

# スポーツ選手インタビューの談話分析： 本物と作り物の談話を比較する

Discourse analysis of authentic and unauthentic athlete interviews

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## Abstract

*When teachers choose materials for their lessons, authenticity is one of the most important features of the chosen text. It is presumed that most of the texts in coursebooks are developed for the sake of the language lessons. They are not authentic texts, in that they have not been produced in real life situations. It is, therefore, debatable whether artificially developed texts are useful for the purpose. In order to explore this problem, I will compare an authentic text with an unauthentic one, produced for language lessons with reference to discourse analysis. Both texts have been taken from interviews with athletes. This study finds that the unauthentic text is very different from the authentic text in discourse features, such as turn taking, discourse markers, grammatical "mistakes" and lexical choices. Nevertheless, it is suggested that both authentic and unauthentic texts should be utilised to develop language awareness in the classroom.*

## 1. Introduction

Language teachers are expected to enable their students to function in real life situations in the target language. When teachers choose materials for their lessons, authenticity is one of the most important features of the chosen text. It is presumed that most of the texts in coursebooks are developed for the sake of the language lessons. They are not authentic texts in that they have not been produced in real life situations. It is, therefore, debatable whether artificially developed texts

problem, I will compare an authentic text with an are useful for the purpose. In order to explore this unauthentic one with reference to discourse analysis. I will consider both general and specific linguistic differences in the two texts, paying a particular attention to discourse features, such as discourse markers, grammatical "mistakes" and lexical choices. Both texts have been taken from interviews with athletes. In one interview, secondary school students interviewed a real athlete, Christine Ohuruogu, in a stadium in London. The other text is a scripted interview, presumably

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conducted in a recording studio. The coursebook does not state that it is a scripted interview, but the data reveal that it is not a real interview.

## 2. Research question

What differences, if any, could I expect to find between an authentic example of contemporary spoken English and an example of texts created for educational purposes?

## 3. Methods

The records of the interviews that are transcribed are called texts here; Text A and Text B. I chose the two texts on the same topic, 'sport', in the hope that it should be clearer to compare discourse features within the same topic.

The lines of the texts have been numbered for the purpose of easy identification in the analysis. I will list the findings that arose from the analysis of the data and compare some of the observed differences between the two texts. The implications of the inclusion or absence of these features in the coursebooks will be discussed further.

### 3.1 Origin of the texts

Text A is an extract from an interview with an athlete, conducted by a group of students in a middle school in London. It was collected by recording video output from 'the BBC News School Report online, "Interviewing an Olympic champion" ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school\\_report/8552204.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school_report/8552204.stm)) and I transcribed it with the help of a native English speaking colleague of mine. Text B is an excerpt from a

listening exercise in a coursebook: Unit 6.1: Go for gold!, PET Masterclass: Intermediate, Student's Book (Capel & Nixon, 2003a, p. 32). The full transcripts of Text A and B are to be found in the Appendix. PET Mastercourse is a coursebook that is designed to prepare students for the Cambridge ESOL Preliminary English Test (PET). The material is written specifically to help students to become familiar with the format of the exam and to learn the language and skills relevant to the exam tasks (Capel & Nixon, 2003b, p. 4).

### 3.2 Speakers

In Text A, S 01 is a male student interviewer, S 02 is a female student interviewer, S 03 is another female student interviewer and S 04 is a female athlete interviewee. In Text B, S 05 is a female interviewer who is the host of a chat show on a radio or TV programme and S 06 is a male athlete interviewee.

## 4. Comparisons of the discourse features

### 4.1 Ellipsis

Ellipsis is the absence of a word or words from a structural slot (Yule, 1996, p. 129). Ellipses are pervasive in spoken discourse, but are situational and not random (Carter & McCarthy, 1997, pp. 14-15).

Table 1. Ellipsis

Text A	Text B
'athletes (of) whatever sport' [Line 22, S 04]	(None)
'we have ...an indoor 200 metre track, and ...	
we also have a hundred-thirty metre straight (track)' [Lines 36-37, S 04]	

Table 1 shows that some ellipses are notable in Text A: '*athletes ... whatever sport*', where "of" is omitted between '*... athletes ...*' and '*... whatever ...*'. '*We have ... an indoor 200 metre track, and ... we also*

*have a hundred-thirty metre straight ...*', "track" is omitted. Both ellipses are common in informal speech. No ellipsis is found in Text B.

#### 4.2 Discourse markers

When texts are not coherent, they do not make sense or they make it difficult for the reader to understand (Halliday & Hassan, 1992). Discourse markers mark boundaries in conversation between one topic and the next (Carter & McCarthy, 1997, pp. 13-14) and the use of discourse markers is one of the key features of spoken English (Huang, 2011, p. 7). Furthermore, Carter and McCarthy (2006) indicate that among all the discourse markers (both discourse markers and linking adjuncts), there are discourse markers which are more common in informal spoken language. Among such discourse markers Carter and McCarthy (2006) mention: single words and miscellaneous items such as *anyway, yeah, cos, fine, good, great, like, now, okay, right / (all) right, so, and, well, then, hey, ah, oh, look, listen, remember, incidentally, meantime, anyhow, and only, and phrasal or clausal items such as you know, you see, I mean, as I say, for a start.*

Table 2. Discourse markers

Text A	Text B
<i>You know</i> [Line 14, S 04]	<i>Well</i> [Line 8, S 06]
<i>So I mean</i> [Line 29 S 04]	<i>Then', 'eventually'</i> [Line 32, S 06]
<i>you know</i> 'three times [Line 37, S 04]	
<i>Well, ahn'</i> [Line 39, S 04]	
<i>I mean</i> 'twice [Lines 40 and 44, S 04]	
<i>you know</i> 'twice [Line 41, S 04]	
<i>you know</i> 'in [Line 42, S 04]	
<i>so</i> [Line 42, S 04]	
<i>and</i> 'twice [Lines 43 and 45, S 04]	
<i>then</i> [Line 45, S 04]	

Table 2 shows that S 04 seems to wish to use markers to signal responses. For example, *'you know'* in Line 97 signals a desire to relate an anecdote. Markers are also used to clarify situations: S 04 uses *'so I mean'* in Line 42 and *'I mean'*, twice in Lines 63 and 64.

Additionally, S 04 seeks to confirm understanding and coherence by using the marker *'you know'* three times in Lines 64-65 and 67. I am also interested in the way in which S 04 manages longer stretches of talk, as seen in Lines 61-73. The use of transaction boundary markers, such as *'I mean', 'you know', 'so', 'and', and 'then',* are also notable. In Text B, *'Well'* is used once in Line 8, by S 06. Regularly occurring markers for completing events such as *'then'* and *'eventually'* are also observable.

#### 4.3 Fixed expressions

Fixed expressions are pre-formulated or prefabricated, and are important in spoken language for maintaining and stabilising relationships and in reinforcing shared knowledge and social conventions, as well as referring to common cultural understanding (Carter & McCarthy, 1997, p. 15). In addition, some of them are collocationally fixed (Carter & McCarthy, 1997, p. 15). Such useful language is, however, 'often absent from coursebooks' (McCarthy, 1991, p. 139).

Table 3. Fixed expressions

Text A	Text B
<i>'making it to the ...'</i> [Lines 23-24, S 04]	<i>'Welcome to the ...'</i> [Line 79, S 05]
<i>'gotten that far'</i> [Line 25, S 04]	<i>'kept ...ing'</i> [Line 105, S 06]
<i>'it was quite a unique feeling to know that'</i> [Lines 24-25, S 04]	<i>'mustn't think too far ahead'</i> [Line 119, S 06]
<i>'oh my gosh, it's over'</i> [Line 28, S 04]	<i>'take a bit at a time'</i> [Line 119, S 06]
<i>'yes, I've done'</i> [Line 33, S 04]	
<i>'have a quick look around'</i> [Line 35, S 04]	
<i>'it's just that, that one race, that one race'</i> [Lines 31-32, S 04]	
<i>'it's gonna be hard work but I think all the same time enjoy it, because that's gonna be a once in a lifetime opportunity</i>	
<i>I mean, when is it ever gonna come back, you know, the Olympics ever gonna come back, you know, to London</i>	
<i>in our lifetime, and you'll be able to compete in it ...'</i> [Lines 61-66, S 04]	

Table 3 shows that there are quite a few fixed expressions used exclusively by S 04, such as *'making it to the Olympic games', 'gotten that far', 'oh my gosh, it's over', 'yes, I've done', 'have a quick look around', 'it's just that, that one race, that one race'* and so on, in Text A. *'I'd gotten, gotten that far'* is notable not only for

containing general phrases, but also for being used together with a quite lengthy fixed expression, *'it was quite a unique feeling to know that'*, which makes the statement colloquial. *'It's gonna be hard work but I think all the same time enjoy it, because that's gonna be a once in a lifetime opportunity I mean, when is it ever gonna come back, you know, the Olympics ever gonna come back, you know, to London in our lifetime, and you'll be able to compete in it ...'* by S 04 also contain a number of fixed expressions; *'it's gonna be'*, *'that's gonna be'*, *'it ever gonna'* and *'ever gonna'*, and the fixed nature of *'gonna'* is further confirmed by the speaker adding a phrasal verb, *'come back'*. In Text B, a couple of fixed expressions were found, such as *'kept ...ing'*, *'mustn't think too far ahead'* and *'take a bit at a time'*.

#### 4.4 Hedges

Hedges are cautious notes that are expressed regarding how an utterance is to be taken (Yule, 1996, p. 130). They include the use of vague language to personalise or indicate sensitivity, in order to "save face" on the part of the speaker (Carter & McCarthy, 1997, p. 16).

Table 4. Hedges

Text A	Text B
Repeated use of <i>'just'</i> [S 04]	<i>'sort of'</i> [Line 87, S 06]
<i>'I just, I just'</i> [Line 17, S 04]	
<i>'you know'</i> [Line 19, S 04]	
<i>'you know'</i> [Line 40, S 04]	
<i>'Yeah, ahaa'</i> [Line 46, S 04]	

In Table 4, what strikes me first is the frequent use of hedges by S 04, particularly the adverb, *'just'*, *'I just, I just'* in Line 17 and *'you know'* in Line 40 in Text A. *'Yeah, ahaa'* also shows hesitation. Hedges occur commonly when a speaker expresses an opinion about somebody or something (Carter & McCarthy, 1997, p.

16). In Text B, *'sort of'* is a hedge. On the other hand, S 06 uses simple starters without hedges, for instance; *'I was always the slowest ...'* in Line 99 and *'but I realized ...'* in Lines 99-100.

#### 4.5 Repetition

All conversations contain repetition. Indeed, repetition occurs in all kinds of discourse (McCarthy & Carter, 1994, pp. 144-145).

Table 5. Repetition

Text A	Text B
<i>'I just I just'</i> [Line 17, S 04]	(None)
<i>'you know, you know, you know'</i> [Line 57, S 04]	
<i>'gonna ... gonna ... gonna ... gonna'</i> [Lines 62-65]	

Table 5 shows that the repetitions, *'I just I just'* and *'you know, you know, you know'*, have their own significance in Text A. Also, the pattern of *'gonna'* in Lines 39-41 tends to be over-repeated, as I discussed earlier. In Text B, no repetition was found.

#### 4.6 Grammatical mistakes

Spoken data frequently contain forms that would be considered ungrammatical in writing (McCarthy, 1991, p. 143). Although such "mistakes" usually go unnoticed in natural speech, it is only when we look at transcripts that we realise how common they are (McCarthy, 1991, p. 143). Speech abounds in verbless clauses, ellipses that would be frowned upon in 'good' writing, lack of concord and omitted relative particles, false starts, slips of the tongue and midstream changes of direction in grammatical structures (McCarthy, 1991, p. 143).

Table 6. Grammatical "mistakes"

Text A	Text B
<i>'I think the Olympic Games ...'</i> [Line 21, S 04]	(Almost none)
<i>'To know that I was one of the many who succeeded in making it to the Olympic games, it was ...'</i> [Lines 22-25, S 04]	
<i>'Well, ahn', '. it's, um'</i> [Line 61, S 04]	
<i>'when ...'</i> [Lines 64-73, S 04]	

As indicated in Table 6, we can see how often utterances are grammatically incomplete by written standards, such as in *'I think the Olympic Games ...'*, *'To know that I was one of the many who succeeded in making it to the Olympic games, it was ...'*. Most of these "mistakes" or incomplete sentences would probably go unnoticed in spontaneous talk. S 04 is finding her way into the argument at this point and therefore her speech is characterised by one or two false starts: *'... it's, um, ahn'*, a discourse marker *'well, ahn'*, as well as by some lapses in syntactic ordering, such as *'when ...'*. In Text B, on the other hand, no grammatical mistakes are found. Besides, Text B contains almost perfect utterance completion.

## 5. Discussion

The findings provide examples of discourse features that are particularly different between the authentic text, Text A, and the coursebook equivalent, Text B. These include the number of discourse markers, ellipses, hedges and repetitions, as well as the number of grammatical "mistakes" or incomplete sentences and the frequency of fixed expressions. As natural conversational data can often seem chaotic because of utterance incompletions and overlaps (McCarthy, 1991, p. 127), the smooth, regular turn taking with no overlaps and false starts exhibited in Text B does not reflect the tempo or the unpredictable nature of natural conversation. Whereas ellipses are pervasive in spoken

discourse (Carter & McCarthy, 1997, pp. 14-15), no ellipses are found in Text B. As Huang (2011, p. 7) says, the use of discourse markers is one of the key features of spoken English. Whereas discourse markers are constantly used by speakers in Text A, they are sparse in Text B. O'Keeffe et al. (2007, p. 182) provide numerous examples from academic and business English contexts and show how features such as vagueness and hedging are socially valued in these situations. Such useful fixed expressions, vague language, and hedges are almost absent from Text B.

## 6. Limitations

This study is limited to the analysis of two texts. The first problem is that it is impossible to meaningfully generalise data from such small samples. Secondly, investigation into some phonological and phonetic features, such as intonation and accents is beyond the scope of this investigation. Instead, there is a particular concentration on certain aspects of grammar, vocabulary and discourse patterning.

## 7. Conclusion

The authentic text is filled with hedges, repetitions, false starts and fixed expressions. Learners might not easily interpret the meaning of what is meant because of the many problems present in such an authentic text. In general, the coursebook text does not accurately reflect natural discourse features. After all, the aim of the coursebook text is not to present authentic discourse, but to provide learners with opportunities for meaningful listening and reading in English. Nevertheless, texts that come from genuine sources have many advantages in the

language classroom. These texts encourage students to notice particular features of the target language, such as grammar orientation (who the message is about and for), lexical phrases, collocations, and text structures, by helping them develop awareness of the sequential relation of clauses, through understanding real and meaningful texts. Language teachers must continue to make use of authentic texts in the classroom.

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## Appendix

## Text A

1 [S 01] *Hello .. We are students from Turin Grove School in*  
 2 *Edmonton, North London*  
 3 [S 02] *My name's Chloe*  
 4 [S 03] *My name's Lakia*  
 5 [S 01] *My name's Aziz .. Today we're here to interview the Olympic*  
 6 *gold medalist, Christine Ohuruogu*  
 7 [S 02] *Christine is the winner of three gold, and two bronze medals*  
 8 [S 03] *She is the current Olympic and Commonwealth champion at*  
 9 *400 metres*  
 10 [S 01] *We are here to talk to Christine and to find out what it takes*  
 11 *to reach the top*  
 12 [S 03] *Let's go and meet her now*  
 13 [S 04] *Hi, how are you?*  
 14 [S 01] *Fine, thank you .. How are you?*  
 15 [S 04] *I'm very well, nice to meet you guys*  
 16 [S 03] *What motivated you into becoming an athlete?*  
 17 [S 04] *Ah, I just, I just did the work .. I really enjoyed the work .. I*  
 18 *know it was hard, but there's something quite magical about*  
 19 *just running and trying to, you know, run as fast as you can*  
 20 [S 02] *What was it like to take part in the Beijing Olympics?*  
 21 [S 04] *It was .. fantastic .. I think the Olympic Games ... it's one,*  
 22 *it's one place that athletes whatever sport want to go to .. To*  
 23 *know that I was one of the many who succeeded in making it*  
 24 *to the Olympic games, it was quite a.., it was quite a unique*  
 25 *feeling to know that I'd gotten, gotten that far*  
 26 [S 02] *What thoughts were going through your mind when you*  
 27 *crossed the finish line?*  
 28 [S 04] *Aaah, mm. ... I think I was just like oh my gosh, it's over, ha*  
 29 *ha ha*  
 30 [S 01, 02, 03] [chuckles]  
 31 [S 04] *That's the one moment you think about all the time, it's just*  
 32 *that, that one race, that one race, so when I finish it's like*  
 33 *yes I've done, hahaha ...*  
 34 [S 01] *What did you think about the facilities here?*  
 35 [S 04] *I think it's fantastic .. If you have a quick look around,*  
 36 *you'll see that we have ah, an indoor 200 metre track,*  
 37 *and ...we also have ah a hundred-thirty metre straight, up*  
 38 *there, what we call the .. ah .. spring corridor, just, just kind*  
 39 *of behind the glass, behind this we have the cage, where*  
 40 *athletes can, you know, some practice their javelin, and they*  
 41 *can practice hammer, shot .. Umm, also we have the 400*  
 42 *meter track outside .. So I mean, this is, I don't think I think I*  
 43 *think this is one of a kind in Britain.*  
 44 [S 01] *Have you leaned anything from taking the piss test like ...?*  
 45 [inaudible]  
 46 [S 04] *Yeah, ahaa, ... it was like very difficult, difficult for me, I*  
 47 *think it was, it was, ah, a new system that come in to place, I*  
 48 *think, the good thing that's come out of it is aah that not just*  
 49 *me but a lot of athletes have realised that, .. we have to ..*  
 50 *take good care when we, you know, with the whereabouts*  
 51 *system to tell them, tell them, exactly where we are, where*  
 52 *we're gonna be and if it does change, we have to let them*  
 53 *know of the changes .. So, ... in a sense, it's kind of*  
 54 *rubbish, .. that it happened to me, but at the same time, it*  
 55 *means that we're stopping a lot of other athletes from going*  
 56 *through the same problem, it was a bit sacrifice to make, ha*  
 57 *ha, you know, you know, you know, it's a good thing, it's a*  
 58 *good thing*  
 59 [S 01] *What advice would you give young people training for the*  
 60 *Olympics, training for the Olympics?*  
 61 [S 04] *Well, ahn, I think they have to .. realise that .. it's, um, it's*  
 62 *gonna be hard work but I think all the same time enjoy it,*  
 63 *because that's gonna be a once in a lifetime opportunity I*  
 64 *mean, when is it ever gonna come back, you know, the*  
 65 *Olympics ever gonna come back, you know, to London in*  
 66 *our lifetime, and you'll be able to compete in it .. So I think,*

67 *you know, I think everyone should just go for the Olympics,*  
 68 *just aim for the Olympics and even if you don't get there, at*  
 69 *least you tried .. I think it's just an amazing opportunity*  
 70 *that I mean, it makes my hair stand up, it's something that*  
 71 *you cannot ever imagining doing, and I think if anyone has*  
 72 *a chance to go, then just go, ha ha ... find any sport, ha ha,*  
 73 *just make sure you can compete for your country in 2012*  
 74 [S 01] *It was really nice meeting you, Christine*  
 75 [S 04] *Oh, ..*  
 76 [S 01] *Thank you for your time*  
 77 [S 04] *You, too .. Thank you for coming, thank you guys very*  
 78 *much, thank you for coming [shaking hands]*

## Text B

79 [S 05] *Welcome to the Sports Show .. Today, we're going to find out*  
 80 *about an extreme sport and ask one competitor why he takes*  
 81 *part .. Dave Clamp, a teacher, and an athlete, oor a*  
 82 *tri-athlete, I should say, is with us – welcome, Dave*  
 83 [S 06] *Thank you very much*  
 84 [S 05] *First, tell us about the triathlon and the Ironman triathlon ..*  
 85 *What exactly do they involve?*  
 86 [S 06] *Well, the triathlon involves swimming, cycling and running ..*  
 87 *It's like a sort of super athletics*  
 88 [S 05] *What distances do you have to cover?*  
 89 [S 06] *Well, for the Ironman events, you take the basic distances*  
 90 *for the ordinary triathlon and multiply them by two or even*  
 91 *three*  
 92 [S 05] *Oh, ...*  
 93 [S 06] *You swim about four-kilometres, do a 180 kilometre bike*  
 94 *ride and run 42 kilometres*  
 95 [S 05] *That's unbelievable*  
 96 [S 06] *Ha, hah [laughs]*  
 97 [S 05] *Hmm .. How did you get involved? Were you a school*  
 98 *sports star?*  
 99 [S 06] *Not at all .. I was always the slowest at 100 metres, but I*  
 100 *realized I could beat a few people on longer distances ..*  
 101 *About 12 years ago, I ran the Paris marathon .. I didn't do*  
 102 *very well and couldn't walk up or down stairs for a week*  
 103 *afterwards*  
 104 [S 05] *Ha hah ...*  
 105 [S 06] *But I didn't give up and just kept training on longer and*  
 106 *longer distances*  
 107 [S 05] *And you've achieved some very impressive results, haven't*  
 108 *you?*  
 109 [S 06] *I won the Double Ironman in 1999, in twenty-three hours,*  
 110 *and I've managed fifth place in the World Triple*  
 111 *Ultra-Distance Triathlon – that took about 36 hours .. I*  
 112 *want to be first next year – so I'm training hard for that*  
 113 [S 05] *It must be very difficult knowing you have to swim, cycle*  
 114 *and run these distances. aha .. How do you manage?*  
 115 [S 06] *It's all about how you think .. You realize that even though*  
 116 *you feel awful, you can keep going .. You get calmer, learn*  
 117 *to start slowly and to divide up the race in your mind*  
 118 [S 05] *Humm ...*  
 119 [S 06] *You mustn't think too far ahead, but take it a bit at a time*  
 120 [S 05] *Humm .. And does this part of your life influence your work*  
 121 *as a teacher?*  
 122 [S 06] *Yes, definitely .. I'd been training and entering races for*  
 123 *years, without doing very well – I didn't even finish my first*  
 124 *Ironman race .. Then eventually, after all the hard work*  
 125 *and training, I found myself among the best athletes in the*  
 126 *world and that feels very good*  
 127 [S 05] *Umm*  
 128 [S 06] *I try to use myself as an example to encourage the kids at*  
 129 *school to want to work harder .. I can show them real*  
 130 *evidence that hard work is worth it*

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