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Integration and Involvement in Speaking, Writing, and Oral Literature*. In D. Tannen (Ed). Oral & written language. Norwood, NJ : Ablex, 1982.

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Starting from what now seems to be an accepted fact—that typical written language and typical spoken language differ from each other in more ways than just the medium in which they are written—we would like to know more about what those ways are. Various studies have focused on particular differences or sets of related differences. Drieman (1962), for example, found that written texts are shorter, have longer words, have more attributive adjectives, and have a more varied vocabulary. Devito (1966, 1967) found written language to have fewer words that refer to the speaker, fewer quantifiers and hedges, and greater abstractness. Beginning with Harrell (1957), various studies have found that written language has more subordinate clauses than spoken language (e.g. O'Donnell, 1974; Kroll, 1977). Kroll made a particularly detailed study of this difference, distinguishing 24 types of clausal and seven types of phrasal subordination, as well as seven types of coordination.

These and other authors have been quick to admit that their work has been incomplete and exploratory. Kroll concludes her article by saying, 'There is still much that remains to be said about the distinction and the overlap between which structures are commonly used in speech and in writing' (p. 106). In the spirit that we are still very much in the age of exploration so far as these differences are concerned, I want here to suggest how certain differences in the processes of speaking and writing have led to specific differences in the two products, spoken and written language. I will focus on two differences in the speaking and writing processes:

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- 1) that speaking is faster than writing (and slower than reading),
- 2) that speakers interact with their audiences directly, whereas writers do not.

I will suggest some specific features of spoken and written language which I believe have arisen from these differences, and will illustrate them with data presently available to me, giving some counts of their occurrences in the two kinds of language. At the end I will try to show briefly how a language which has no written tradition may nevertheless have different styles which in some ways parallel the differences between spoken and written language; how 'oral literature', that is, may justifiably be considered 'literary' (cf. Bright, this volume).

A word about the data I am using is in order. We have been collecting samples of four styles of language:

- 1) informal spoken language, from dinnertable conversations,
- 2) formal spoken language, from lectures,
- 3) informal written language, from letters,
- 4) formal written language, from academic papers.

Subjects have been academic people (faculty and graduate students) who are accustomed to producing language of these four kinds. We are in the process of analyzing these language samples for occurrences of a large number of features which we hypothesize to have significantly different distributions in the four styles. I will report here on only a few features which seem especially important, and on only the two maximally differentiated styles: informal spoken language and formal written language. Counts will be based on data from 14 subjects from an eventual total of 25, and on 9,911 words of informal spoken language and 12,368 words of formal written language. This will be no more than a partial and preliminary report from a project still in its early stages.

SPEAKING IS FASTER THAN WRITING (AND SLOWER THAN READING)

The average speed of spoken English, including pauses, is in the neighborhood of 180 words per minute.¹ The speed of writing depends on whether it is handwriting or typewriting, as well as on individual differences. It is at least in the right ballpark to say that handwriting characteristically takes place at slower than one-tenth the speed of speaking.² Presumably, most of the differences between written

and spoken language have resulted from the nature of handwriting rather than typing, but even typing takes place at, say, about one-third the speed of speaking, and that rate is for copying, not for the creation of new language. Writing, then, of whatever kind, is slower than speaking, and handwriting is much slower. It is also relevant that reading, the other end of the process, is faster. Reading speeds vary considerably, of course, but the average may be between 200 and 400 words per minute (Gibson & Levin, 1975, p. 539), a little faster than speaking and listening. Thus, while speaking and listening necessarily proceed together at the same speed, writing and reading deviate from that spoken language baseline in opposite directions, writing being much slower and reading somewhat faster.

Observation of spontaneous spoken language has led various investigators independently to the finding that it is produced in spurts, sometimes called idea units, with a mean length (including hesitations) of approximately two seconds or approximately six words each (Chafe, 1980). Idea units typically have a coherent intonation contour, they are typically bounded by pauses, and they usually exhibit one of a small set of syntactic structures. They are a striking, probably universal property of spoken language. It is useful to speculate that each idea unit represents a single 'perching' of consciousness (James, 1890, p. 243), or a single 'idea' in that sense. If that is true, then when we speak we are in the habit of moving from one idea to the next at the rate of about one every two seconds. Perhaps that is even our normal 'thinking rate', if language reflects the pace of thought. Whether or not this rate applies to all thinking, it is certainly a rate we are accustomed to while we are using language—probably while we are thinking in language to ourselves as well as when we are overtly vocalizing.

If that is our temporal baseline, the activity of writing presents a problem. If we write more than 10 times more slowly than we speak, what is happening in our thoughts during all that extra time? It is doubtful that very much of our cognitive capacity has to be devoted to the mechanical activity of writing itself, at least after we get beyond the first grade. In writing, it would seem, our thoughts must constantly get ahead of our expression of them in a way to which we are totally unaccustomed when we speak. As we write down one idea, our thoughts have plenty of time to move ahead to others. The result is that we have time to integrate a succession of ideas into a single linguistic whole in a way that is not available in speaking. In speaking, we normally produce one idea unit at a time. That is apparently about all we have the capacity to pay attention to, and if we try to think about much more than that we are likely to get into trouble (cf. the 'one-clause-at-a-time hypothesis' suggested by Frances Syder and Andrew Pawley). In writing we have time to mold a succession of ideas into a more complex, coherent, integrated whole, making use of devices we seldom use in speaking. It is probably also significant that a reader, proceeding at a greater speed than even a listener, can assimilate very quickly the larger span of ideas that the writer has taken time to integrate. In other words, the abnormal quickness of reading fits together with the abnormal slowness of writing to foster a kind of language in which ideas are com-

¹This is the rate we found in the pear stories data reported in Chafe, 1980.

²Matsushita (in press) gives speeds for one subject averaging 13 words per minute over four different discourse types.

bined to form more complex idea units and sentences. I will say that written language tends to have an 'integrated' quality which contrasts with the fragmented quality of spoken language.

FRAGMENTATION

The fragmentation of spoken language shows up partly in the stringing together of idea units without connectives:³

- (1) And my room was small.
 . . . It was like . . . nine by twelve or something.
 It seemed spacious at the time.
 . . . I came home,
 I was really exhausted,
 I was eating a popsicle,
 . . . I was sitting there in my chair,

But idea units are also frequently introduced with coordinating conjunctions, by far the most common of which is *and*:

- (2) A—nd it's . . . very well . . . um equipped.
 . . . You know the kitchen,
 . . . and and it's got a dishwasher,
 and it's got . . . uh . . . all kinds of . . . you know . . . mixers and . . . uh
 . . . plates
 and . . . you know every kind of equipment you need.
 And . . . a—nd uh— . . . staple . . . things.

Other conjunctions which occur fairly often are *but*, *so*, and *because*:

- (3a) But of course to the audience sounded like. . . sort of a total nonsequitur.
 (3b) But the other thing too is she's always had a thing for older men.
 (3c) So they were having a fit.
 (3d) So it's . . . you know really handy.
 (3e) Because the theory is prescribed in some way.
 (3f) Because the— uh starting date will be in October.

In the data at hand, the occurrences of these conjunctions at the beginnings of idea units were as follows, the figures being numbers of occurrences per thousand words:

³In these transcriptions two dots indicate a break in timing too brief to be measured as a pause, three dots indicate a measurable pause, and two hyphens show a lengthening of the preceding segment.

	<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
<i>and</i>	44.2	10.1
<i>but</i>	9.8	4.1
<i>so</i>	7.4	0.0
<i>because</i>	4.7	1.5
<i>combined</i>	66.0	15.8

Thus in these spoken data there were about four times as many coordinating conjunctions which were initial in idea units.

INTEGRATION

Integration refers to the packing of more information into an idea unit than the rapid pace of spoken language would normally allow. In fragmented language, a typical idea unit consists of a single clause, containing one predicative element (a verb or predicate adjective) and the noun phrases which are directly associated with that element as subject, object, and the like:

- (4a) I was eating a popsicle.
 (4b) And my room was small.

Sometimes a fragmented idea unit may consist of nothing more than a noun phrase or prepositional phrase:

- (5a) And . . . a—nd uh— . . . staple . . . things.
 (5b) At that point.

Integrated language, on the other hand, makes use of a variety of devices for incorporating additional elements into an idea unit. The following are some of the more conspicuous of these devices.

Nominalizations

The most characteristic integrative device in our samples of written language was nominalization, as in the use of *treatment* rather than *treat*, *development* rather than *develop*, *operation* rather than *operate*, and *use* (the noun) rather than *use* (the verb) in the examples immediately below. A nominalization allows a notion which is verbal in origin to be inserted into an idea unit as if it were a noun. Such an element then plays the role of a noun in the syntax of the idea unit, acting as one of the arguments of the main predication. Thus it adds another, intrinsically predicative, element to the idea unit in the guise of a nominal one.

- (6a) There appeared to be evidence of differential *treatment* of children.
- (6b) The historical *development* of proper names often deviates from regular processes of linguistic change.
- (6c) the meaning generated by the *operation* of productive algorithms which make no *use* of context, inference, or past calculation.

There were about eleven and a half times as many occurrences of nominalizations in our written data (the figures are again occurrences per thousand words):

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
4.8	55.5

Associated with nominalizations is the occurrence of prepositional phrases, usually introduced by *of*, which express the subject or object of the nominalized verb; for example, *treatment of children*, where the children are the object of treatment, or *development of proper names*, where the proper names are the subject of development. We found these 'genitive subjects' and 'genitive objects' occurring significantly in the written material, but hardly at all in the spoken:

	<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
genitive subject	0.1	4.1
genitive object	0.1	12.3

Participles

Another frequently used integrative device was the use of participles, both present and past. Participles allow verbs to be used syntactically as either nouns or adjectives, and thus to be integrated into idea units in either a nominal or a modifying function. We have looked separately at the occurrences of present and past participles. For present participles we counted occurrences of the *-ing* suffix on verbs, but omitted progressive constructions like 'he was reading' and clearly lexicalized words like 'meaning' or 'interesting' which, whatever their origins, behave as frozen nouns or adjectives. We counted present participles used as nouns, or gerunds:

- (7) Her realism is preoccupied with *establishing* the literary work's relation to the world,

as well as those used adjectivally:

- (8) It was a *recurring* classroom activity.

We also included postposed modifiers like the following, which might alternatively be regarded as reduced relative clauses:

- (9) There are, for example, no slang terms for patients *suffering* from severe or painful forms of cancer,

Here the participle is an abbreviated way of saying, 'who are suffering'.

With past participles we omitted perfect constructions like 'he has read' and lexicalized forms like 'confused'. What we counted were preposed modifiers such as:

- (10) The sight of an object brings about *directed* looking.

and postposed modifiers which, again, might be interpreted as reduced relative clauses:

- (11) A frequent change *found* in proper names is syllable loss.

Here the participle is an abbreviated way of saying 'which is found'. Present participles were more common in our data and were more frequent in writing than in speaking. Past participles were overwhelmingly more frequent in writing (per thousand words):

	<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
present	7.1	20.7
past	1.2	14.9
combined	8.3	35.6

Thus participles in general were more than four times as frequent in the written data.

Attributive Adjectives

We found predicate adjectives, as in 'the house was *old*', to occur with approximately equal frequency in spoken and written language: 15.8 occurrences per thousand words in speaking, and 20.2 in writing. Such predicate adjectives are the basic device for expressing states in English. The use of attributive adjectives, as in 'the *old* house', allows states to be expressed as modifiers rather than assertions and is thus another integrative device. Examples from our written data include:

- (12a) and have produced *drastic* changes in previously *stable* facets of the language.
- (12b) Now these are two *distinct* places.

Although attributive adjectives were fairly common even in speaking, they appeared about four times as often in writing:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
33.5	134.9

Thus, while nominalizations show the greatest proportional difference across the two kinds of language, attributive adjectives are the single most prevalent feature of written language.

Conjoined Phrases

The possibility of conjoining verb phrases, adjective phrases, or noun phrases provides another device by which more information can be packed inside one idea unit. Thus *learn* and *use* are joined together in parallel in the following example:

- (13) as well as for speaker's tendency to learn these names earlier and use them more frequently.

rather than:

- (14) as well as for speaker's tendency to learn these names earlier, and for speaker's tendency to use them more frequently.

The same can be done with adjectives:

- (15) The traders are greedy and gullible.

rather than:

- (16) The traders are greedy, and the traders are gullible.

And with nouns:

- (17) so that Dorothea Brooke can, eventually, find her proper husband and her proper task in the world.

rather than:

- (18) so that Dorothea Brooke can, eventually, find her proper husband, and so that Dorothea Brooke can, eventually, find her proper task in the world.

The total count of conjoined phrases in our data shows about four times as many in writing as in speaking:

	<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
verb phrases	1.2	1.5
adjective phrases	0.6	5.1
noun phrases	3.4	17.1
combined	5.8	23.8

Series

Series provide a similar device, in this case for integrating three or more items within an idea unit:

- (19) No capital letters, definite articles, or plural markers provide clues.

rather than:

- (20) No capital letters provide clues,
no definite articles provide clues,
no plural markers provide clues.

Series appeared eight times as often in our written data:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
0.9	7.2

Sequences of Prepositional Phrases

Prepositional phrases may be chained in sequence within an idea unit to consolidate a larger amount of information than would typically be found in an idea unit in fragmented language:

- (21a) I avoid the question of the nature of referential forms in any underlying linguistic structure.
(21b) and should serve as a set of criteria for evaluating theories of cognitive development with regard to their implications for education.

This device was, in our data, nine times more prevalent in writing than in speaking. The occurrences of such sequences per thousand words were:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
1.8	16.2

Complement Clauses

So far we have looked at the integration of single words and phrases into idea units, but of course whole clauses may be embedded as well. So-called complement clauses provide an example. We have looked at occurrences of clauses introduced by *that* and *to*:

- (22a) It is notable *that assimilation rules are not much in evidence.*
 (22b) This is not to suggest *that there are unlikely to be terms of this kind.*
 (22c) and a wish *to care for the most needy.*
 (22d) It is essentially impossible *to consider one without the other in educational practice.*

These two kinds of complement clauses together occurred more than twice as often in our written data (per thousand words):

	<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
<i>that</i> complements	6.0	10.4
<i>to</i> complements	2.9	8.8
combined	8.9	19.2

Relative Clauses

A similar proportion of about two to one in favor of written language was found for relative clauses, which constitute another device by which a whole clause can be inserted within an idea unit:

- (23a) and of the cognitive constraints *which seem to be responsible for this distribution.*
 (23b) English has a variety of sentence types *in which the illocutionary force of the sentence is shifted in mid-stream.*

The occurrences per thousand words of restrictive relative clauses were:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
9.7	15.8

SUMMARY

In summary, we found formal written language to differ from informal spoken language by having a larger proportion of nominalizations, genitive subjects and objects, participles, attributive adjectives, conjoined phrases, series, sequences of prepositional phrases, complement clauses, and relative clauses. These are all de-

vices which permit the integration of more material into idea units. I have suggested that such integration is fostered by the greater amount of time available in writing, and that speakers are less likely to use them because of the faster pace of spoken language.

SPEAKERS INTERACT WITH THEIR AUDIENCES, WRITERS DO NOT

Speakers and writers usually have different relations to their respective audiences. It is typically the case that a speaker has face to face contact with the person to whom he or she is speaking. That means, for one thing, that the speaker and listener share a considerable amount of knowledge concerning the environment of the conversation. It also means that the speaker can monitor the effect of what he or she is saying on the listener, and that the listener is able to signal understanding and to ask for clarification. It means furthermore that the speaker is aware of an obligation to communicate what he or she has in mind in a way that reflects the richness of his or her thoughts—not to present a logically coherent but experientially stark skeleton, but to enrich it with the complex details of real experiences—to have less concern for consistency than for experiential involvement. The situation of the writer is fundamentally different. His or her readers are displaced in time and space, and he or she may not even know in any specific terms who the audience will be. The result is that the writer is less concerned with experiential richness, and more concerned with producing something that will be consistent and defensible when read by different people at different times in different places, something that will stand the test of time. I will speak of 'involvement' with the audience as typical for a speaker, and 'detachment' from the audience as typical for a writer.

DETACHMENT

The detached quality of written language is manifested in devices which serve to distance the language from specific concrete states and events. Such a device in English is the passive voice, which suppresses the direct involvement of an agent in an action. Examples of the passive in our written data are:

- (24a) Its use *was observed* on only a single occasion.
 (24b) The resonance complex *has been studied* through experiments with an electronic violin.

There were about five times as many occurrences of the passive in our written sample as in our spoken:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
5.0	25.4

Nominalization seems to be another device associated with detachment, besides functioning as an integrative device as described above. Not only does nominalization allow predications to be integrated within larger sentences; it also suppresses involvement in actions in favor of abstract reification. Examples were given above, along with counts showing the striking predominance of nominalizations in our written data.

INVOLVEMENT

First Person References

A speaker's involvement with his or her audience is manifested, for one thing, in a speaker's more frequent reference to him- or herself. Although such use is in part determined by the subject matter (one can of course write about oneself), first person reference is otherwise much less frequent in formal written language. Typical examples of such reference in our spoken data were:

(25a) I have a friend who's . . . about six foot and blond.

(25b) I was reading some of his stuff recently.

Occurrences per thousand words of first person references, including *I*, *we*, *me*, and *us* were:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
61.5	4.6

Second person reference would seem to be also a symptom of involvement, but there were too few examples in our data to demonstrate anything of interest.

Speaker's Mental processes

References to a speaker's own mental processes were also not uncommon, but were conspicuously absent in our written data; some examples from spoken language follow:

(26a) and I had no idea how I had gotten there.

(26b) but . . . I can recall . . . uh . . . a big undergraduate class that I had.

(26c) and I thought . . . am I alive?

The occurrences of such references in our data were as follows:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
7.5	0.0

Monitoring of Information Flow

Involvement includes monitoring by the speaker of the communication channel which exists with the listener, and attempts to make sure that the channel is functioning well. The speaker may do things to reassure him- or herself that the listener is assimilating what he or she is saying, or to prod the listener into noticing and acknowledging the flow of information. Colloquial expressions like *well*, *I mean*, and *you know* perform one or another of these functions:

(27a) Well I . . . I took off four weeks.

(27b) But . . . but as it is still I mean . . . everybody knows everybody.

(27c) So we . . . so we . . . you know, we have this confrontation.

These expressions were significantly present in our spoken sample, and entirely absent in the written:

	<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
<i>well</i>	7.0	0.0
<i>I mean</i>	2.5	0.0
<i>you know</i>	13.6	0.0

Emphatic Particles

Particles expressing enthusiastic involvement in what is being said, like *just* and *really*, are also diagnostic:

(28a) I just don't understand.

(28b) And he got . . . really furious.

The occurrences were:

	<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
<i>just</i>	7.5	0.4
<i>really</i>	5.1	0.0

Fuzziness

Vagueness and hedges are also more prevalent in speaking, and may also express a desire for experiential involvement as opposed to the less human kind of precision which is fostered by writing. The following are examples of spoken fuzziness:

- (29a) schemes for striking, lifting, pushing, pulling, *and so on*.
- (29b) moving the bridge or soundpost *a millimeter or two*.
- (29c) Since this banker is *something like* forty-seven.
- (29d) And he started *sort of* circling.

Counts of occurrences per thousand words of this kind of language were:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
18.1	5.5

Direct Quotes

Finally, direct quotes also express an involvement in actual events which tends to be lacking in written language:

- (30a) And uh . . . she said, 'Sally can I have one of your papers?'
- (30b) And I said, 'Well no I'm afraid I don't.'

The occurrences of direct quotes in our data were as follows:

<i>Spoken</i>	<i>Written</i>
12.1	4.2

SUMMARY

In summary, whereas written language fosters the kind of detachment evidenced in the use of passives and nominalizations, spoken language shows a variety of manifestations of the involvement which a speaker has with his or her audience. Among these evidences of involvement are references to the speaker, references to the speaker's mental processes, devices for monitoring the flow of information, the use of emphatic particles, fuzziness, and the use of direct quotes.

I should repeat that these seemingly categorical statements about spoken and written language apply in fact to extremes on a continuum. The figures I have given are from maximally differentiated samples: spontaneous conversational language on the one hand and formal academic prose on the other. There are other styles of speaking which are more in the direction of writing, and other styles of writing which are more like speech. With other data now being collected and analyzed, we will eventually be able to report on a fuller range of styles. At the same time, we are looking also at the speech and writing of children, with the hope of tracing the manner in which these differences are acquired.

ORAL LITERATURE

The term 'oral literature' seems, etymologically at least, to contain an internal contradiction. How can something be oral and written at the same time, if 'literature' implies writing? The term seems to unite in one concept the two kinds of language whose differences we have been exploring. But oral literature has proved to be an identifiable way of using language, and it may be interesting to consider briefly how language that fits that category relates to what I have been discussing.

For many years I have been involved with a language called Seneca, an Iroquois language spoken in western New York State. Seneca has no written tradition. A missionary named Asher Wright developed an excellent orthography for the language in the 19th century and published some religious materials in it, but no widespread use of writing developed out of his efforts. Within the last few years an interest in teaching the language has led to a new orthography and the preparation of written educational materials, but there is still no use of writing for other purposes. Seneca, on the other hand, has an extraordinarily rich and varied oral literature, some of it ironically accessible now only from written records of earlier speakers (e.g. Hewitt, 1903), but much of it still known and performed. Some years ago I worked extensively with certain ritual materials in this language (Chafe, 1961). In examining features which differentiate spoken and written language, I have noticed that features of a similar sort may differentiate colloquial Seneca from the language used in these rituals.

Why should that be? Why should the distinction between colloquial and RITUAL language in some ways parallel the distinction between colloquial and WRITTEN language? One reason, I suspect, is that ritual language, like written language, has a permanence which colloquial language does not. The same oral ritual is presented again and again, not verbatim, to be sure, but with a content, style, and formulaic structure which remain constant from performance to performance. A piece of ritual language is something which is valued, and which is repeated because of its value. We may sometimes say, 'That was a good conversation,' but we are unlikely to repeat the conversation later because it was so good. Rituals, on

Rituals, on the other hand, are performed and listened to over and over again. As a result they contain language that has been formalized and polished, even over many centuries, contrasting with the spontaneity and roughness of conversation. We might then expect to find in ritual language something like the integration of written language, as opposed to the fragmentation of spoken.

It is also the case that the performer of a ritual is removed from his audience in a way that parallels the solitude of a writer. In religious performance he stands before the assembled crowd and recites from memory, using stylized intonation patterns having little in common with the intonation contours of colloquial speech. What he performs is a monologue, with minimal feedback and no verbal interaction. Thus the situation is one which fosters detachment rather than involvement, just as we saw to be the case with writing.

It is impossible to compare, in colloquial and ritual Seneca, the occurrences of any of the features we found to differentiate spoken and written English. Seneca has no nominalizers performing the same function as the English nominalizers discussed above. It has no participles. It has no attributive adjectives either; adjectival meanings are expressed by stative verbs. It has neither prepositions nor postpositions. It has no complementizers like English 'that' or 'to', and no constructions which are like English relative clauses. To find these integrative devices missing in a language without a written tradition might suggest, of course, that they are features which arise in a language precisely because of writing. But such a conclusion would have to be treated with a large dose of skepticism, since there are numerous other unwritten languages in which at least some of these same features do exist. However that may be, we cannot simply count, in colloquial and ritual Seneca, the same integration features we counted in spoken and written English, since many of these features simply are not there.

Instead I will try to suggest the flavor of the difference in integration between the two styles of Seneca with a typical example. A speaker in a Seneca conversation, reminiscing about some events in his earlier life, said the following, for which I provide a free English translation:

- (31) *Da: ne: di neh, ga:nöwögö: gaya:söh,*
 And so it's called *ga:nöwögö:h*,
jöëdzë syö' gë:s hadi:ya:s, nonëjih.
jöëdzë syö' they used to call it long ago.
Ne: ne' ho wa' agwanödayë:.
 We camped there.
Dedza:ögwa: nö'gëhödi wa:yanöge'.
 There are berries on both sides of the river.

This sequence surely has a fragmented quality. It consists of three intonationally separate sentences, and four syntactically independent clauses or idea units. In contrast we can look at the following sequence from a Seneca Thanksgiving Ritual (Chafe, 1961, p. 18):

- (32) *Da: ne: wai ne tgaie:i',*
 And so in fact it's true,
ögwajä: dahgöh,
 we are using it,
ha' dewë:nishäge:h
 every day
ha' dewahsödage:h,
 every night,
ne' ho deyögwadawënye:h,
 we who are moving about,
hë:öwe yöëdzade'.
 where the earth is.

Here the idea units are combined into an integrated whole. For one thing, the only sentence-final intonation occurs at the end of this sequence; the sequence of phrases or clauses is united into a single sentence. Beyond that, the phrases and clauses depend on one another. The first line establishes the validity of what is to follow. The second line can be regarded as the principal clause, with all that follows elaborating it in one way or another. The third and fourth lines provide a temporal modification of the second, the fifth line elaborates on the 'we' of the second, and the sixth line gives a spatial modification of the fifth. The entire passage hangs together with an internal cohesion that is absent from the earlier example.

Turning now to the distinction between involvement and detachment, we can look for features of Seneca which reflect this difference. For English we noted the occurrence of passives as a symptom of detachment. Seneca has nothing like the English passive. It does, however, have an impersonal reference marker, a verb prefix which means 'one' (French 'on'). As with the passive, this prefix allows the omission of specific reference to the agent of an action, and thus appears also to be evidence of detachment. In a thousand words of colloquial Seneca this 'one' prefix occurred only twice, whereas in a thousand words of ritual it occurred 36 times.

Seneca has a variety of particles which can be interpreted as expressing involvement, for example *agwas* 'really' and *do:gës* 'for sure', which occurred respectively five and four times in a thousand words of conversation, but not at all in the ritual data I looked at. More striking was the occurrence of particles expressing fuzziness or evidentiality, whose occurrences per thousand words were as follows:

	Colloquial	Ritual
<i>nö:h</i> I guess	18	0
<i>a:yë:</i> it seems	10	0
<i>gi'shëh</i> -maybe	5	1
<i>i:wi:h</i> I think	4	0

To discuss more of these differences would carry us too far into the details of the Seneca language (see Chafe, 1981 for further discussion). I wish here only to leave the suggestion that oral literature may indeed be more like written than spoken language in some ways. The permanence, value, and polish of an oral text may lead to a more integrated, less fragmented kind of language than that found in spontaneous conversation, and the detachment of a reciter from his audience may produce a kind of language lacking the involvement of colloquial speech. Certainly the differences between colloquial language and oral literature do not in all ways parallel those between spoken and written language, but the extent to which the parallel does seem to hold is intriguing and worthy of more systematic attention.

CONCLUSION

I have tried to show that spoken and written language differ with regard to two sets of features. The features of one set can be assigned to an opposition of fragmentation and integration, which I suggested is a consequence of differences in the use of time in speaking and writing. The features of the other set reflect an involvement vs. detachment dichotomy, attributable to the different relations of a speaker or writer to the audience. Occurrences of specific features in conversation and academic prose were cited and illustrated. I concluded with a suggestion that some of the same differences may distinguish colloquial language and oral literature, even in a language that has never been written. The reasons may be that oral literature has a kind of permanence analogous to that of written language, and that the reciter of oral literature is, like a writer, detached from direct personal interaction.

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