.

and he undoes his *tóp búttón* (61) and he's got a *tée-shirt* on under it. ... (62) I say, *Ráy*, you gotta take off your *tée-shirt* (63) so your *háir* will stick out. (64) He says ... *thát* ... is the end of the line.

Less than a week later, the class member decided to use this story for her research, and asked Della to write what she had told about Fernandez. Della typed out the following narrative:

(1) At my agency, (2) there's a man who is Mr. Politeness. (3) He doesn't say "Hi," (4) he says "Good morning" (5) and "Good afternoon." (6) Instead of calling me "Della," (7) he calls me "Mrs. Whittaker." (8) And he dresses as if he worked in a business corporation downtown (9) instead of for the Government at a field office. (10) He is from Chile, South America. (11) He knows at least four languages fluently— (12) Spanish, French, English, and something else. (13) Whatever language I speak to him in, (14) he answers in that language. (15) I'll say, "Bonjour, Monsieur Fernandez, comment s'a va?" (16) And he'll answer "Il va bon," (17) or whatever the French say. (18) He always says the right thing (19) in the right language. (20) But me, (21) I forget what language I'm supposed to answer in, (22) and I usually answer in some other language. (23) Like if he asks, "Comment s'a va?" (24) I answer, "Va est gut, gracias." (25) I like to tease him, (26) and he likes me to tease him. (27) I don't think that anyone else at my agency teases him. (28) He's over 60, (29) and most of the other physicists and engineers are punks of 35, (30) so they're impatient with him. (31) Also, they don't like to stand around (32) and wait until he translates their English (33) into whatever language he's thinking in, (34) and they have trouble understanding his accent (35) when he speaks English. (36) So I think they give him short shrift. (37) But I stand around (38) waiting for him to talk back, (39) and I do like to tease him in the hall. (40) One day I was praising him for his spiffy attire, (41) a really neat pin striped suit (42) with a white long-sleeved shirt (43) and a dark tie. (44) He did look handsome. (45) I told him so, too, (46) and he smiled and thanked me. (47) He said that he liked to look businesslike, (48) that appearance is part of getting along in the world. (49) Just then a younger guy walked past (50) wearing the latest in spiffy attire— (51) short-sleeved shirt, (52) no tie, (53) two buttons undone, (54) hair sticking out of his chest. (55) I said, "Hey, Ray, businesslike is one thing, (56) but you've got to dress in the latest style." (57) "What's that?" he said. (58) I said, "You've got to take off your jacket." (59) He took it off, (60) right there in the hall. (61) "Now what?" he said. (62) I said, "You've got to take off your tie." (63) He took off his tie (64) and laid it neatly over the jacket on his arm. (65) "Now what should I do?" he said. (66) I couldn't believe my ears! (67) But I'd gone this far (68) and he'd gone with me, (69) so I figured I'd take it all the way. (70) I said, "You have to unbutton your two top buttons (71) and let your chest hair stick out." (72) Ray looked around (73) and saw that same young guy come back from down the hall. (74) He saw the guy's shirt undone at the top two buttons, (75) and he must have seen his hair sticking out from his chest. (76) Right in front of my very eyes, (77) Ray reached up to his neck with his free fingers (78) and undid his two top buttons. (79) Then he fluffed the few stray gray hairs sticking out from his collar bone. (80) "How do you like that?" he said. (81) I said, "Ray, you've got your two buttons undone (82) and your hair's sticking out, (83) but you've got a tee shirt on. (84) You can't walk around with your undershirt showing." (85) "Oh," he said, (86) looked at his shirt, (87) and put his jacket back on (88) and his tie back around his neck. (89) "I'll think about that," he said, (90) and we parted laughing. (91) About a week later, (92) Ray came to my office (93) to discuss the title of a report (94) that he had been working on. (95) I had been bending over another report (96) when he came in, (97) and I recognized him only by his voice (98) as he said hello (99) and handed me his suggested title. (100) Still looking onto my desk, (101) I talked with him about wording. (102) When we were both satisfied about the title, (103) I handed it to him. (104) This time I looked at him. (105) He was smiling. (106) And so was I. (107) He had on a short-sleeved shirt (108) unbuttoned at the neck, (109) and he didn't have on any tee shirt.

This pair of narratives does not conform to expectations established for spoken and written discourse. Not only is the written version much longer, but it contains many features associated with spoken language, e.g. direct quotation and use of details for imageability. The key seems to lie in the fact that the writer produced not expository prose but a short story, a piece of creative writing.

That written imaginative literature employs features of spoken language is not a new idea. But which features does it use, and to what end?

Both Ochs and Chafe are aware of the special status of literary prose. Chafe (1979a) suggests that a literary text is 'an imitation of natural speech', and Ochs (1979:77) asserts that a 'novelist trying to recreate a casual situational context will use many of the features ... of unplanned discourse in his story.' Lakoff 1981 and Lakoff & Tannen 1981 note that written dialog in fiction and drama often strikes readers as more real than actual transcripts of spoken conversation.

Examination of the spoken and written versions of 'Fernandez' suggests that written imaginative literature combines the involvement of spoken language with the integration of writing.

6. MICRO-ANALYSIS OF SPOKEN AND WRITTEN NARRATIVES. The ensuing analysis demonstrates that the written version of 'Fernandez' uses integration to fulfil the charter of literary writing to pack maximum impact into minimal words (cf. Rader). In addition, it exhibits more, rather than fewer, involvement features.

Consider the following matched segments of the Fernandez stories (numbers in brackets refer to the first unit quoted from complete texts):

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) [S43] So just then some young guy passes through the hall, with his two buttons undone, and his hair all stickin' out, | [W49] Just then a younger guy walked past wearing the latest in spiffy attire—short-sleeved shirt, no tie, two buttons undone, hair sticking out of his chest. |
|--|--|

In some ways, these corresponding written and spoken segments do conform to Ochs' and Chafe's descriptions of spoken and written language. The written segment is closer to our notions of a sentence; the spoken segment does not end with sentence-final intonation, and it begins with what would be thought of as a conjunction (*so*). The written version uses the past tense, whereas the spoken uses the present. The deictic *some* in the spoken (*some young guy*) becomes the indefinite article in the written (*a younger guy*).

However, in other ways the written version is even more 'spoken-like' than the spoken version. It is characterized by greater imageability, resulting from details that give the audience a sense of the 'richness' of experience. The young man's clothes are described in more detail in the written version (*short-sleeved shirt, no tie, two buttons undone*). Inclusion of such details contributes to the otherwise unexpected greater length of the written story.

Segments in ex. 1 illustrate other ways in which the written version combines features of written and spoken discourse. The written segment includes a form

of external evaluation called an abstract (cf. Labov): a summary of the main point of the description of the passing co-worker's clothes (*the latest in spiffy attire*). Moreover, the segment combines formal and informal registers (*guy* and *sticking out*, on the one hand; *spiffy attire*, on the other). It is interesting, furthermore, to note that Della used the formal term *attire* in her comment to her husband which preceded this story. Thus, just as language expected in speaking is used effectively in writing, so language associated with writing is used effectively in speaking. In both cases, the markedness of the choice—i.e., the very violation of expectation—creates the effect.

There are numerous examples throughout these narratives in which the written counterpart includes more details, rather than fewer, with consequent imageability. For instance, when the central incident of Fernandez' style of dress is introduced:

- | | |
|--|--|
| (2) [S37] So the:n, ... I see: ... that he has on
such a nice suit one day, | [W40] One day I was praising him for his
spiffy attire, a really neat pin
striped suit with a white long-
sleeved shirt and a dark tie. |
|--|--|

As in ex. 1, Della's spoken version simply says that Fernandez was wearing a nice suit. In writing, she describes the suit and also his shirt and tie. She also introduces more action by saying that she was praising him, whereas in speaking she simply reported her impression (*I see ...*).

Similarly, consider the ways the stories begin:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (3) [S1] Oh, I have to tell you about this guy
at work, Fernandez. | [W1] At my agency, there's a man who is
Mr. Politeness. |
|---|--|

These introductions confirm expectations about spoken and written discourse. The deictic (*this guy*) sounds spoken, while the indefinite article (*a man*) sounds written. There is a relative clause in the written (*who ...*), where the spoken relies on juxtaposition of propositions. Furthermore, the written version makes explicit what is important about this man (*Mr. Politeness*).

However, the written version goes on to illustrate Fernandez' politeness with examples of dialog, in a segment which has no spoken counterpart:

- (4) [W3] He doesn't say "Hi," he says "Good morning" and "Good afternoon." Instead of calling me "Della," he calls me "Mrs. Whittaker."

Thus the written passage is more 'written-like' in that it states a generalization about Fernandez' behavior, but it is more 'spoken-like' in its use of direct quotation and high imageability.

7. PARALLEL CONSTRUCTIONS. Ochs points out that spoken discourse uses parallel constructions and repetitions. This is seen in the way that Della tells that Fernandez speaks many languages, as opposed to how she writes it:

- | | |
|--|---|
| (5) [S5] ... And hé knows Spànish, and hé
knows Frèñch, and hé knows
English, and hé knows Gèrman, | [W11] He knows at least four languages
fluently—Spanish, French,
English, and something else. |
|--|---|

The impact of Fernandez' language ability is conveyed in the spoken text by the force of parallel constructions. In the written, the list is collapsed or integrated; and the evaluation that he speaks them well is lexicalized (*fluently*). In the spoken, the implication that he speaks these languages fluently is implied

in the flow of the parallel constructions. Furthermore, the rhythm of the repeated parallelisms functions to set off the following sentence, which begins in the same way but then alters the pattern, after the prosodic cue of a noticeable pause:

- (6) [S9] and hé is a géntleman.

Here rhythm is a significant factor in conveying the message: not only does the rhythmic force of the parallel constructions imply the fluency of Fernandez' language ability, but the 'list' intonation also implies that these are just four of a longer list.¹⁴

There are other such examples as well. Della uses parallelism and 'list' intonation to indicate the help she gives Fernandez at work; although there is no precise counterpart in the written version, there is a section at the end where she refers to editing help which she gives him, as part of the action contributing to the narrative climax:

- | | |
|--|--|
| (7) [S26] and he wants help with this, or help
with that, he wants to understand
well can this be done, and can that
be done, | [W101] I talked with him about wording.
When we were both satisfied
about the title, I handed it to him. |
|--|--|

In speaking, Della never says what she helps Fernandez with, as she does in writing; but the force of the two parallelisms gives a sense that she helps him with many minor tasks. In speaking, the syntactic form and resultant rhythm carry much of the meaning, whereas in writing the meaning is lexicalized in specific content. Thus rhythm—thought of as basic in such literary genres as poetry—is also basic in face-to-face talk, both on the discourse level (as recent work by Erickson 1980 and Scollon 1981 shows) and on the sentence level, as shown here.

Parallel constructions are not absent from the written version of 'Fernandez'; but they are less compelling there, offset by intermediary material and less rigid repetition of structures, and the parallelism is consequently less forceful. This can be seen in ex. 8; but note that the rewording which reduces the parallelism serves another purpose, that of introducing details which increase imageability:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (8) [S46] I say, hey, you gotta un ... you
gotta take off your jacket. | [W58] I said, "You've got to take off
your jacket." |
| [S49] I say gotta take off your tie. | [W62] I said, "You've got to take off
your tie." |
| [S53] I say, you gotta undo your first two
buttons. | [W70] I said, "You have to unbutton
your two top buttons and let your
chest hair stick out." |

¹⁴ 'List' intonation was found to be used to similar effect in a study of interaction involving a pediatrician (Tannen & Wallat 1981). When addressing a child's mother, the pediatrician minimized the effect of her diagnosis by saying *the only danger would be from bleeding*. When reporting to the staff at her facility, however, the pediatrician emphasized her concern and aroused theirs by using a 'list' intonation: *the possibility of sudden death, intracranial hemorrhage, ...* In addition to the terms used, the creation of a list out of what is essentially the same single feature (bleeding) results in a very jarring and effective warning.

[S62] I say, Ray, you gotta take off your tee-shirt so your hair will stick out.

[W81] I said, "Ray, you've got your two buttons undone and your hair's sticking out, but you've got a tee shirt on. You can't walk around with your undershirt showing."

While the spoken and written versions begin similarly, the spoken contains quadruple repetition of *I say you gotta take off ...*, with very slight deviation. In contrast, this construction is repeated only twice in the written. There is a transition to present tense in the spoken, from *I said* in S46 to *I say* in S49 and thereafter. The written begins with and maintains past tense. This pattern conforms to Ochs' observations of tense in spoken and written narratives.

While both versions give Della's words in direct quotation, the informal vocative *hey* is found only in the spoken; and some of the dialog in the written version restates information that has already been given (W81), and serves the purpose of external evaluation by making explicit the judgment (left unstated in the spoken) that one's undershirt should not show. Thus the written narrative uses a device that, on the surface, is 'spoken-like' (direct quotation) for a 'written-like' purpose (external evaluation).

In the spoken segments, Fernandez is represented only by his actions. In the written counterparts, he is also introduced as a character through dialog. In addition, his actions are described in more detail and with more precision in the written, as seen in ex. 9 (of course, the spoken rendition included gestures):

(9) [S58] he's got his jacket on this arm and his tie over here,

[W63] He took off his tie and laid it neatly over the jacket on his arm.

In this example, the written segment integrates information about the jacket into the sentence about the tie. The verb (*laid it*) and adverb (*neatly*) contribute to the characterization of Fernandez as *Mr. Politeness*.

Finally, W63 describes an action rather than a state—just the opposite of what Chafe found typical of written discourse. In fact, action is added in the written that has no counterpart in the spoken:

(10) [S60] and he undoes his top button

[W76] Right in front of my very eyes, Ray reached up to his neck with his free fingers and undid his two top buttons. Then he fluffed the few stray gray hairs sticking out from his collar bone.

In addition to illustrating the addition of action in the written story, this example illustrates the phenomenon of sound touch-offs—not in the spoken version (as Ochs, following Sacks and Schegloff, suggests), but rather in the written, as indicated by the underlined initial consonants. This is the device which literary analysts call alliteration. The written version uses repetition of vowel sounds as well (assonance), in *stray gray hairs* (which also repeats the vowel of the name *Ray*) and in the repeated high front vowel in *reached* and *free*. Again, imaginative literature is not different from spoken language, but rather elaborates a phenomenon that is spontaneous in conversation.

The use of integration rather than strictly parallel constructions contributes

to the effect that written language seems more compact. However, the written Fernandez story contains many examples of just the opposite. In ex. 11, Della illustrates her foreign language interchanges with Fernandez. Here the written version is more elaborated rather than more compact:

(11) [S32] I say, Aaaaaahhh, Monsieur, ... comment ça va:, because I can't think of how to say it in Spanish. Or he walks in, and I say, Gracias ... señor Fernández, ... and he says, Buenos días, ... señora Whittaker.

[W13] Whatever language I speak to him in, he answers in that language. I'll say, "Bonjour, Monsieur Fernandez, comment s'a va?" And he'll answer "Il va bon," or whatever the French say. He always says the right thing in the right language. But me, I forget what language I'm supposed to answer in, and I usually answer in some other language. Like if he asks, "Comment s'a va?" I answer, "Va est gut, gracias."

In the spoken text, Della demonstrates a typical conversation between herself and Fernandez; in writing, she both presents the dialog and tells what the point is (*He always says the right thing in the right language*.) She introduces, moreover, the notion that she mixes languages. In the spoken version, the comic effect is accomplished by paralinguistics: she raises her pitch dramatically, draws out the vowel sounds, and pauses significantly, as she mimics herself talking to Fernandez. However, these paralinguistic and prosodic effects are not available in writing; therefore Della introduces humor in the written version by portraying herself as mixing languages. In addition, Della's incompetence sets off Fernandez' language ability.

While the written story thus introduces more direct quotation (and hence becomes more 'spoken-like'), it also contains more explanation or external evaluation (and becomes more 'written-like'). However, this literate increased explanation is accomplished in a register that is often decidedly oral (*But me, ...*)

8. IMAGINATIVE LITERATURE AS INTEGRATED INVOLVED WRITING. Chafe's notion of involvement and integration accounts for many of the features which he and Ochs identify as characteristic of (planned/formal) written and (unplanned/informal) spoken discourse. (Labov's notion of evaluation is also useful.) In both systems speakers are seen to use tone of voice, rhythm, and other paralinguistic features to show their attitude toward their material and the way in which they want to show its parts to be related. Writers must depend more on lexicalization to achieve these effects.

But involvement and integration are different orders of categories. Integration and fragmentation are features of the surface form of discourse. Involvement and detachment refer to a deeper level, reflecting the writer's or speaker's stance toward the material and the audience. Since they operate on different levels, integration or fragmentation and involvement or detachment are not mutually exclusive. Della's written short story combines features of integration with features of involvement.

What motivates the choice of features which serve involvement or detachment? What makes appropriate the choice of features which create integration or fragmentation? The notion of planning time is not sufficiently explanatory. With increased planning time at her disposal, Della wrote a story which seems in many ways more unplanned than her spontaneous spoken one. (For example, she writes that Fernandez speaks *Spanish, French, English, and something else*, whereas in speaking she listed four languages by name.)

From one point of view, the differences reflect register: people produce language of a form that seems appropriate to the genre and audience. In this case, Della produced a short story. A short story, like other genres of imaginative literature, has as its goal not to convince the reader through logical argument, but to move the reader emotionally through a sense of involvement with its point of view. Thus features of involvement, in Chafe's sense, grow out of the establishment of what Havelock 1963 and Ong 1977, 1979 call a 'sense of identification'. This is also the kind of knowing that motivates face-to-face conversation; that is why written imaginative literature builds on and elaborates aspects of spoken language such as use of detail, direct quotation, sound and word repetition, and syntactic parallelism. Often it goes to great lengths to preserve the seemingly inefficient features of spontaneous speech such as hesitations, repetition of ideas, and fillers,¹⁵ and to re-create effects that are accomplished in speaking by paralinguistic cues.

9. CONCLUSION. The difference between features of language which distinguish discourse types reflects not only—and not mainly—spoken vs. written mode, but rather genre and related register, growing out of communicative goals and context. What Kay calls autonomous language, which he and others identify with writing, focuses on the content of communication, conventionally de-emphasizing the interpersonal involvement between communicator and audience. Ideally, the audience is expected to suspend emotional responses, processing the discourse analytically and objectively. When relationships between propositions are explicit, the reader or hearer supplies minimal connective tissue from background knowledge and shared context. By contrast, non-autonomous language purposely builds on interpersonal involvement and triggers emotional subjective responses, demanding maximum contribution from the audience in supplying socio-cultural and contextual knowledge. The invocation of the audience's participation in this way contributes to the sense of involvement that is necessary for subjective knowing.

Analysis of the spoken and written versions of 'Fernandez' demonstrates that these complex processes in discourse cut across spoken and written modes. Imaginative literature, as exemplified in the written version of 'Fernandez', exhibits typically written, integrated prose; but it simultaneously elaborates

¹⁵ In conversation, a person might indicate that something is not meant seriously by winking or laughing. In expository writing or an oral lecture, one might lexicalize by adding, for example, *in a humorous vein*. But imaginative literature manipulates writing to preserve the effect of face-to-face interaction; so a novel or short story might add *She said with a wink*—or, as Jana Staton (p.c.) has observed in children's written dialogs with their teacher, *Ha ha ha*.

strategies associated with speaking, in order to create involvement. Thus imaginative literature, far from being maximally different from ordinary conversation, elaborates and refines features which are spontaneously produced in everyday conversation.

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