

# Linguistic Statement Analysis

Linguistic Statement Analysis Methodologies  
as a Tool in the Conduct of Investigations

Presented By

**Elizabeth Martin**

Certified Principal Forensic Psychophysiological  
Certified Linguistic Statement Analyst  
Neurolinguistic Programming Master Practitioner

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“Without knowing the force of words, it  
is impossible to know more.”  
— Confucius



# The Scope of this Presentation

- What is Linguistic Statement Analysis
- Breaking the Linguistic Code
- Pure Statements
- Analysing Structure and Content
- Unique Word Analysis
- Practical Demonstration
  - Analysis of Olympic Swimmer Ryan Lochte alleged robbery statement

6?99 punctuation  
! adjective ;  
**Language**  
noun verb

# Linguistic Statement Analysis

**Linguistic** - Relating to language or linguistics

**Statement** - A definite or clear expression of something in speech or writing

**Analysis** - Detailed examination of the elements or structure of something.

Statement Analysis is the process of analysing a person's words, structure and content of a statement to determine if the subject is attempting to be deceptive or hide relevant information related to a specific event.



**People's words will betray them**

Statement Analysis Methodologies' look upon a statement as an equation. This means we are not interested in the content of the statement, but in the relationship between what is said and not said:

The different links of the statement

The subjective meaning the subject attributes to each word

The different locations in which a certain word is used

The relationship between the different words.

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- Answering a question with a question.
- Glossing over critical points in the narrative.
- Bridging gaps with uninformative statements such as
  - "We talked" (about what?)
  - "afterwards" (after what?)
  - "Next thing I knew"

**RULE: In analysing statements we only analyse what the subject says and not what we know**

## Total Belief in the Subject

The content of the statement is always assumed to be true. However, the statement analyst must be aware to find out what the subject didn't say or eliminated.

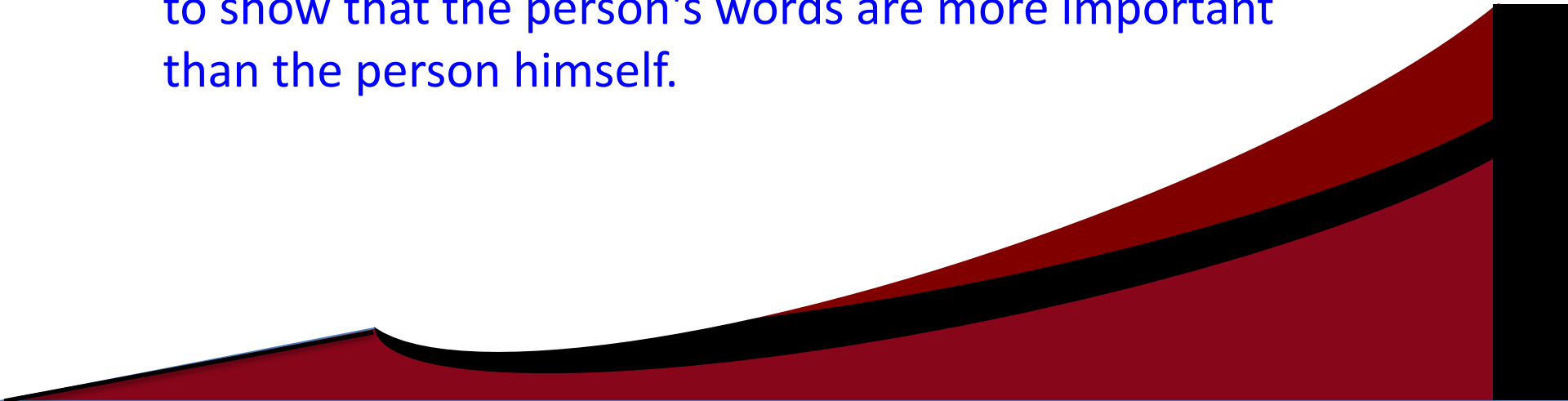
We must ask "Is it possible that the statement is truthful, but the subject still committed the crime?"

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Eliciting a statement is not a 50/50 proposition. Consider an interview successful if the subject speaks about 95% of the time, and the investigator only about 5%. This minimises the investigator's contribution to the final statement.

RULE: "The person is mute. The statement speaks,"  
to show that the person's words are more important  
than the person himself.

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## Goals for Analysing a Statement

1. Establish the subject's language baseline.
2. Find language clues to indentify "who is the subject?"
3. Establish relationships with anyone else mentioned in the statement.
4. Identify any indications of missing information or missing time.



## Structural **Red** Flags



- Change in Speech Patterns
- Pronoun Use
- Gaps in the Narrative
- Change in Tenses

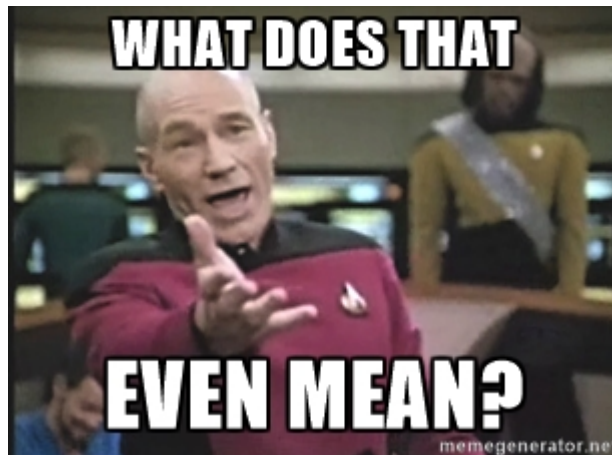
# Nothing Happens in a Vacuum



Most deceptive stories are governed by  
logic, whilst truthful stories are not  
necessarily logical

The majority of the Statement Analysis techniques are based on word definitions.

- Every word has a meaning.
- People mean exactly what they say



"You know, I am trying to be as honest as possible."



"You know, I am trying to be as honest as possible."





*"I swore an oath to tell the truth and I believed I was bound to be truthful and I tried to be."*

*Former President Bill Clinton August 17, 1998.*



## “Talking” in an Open Statement



# Rules of Grammar

Consider the following statement from an alleged robbery:

"I was standing at the bus stop when a man approached me and asked me what time it was. The man then pointed the gun at me and told me to give him my wallet."

## Verb Tenses

“I was sitting in my car when a man opened my door, pointed a gun at me and tells me to get out.”

## Unique Words

- Never. Meaning “not ever”. This does not mean “no”
  - Question: “Did you sell him drugs?”
  - Answer: “I never sold drugs”

# “Just”

Just minimises the actions of the speaker

- I Just went to McDonalds and came back
- I just walked her home and left
- I just walked in and it was broken

# **“Actually”**

**When people use the word “actually”  
they are comparing two thoughts**

- Question: “Did you buy a handgun?”
- Answer: “Actually I bought a rifle”
  
- Question: “What did you do Saturday night?”
- Answer: “Actually I went to a birthday party”

## “I don’t remember”

...and then we returned home. My daughter then watched my son in the house while I mowed the front lawn. At that point my wife returned home from work and I took a short nap. I am having difficulty in remembering what I did for the next few hours. When I woke from my nap I ate lunch and went to my office for a few hours....



- **Wife returned home.**
- Go on.
- **We talked for a few minutes. I was tired from having been in the sun while I mowed the lawn so I napped in my chair. When I woke from my nap my wife had put my son down for his nap and she was preparing to take a nap also. I decided to go to the office and finish some things before I left on the trip.**
- You said “we talked”. Tell me about it
- **I don’t recall the topic of the conversation**
- Take a minute to think about it
- **It was probably about the children and what she did at work**

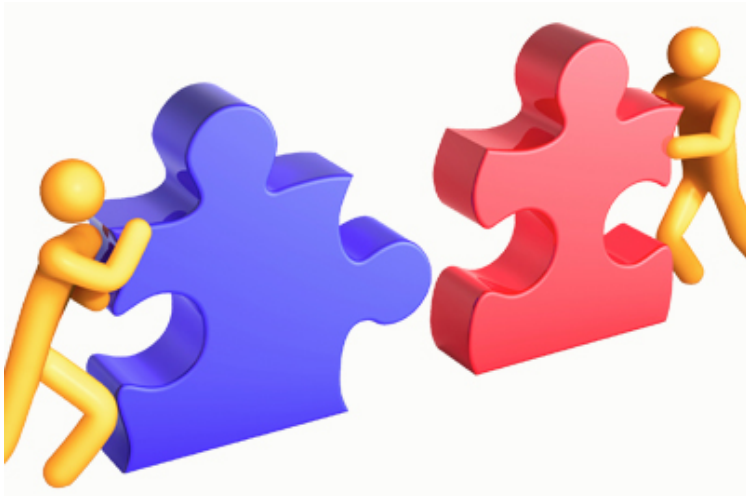


“Married 66 years. I am 83 and have never cheated; my husband is 89 and says he can’t remember”



# Test of Commitment

1. The subject needs to connect the statement to himself/herself by putting the pronoun “I” in the statement.
2. The subject needs to connect the statement to the past.



## The “Social Introduction” in Statements

“I got up, took a shower, and got dressed. My husband got up...”

- I am married
- I have a husband
- He is alive
- He was there
- He got up

## Deviations from the Shortest Way

1. "I got up, took a shower, and got dressed. My husband Steve(=social introduction) got up and joined me in the kitchen. Then my husband Steve went..."
2. "I got up, took a shower, and got dressed. Steve (=social introduction) got up and joined me in the kitchen. Then my husband Steve went..."
3. "I got up, took a shower, and got dressed. My husband (=social introduction) got up and joined me in the kitchen. Then Steve went..."
4. "I got up, took a shower, and got dressed. Steve got up..."

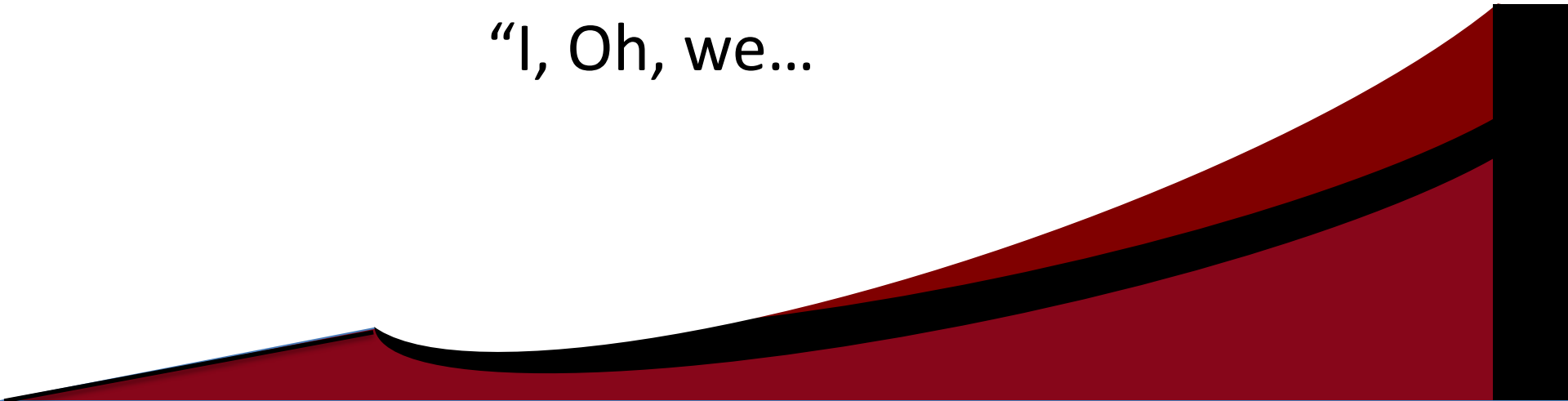
# PRONOUNS

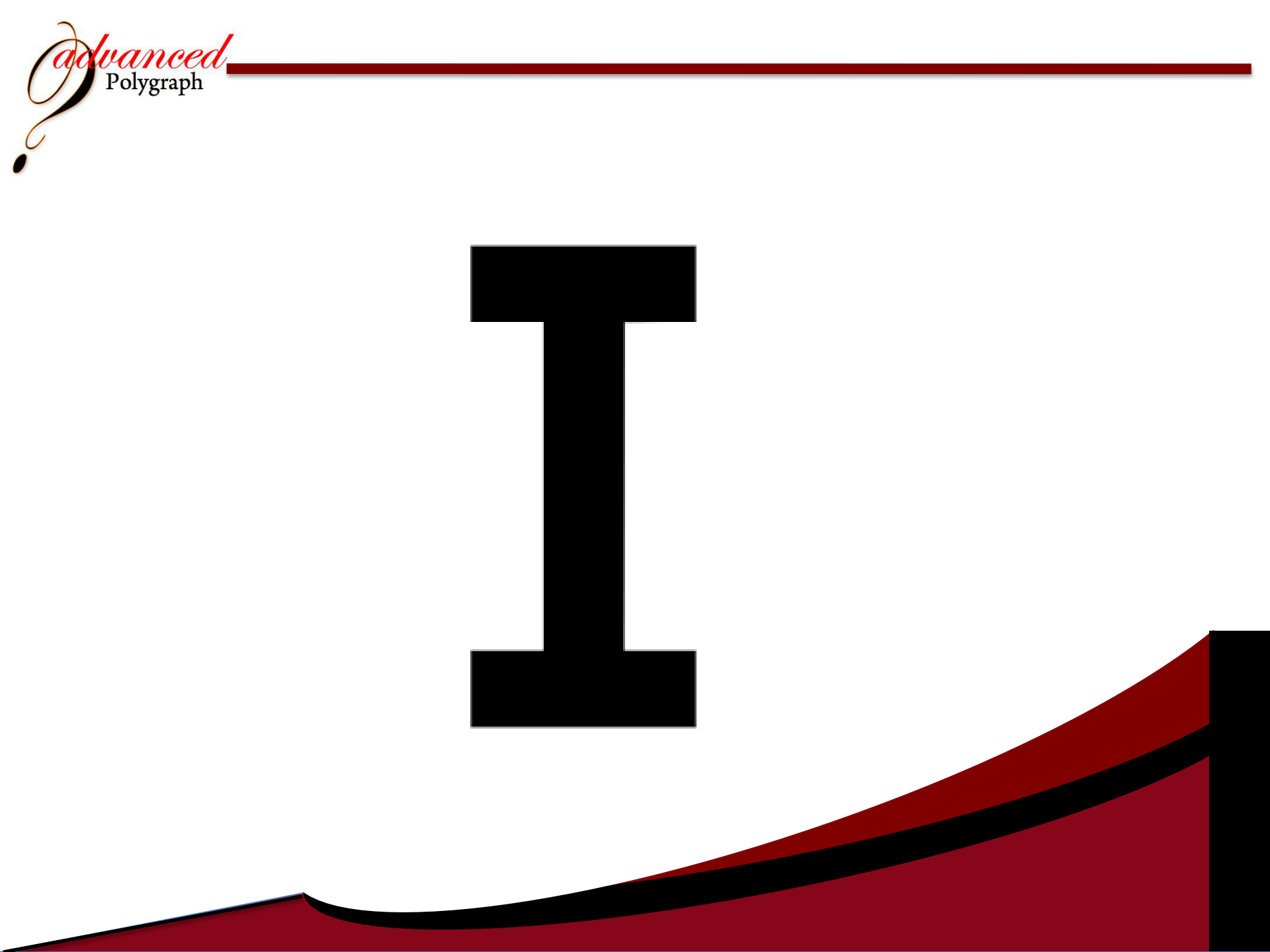
We use pronouns because they shorten the sentences and make life easier.

I, My, Me, Myself, You, Your, He, His, She, Her, It, They, Our, Their, Us, Him, Them, Ourselves.

“I got up at 6 o’clock.”

“I, Oh, we...”

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## “WE”

You can say the same sentence four ways and have four completely different meanings

1. We went...
2. My husband and I went...
3. I went....with my husband....
4. I went...with the husband...

## “My” vs. “The”

“I came to my desk and I found out that money is missing from the desk.”

The change from MY to THE is important in Disputes about possession, Arson Cases and Child Abuse Cases.



## “WITH”

“With” indicates distance.

Example: “I had breakfast with my husband”

1. Did you eat the same food?
2. Did you eat at the same time? Did you read a newspaper during breakfast?”
3. Were there any differences of opinion during the conversation over breakfast?

Example: “I watched TV with my husband”

1. Did one of the two do something else (read a book, surf the web) while the other watched TV?

# Olympic Swimmer Ryan Lochte

Bush: "So, what happened? You were held at gunpoint last night."

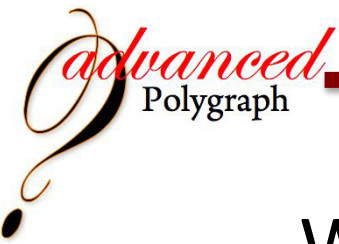
Lochte: "Yes."

Bush: "What happened? Who were you with? What time at night? Who pulled you over?"

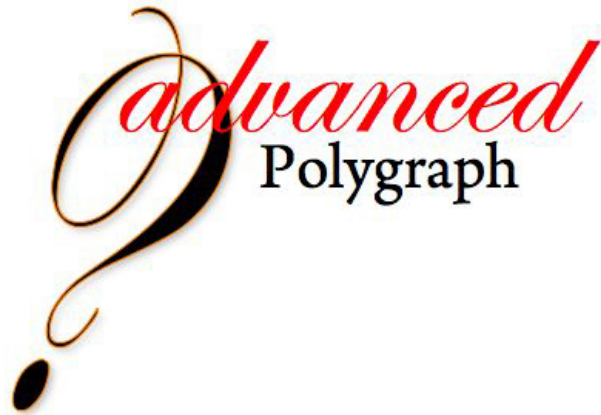
Lochte: "I was with a couple of swimmers. Ah, we were coming back from a friend's house and we got pulled over in our taxi and these guys came out with a badge, a police badge, no lights, no nothing just a police badge. They pulled us over, ah, they pulled out their guns. They told the other swimmers to get down on the ground. They got down on the ground. I refused. I was like, 'We didn't do anything wrong so, I'm not getting down on the ground.' And then the guy pulled out his gun. He cocked it and put it to my forehead and he said, 'Get down' and I was like, I put my hands up, I was like, 'Whatever.' He took our money. He took my wallet and then."

Bush: "But he left your cellphone, he left your credentials."

Lochte: "He left my cellphone. He left my credentials."



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For Further Training in Linguistic Statement Analysis  
[info@advancedservicesgroup.com.au](mailto:info@advancedservicesgroup.com.au)