

## Genre and register

### DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

## GENRE

- For any text analysis, we should be able to identify a **specific text type**, i.e. a **genre**.

Examples of genre:

*recipe, personal letter, advertisement, police report, student essay, formal letter, film review, health brochure, biology textbook, scientific paper...*

## REGISTER

- Register refers to **the type of language**.
- It is a **variety of a language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting**.
- For example, when speaking in a formal setting, an English speaker may be more likely to use features of prescribed grammar (such as pronouncing words ending in *-ing* (e.g. "walking", not "walkin'"), choosing more formal words (e.g. *father* vs. *dad*, *child* vs. *kid*, etc.), and refraining from using words considered nonstandard, such as ain't).
- Most often, it refers to the formality scale** but it is not only confined to that.

## Register: field, tenor and mode

- The field:**
  - What the communication is about – the **field**.
  - What is the content matter or topic of the communication?
- The tenor:**
  - Who you are communicating with – the **tenor**.
  - Who are the people taking part in the communication?
- The mode:**
  - How you are communicating – The **mode**.
  - Is it spoken or written communication and what media are used?

## Using language for different purposes Language Continuum

Informal ⇨ ⇨ ⇨	⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨	⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ Formal
<b>Text 1</b> "It's Will's 50 <sup>th</sup> on Saturday. How about coming to our place for lunch? About midday?"	<b>Text 2</b> "Hello Fred. I was wondering if you received the invitation to Will's 50 <sup>th</sup> birthday party? It's at our place on Saturday and will start at midday. I hope you can come."	<b>Text 3</b> You are cordially invited to attend a luncheon party in celebration of William Smith's 50 <sup>th</sup> birthday. The luncheon will commence at 12.00pm on Saturday 16 November 2010 at 2 River St. Pretty Bay.
Spoken ⇨ ⇨ ⇨	⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨	⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ ⇨ Written

## Field, Tenor and Mode

Context	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3
<b>Field</b> – What was the text about?			
<b>Tenor</b> – Who was taking part?			
<b>Mode</b> – Was the communication written or spoken?			
Typical language patterns			

## Text 1

The Upper Mountains continue to be very popular with many visitors to Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

Day trippers come to roam and take in all that is wonderful about our villages. Others come for the challenge of an 8 hour bush walk or rock climbing.

## Analysis:

- **Genre:** travel brochure
- **Register:**
  - **Field:** travel/tourism
  - **Tenor:**
    - **participants:** advertisers and people with an interest in travel / new tourists;
    - **social distance:** medium
    - **formality scale:** formal
  - **Mode:** written

## Text 2:

Megalong Books

Full range of books for adults and children.

Friendly service.

Orders taken.

183 THE MALL LEURA.

## Analysis:

- **Genre:** advertisement
- **Register:**
  - **Field:** informing potential customers
  - **Tenor:**
    - **participants:** vendor-customer relationship;
    - **social distance:** maximum
    - **formality scale:** formal
  - **Mode:** written

## Text 3

Tipping Point

In the wacky world of gratuities, it's hard to know how much to give to whom, writes Peter Preston.

If it's Monday, it must be Belgium; so plan to leave 10 per cent on the plate.

Tomorrow, in France, we'll do service *compris*, though a few more euros more may reward an unlikely smile or a spurt of speed.

Wednesday? Spain, where those who run restaurants themselves insist that 3 per cent or 4 per cent is quite enough...

Welcome to the wonderfully wacky world of tipping.

## Analysis:

- **Genre:** newspaper travel article
- **Register:**
  - **Field:** entertaining regular readers
  - **Tenor:**
    - **Participants:** journalist-reader relationship
    - **social distance:** close
    - **Formality scale:** neutral to formal
  - **Mode:** written

## Text 4

The mummified body of a 5,300-year-old man discovered in the Dolomites on the Austro-Italian border completed a controversial journey yesterday to an Italian museum...

## Analysis:

- Genre: science newspaper article
- Register:
  - Field: informing the readers
  - Tenor:
    - Participants: journalist-reader relationship;
    - social distance: maximum (authoritative-informative reporting)
    - formality scale: formal
  - Mode: spoken or written, it might also be a radio broadcast

## Text 5

Once upon a time, there was a little girl who lived with her mother in a tiny house in the middle of a BIG forest...

## Analysis:

- Genre: fairy tale
- Register:
  - Field: telling a story to a child
  - Tenor:
    - Participants: adult (parent/teacher) - child relationship
    - Social distance: closest
    - Formality scale: neutral to formal
  - Mode: perhaps spoken, perhaps in a book

## Tenor – formality scale

**Informal to formal** means moving from the kind of speech we would use when talking with friends:

*'I'm not going this afternoon 'cos I've got a cold.'*

To the kind of voice we use with our professional hat on:

*'I will be unable to attend this afternoon's appointment as I have contracted an infection, for which I will need to visit the doctor.'*

Imagine you've contracted someone to carry out painting work for your business. You were out of town and one of your staff paid the painters from the till. When you return the job is poorly finished. You need to write to the painters making it clear that you're not happy and you intend to do something about it. How can you show you should be taken seriously? Like this, perhaps?

*To Speedy Plumbers,*

*You dun a really bad job!! Painting was incomplete e.g. lots of equipment left lying around – which took me 2 weeks to clear up!! I am totally raging!! U owe me a refund for the work you dun or I get a lawyer to handle the situation...*

*Yours, Cliff Hanger*

## Compare:

You dun a really bad job!!	The job done was unsatisfactory.
Painting was incomplete e.g. lots of equipmnt left lying around	The painting was incomplete and equipment was left unattended.
- which took me 2 weeks to clear up!!	Furthermore, the situation took two weeks to address.
I am totally raging!!	This is completely unacceptable.
U owe me a refund for the work you dun or I get a lawyer to handle the situation...	An immediate refund is requested or legal action will be sought.

## What did we do?

~~You dun a really bad job!!~~ The job done was unsatisfactory. The painting was incomplete e.g. and lots of equipmnt equipment was left lying around. unattended - which Furthermore, the situation took me 2 two weeks to clear up!!! Address. I am This is totally raging completely unacceptable. U owe me for the work you done- An immediate refund is requested or I get a lawyer to handle this situashin legal action will be sought'

## What did we do?

- Made the register of words **Get:** obtained; **raging:** displeased more formal  
**Sort out:** address
- Removed abbreviation **eg:** for example
- Used passive voice **I want to:** It is requested that  
**You should:** There should be
- Removed digits **2:** two, to, too; **4:** four
- Removed text language **I want u 2:** I want you to
- Formal linking **However, furthermore**
- Used fewer exclamation marks

## Language: formal register

For each thing you want to say there will be a range of ways to say it. From very formal to very informal:

Very informal	Informal	Neutral	Formal	Very formal
'Slang'				
Done-in	Beat	Tired	Drained	Fatigued
Mincee	Rubbish	Bad	Poor	Substandard
Teensy	Wee	Small	Minute	Diminutive

## Register: formal verbs

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get</li> <li>• Looking</li> <li>• Went</li> <li>• Deserves</li> <li>• Saw/seen</li> <li>• Buy</li> <li>• Having</li> <li>• Has</li> </ul> | ➔ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain/achieve</li> <li>• Seeking</li> <li>• Attended</li> <li>• Merits</li> <li>• Observed</li> <li>• Purchase</li> <li>• Featuring</li> <li>• Possesses</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|

## Register: formal adjectives

### These are vague...

Good, great

Nice

Practise with word thesaurus.

### These are specific...

Excellent, valuable, skilled, effective

Stylish, sophisticated, friendly, confident

## From active to passive voice

### Active constructions

### Passive constructions

I looked up the internet	The internet was consulted.
Dan cleaned the car	The car was cleaned (by Dan)
I will finish the work today	The work will be finished today
We visited the site	The site was visited