

Register and Genre

Genre:

refers to a type or category of literature which has shared recognisable textual properties, features or conventions. These are the broad categories:

- Fiction
- Advertisements
- Drama
- Epic
- Poetry
- Lyric

Genre can be defined as a category of texts marked by a distinctive style, form or context. For example, classical poetry and rap lyrics belong to different genres.

Text classification will often involve (but is not limited to) the following aspects:

- what a text is about, i.e. what its topic is;
- the speaker's or writer's intention (the reason why the text was produced);
- the medium of its production and reception, i.e. spoken or written, or written but meant to be spoken in performance, etc.;
- the type of the register that constitutes the text;
- the relationship between writer or speaker and the recipient or audience, for example, a lecturer and a student, a lawyer and a client, a student and her friend.

Words associated with the term genre include category, kind, variety and type.

Register:

Register refers to features of text that point to it belonging to a particular field ie If someone talks about networking, routers and ports you can identify the register as belonging to I.T

It is the features of either a spoken or written text that identify it as belonging to a particular type of linguistic activity or a particular field or discourse, e.g. Science, Law, Religion. This is largely determined by lexis (the words or vocabulary of which the text is composed).

- The lexis (words) we use varies according to the type of situation, that is, according to the social context of language use and this is sometimes what is called 'language appropriateness'
- Sometimes this 'appropriateness' is determined by the register being either formal or informal.
- Registers include the varieties of language associated with people's professions.

- For example, a qualified lawyer does not use the same register to address everyone he or she speaks to. A lawyer may use an informal register at home with family and friends while at work he or she may use a more formal register with clients.
- Many professionals such as nurses and agriculturalists have a jargon (specific vocabulary) of their own. This is the lexis (vocabulary or lexical items) commonly used in their profession.
- Language varies according to the addressor, addressee, speaker's social class, ethnic group, age, and sex.
- This variation sometimes is brought by the informal and the formal factor variable.
- Formal register is a type or category of register that involves standard language and is used by professionals in their respective institutions, whereas informal register involves casual conversations between the speaker and close associates or people who are familiar with the speaker.
- Register also involves attitude and level of formality associated with a variety of language.
- There is a relationship between the following two variables: the writer's attitude and the language variety he/she chooses.
- Attitude is mostly reflected in face-to-face conversations.
- However in the written mode, it is sometimes subtle. There are different registers for different contexts, for example, we can have frozen, formal, consultative, casual and intimate registers

Different Registers:

Frozen: Language that rarely changes e.g. words of a song or prayer
Formal: one way communication e.g. presentation, lecture

Consultative: two way communication e.g. between a doctor and patient

Casual: communication with a friend

Intimate: Language shared between close couples e.g. the partner sometimes finishes the other one's sentences. This type of language is sometimes full of code words (words known to only those involved).

REGISTER IS RELATED TO GENRE;

for example, the register of a student's memorandum of grievances and the autopsy report from a pathologist will be different. This means that we can work out the register of a text by looking at its genre features.

GENRE	REGISTER
Biographies	President Mandela
Romance	Adore
Health	Antibiotics
Informational	Crime
Fantasy	Myth