

Chapter 01: Terminology

Different Levels of Language

- Mastering communication means adapting the form of your message to the target audience and the goal you have in mind
 - You don't approach a teenager, a friend, a colleague or an assembly of scholars in the same way.
 - You don't write the same way for a scientific journal as for a popular newspaper.
 - Each communication situation calls for the choice of a particular language register and the use of lexical and syntactic forms that correspond to it.
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- We usually distinguish three main language registers.
 - We can add a fourth more specific one : The technical register

The familiar register:

- ✓ Used to create a sense of closeness and complicity,
- ✓ Reproduce the language of oral conversation
- ✓ Also used for didactic purposes, such as popularizing science for children and teenagers.

Characteristics:

- ✓ The vocabulary is restricted, popular, even cliché, and full of imagery.
- ✓ Abbreviations are often used: TV, The lab, ASAP...
- ✓ Use of idiomatic expressions: “Dressed to kill”, “Piece of cake”, “Break a leg”
- ✓ Simplified often incorrect grammar
- ✓ Frequent interjections (Nah, woops, phew, yummy, yikes...) and interpellations (Hey, Yo man....)

The current register:

- ✓ The most neutral register,
- ✓ Differs from the oral language, but avoid complexity and ambiguity (*Its, It's; You're, your.....*)
- ✓ Often used in everyday written communication (*a report, thesis...*), regular administrative or professional correspondence (*email...*), newspaper articles, leaflet...

Characteristics:

- ✓ Use of standard vocabulary
- ✓ Use of simple, correct grammatical forms
- ✓ No particular stylistic devices (used in creative writing such *metaphor, irony...*)

The sustained register:

- ✓ Used to express a social or cultural distinction, deepen an intellectual reflection, show deference to the addressee.
- ✓ Requires a perfect mastery of expression and grammar require a rich vocabulary
- ✓ Used for expmple in academic papers (English literature, philosophy...) or a very formal letter

Characteristics:

- ✓ Use of rich, rare often abstract words (**Incandescence**: light produced by high temperatures; **Nefarious**: Wicked, villainous, despicable; **Epoch**: A particular period of time in history or a person's life.
- ✓ Use of sophisticated syntax and complex sentences
- ✓ Use of stylistic effects

The technical register:

- ✓ Used for professional exchanges between specialists in the same trade or scientific discipline.
- ✓ Enables (allows) to express themselves with a high degree of precision in the concerned field
- ✓ It demonstrate a shared sense of belonging

Characteristics:

- ✓ Use of a highly specialized lexicon (**microbiology, biochemistry, molecular biology, analytic technics...**)
- ✓ Use of common syntactic structures: usually very simplified
- ✓ Strive for precision, avoiding ambiguity