

A level ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Unit 4 Spoken Texts & Creative Recasting

Section A: Analysing Spoken Language

Sample overviews



Overviews

Read through the following sample overviews and think about the strengths and weaknesses in each case.

You should consider:

- the style
- the content
- the use of appropriate terminology
- the selection of apt examples.

RESPONSE 1

Text A is a conversation from the programme *don't tell the bride*. It is a discussion about what kind of wedding party the bride and groom would both like to have. I expect the text to be informal with a middle-low register. Text B is conversation on BBC1. It is a discussion about John Barnes family background. I expect this text to be slightly more formal than Text A and so has a middle-high register.

RESPONSE 2

Both Texts A and B involve conversations with people who are familiar (friends and family). However, Text A possesses a more informal dynamic because it is an example of a reality television show broadcast on BBC3 which has a target audience of 16-35 year olds. This means it has a colloquial style demonstrated through the contraction of the coordinating conjunction 'and' to /ən/ and the elision of /ləʊdzə/. Text B is more formal because it is broadcast on BBC1 which has a wide general audience. While both shows are about entertaining the audience, Text B is also informative. It provides details about Barnes' family background: the noun phrase "eighty mango trees in the garden" describes the place he grew up, and the lexical set of family members ("father, "grandfather", great grandfather") demonstrates the focus of the programme. John Barnes is speaking to his mother and this may also affect the tenor of the interaction because he will be showing respect to an older person. The setting is also different because the conversation in Text A takes place in John Barnes' mother's home, while Text B takes place in more public places like looking around arenas and in the pub.

RESPONSE 3

In this essay I will be comparing two texts that focus on conversations regarding family members and friends. Text A is from the BBC 3 programme 'Don't Tell the Bride' whereas Text B is from 'Who Do You Think You Are?' which is a programme about family history. I will address key features of spoken language as well as consider the lexical choice and grammatical structure within each extract. After acknowledging the context of which each conversation takes place, it is immediately clear to recognise and identify that there will be difference regarding formality when comparing each one.

RESPONSE 4

The most prevalent contrast between the two texts, in my opinion, is the subject matter of the conversations, and how this directly affects the fluency of the speakers. Text A revolves around planning a wedding party, with the bride and groom, unknowingly having contrasting ideas. The groom wants the party to be based on their shared career, wrestling. Contrasting to this, Text B is a conversation about family. The features of spoken language throughout both of the extracts reflect the subject matter and therefore the background of the speakers.

RESPONSE 5

Text A is about planning a wedding and there is an air of excitement in the transcript demonstrated by Mike's emphatic stress on key adjectives which suggest his enthusiasm (for example, "big" and "huge"). He clearly wants a very energetic wedding. He describes the occasion he wants to plan using abstract nouns such as "spectacle", "show" and "event". These indicate that he wants a magnificent day to remember which will be enjoyable for everyone to watch. Text B, on the other hand, is far more restrained. The purpose is still to entertain, but viewers will be more interested in information about Barnes' background than in public displays of emotion. Adjectives such as "favourite", "good" and "very pleased" reflect positive family relationships, but Text A draws attention to the potential conflict between the bride and groom. There is a tension between Mike and Becky's idea of a dream wedding and this is demonstrated in the opposition created between noun phrases such as "a wrestling show" and "/kaɪndə/ fairy tale (. princesy wedding". The modifiers (underlined) suggest they want completely different things.

RESPONSE 6

Text A is a 'semi-scripted', evening TV programme live on BBC Three. 'Semi-scripted' refers to the fact that, while no individual scene in the show is 'acted out' in a traditional manner, the film crew will know what part they are filming, and the participants (Mike, Becky and their family/friends) will understand that they are being filmed, leading to some more unnatural scenes. The audience is very general primarily, being broadcast in the early evening to almost the entire country though a potential brides and grooms to be would likely take an particular interest in the show. The subject mainly revolves around the wedding, with various specific topics covered through the various scenes of the show regarding Mike and Becky's interests. The function is particularly focused on interaction and transaction here, with the general purpose being to entertain. And the tone, due to the relatively casual and intimate context remains largely informal through. Text B, however, contrasts this because its broadcast on BBC One. This conversation is also recorded and broadcast live, and I will therefore expect to see slight slips, in terms of non-fluency features, such as the use of fillers. As mentioned earlier, the audience will be older than for Text A with the primary audience consisting of enthusiasts for finding out about the past. The subject obviously differs and the topics shift more fluidly and cover a much narrower range than Text A. The function is the main similarity to A, being a dual interactional and transactional conversation, to entertain and inform.