

Some possible dimensions of register (Biber)

Information-focused versus interactive discourse

| Information-focused | Interactive |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Greater word length | Present-tense verbs |
| Nominalizations | Contractions |
| Prepositional phrases | First-person pronouns |
| Abstract nouns | Second-person pronouns |
| Relative clauses | Activity verbs |
| Attributive adjectives | |
| Passive verb phrases | |

Stance- versus context-focused discourse

| Stance-focused | Context-focused |
|--|--|
| <i>That</i> -deletions | Nouns |
| Mental verbs | <i>WH</i> -questions (<i>who, what, when, why, where, how</i>) |
| Factual/mental verb + <i>that</i> -clause | |
| Likelihood/mental verb + <i>that</i> -clause | |
| Likelihood adverbs | |
| Adverbial clauses | |
| General hedges | |
| Factual adverbs | |

Narrative-focused discourse

| Narrative-focused | Non-narrative-focused |
|--|-----------------------|
| Past-tense verbs | Present-tense verbs |
| Third-person pronouns | |
| Non-factual/communication verb + <i>that</i> -clause | |
| Communication verbs | |
| <i>That</i> -deletions | |

Collocations: large, big, small, and little (Stubbs)

| large... | big... | ...small | small... | ...little | little... |
|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| intestine | toe | com- | intestine | beautiful | finger |
| body | brother | para- | animals | charm- | brother |
| family | sister | tively | boat | ing | sister |
| fish | boy | exceed- | boy | cute | boy |
| piece | city | ingly | children | dainty | child |
| square | house | infinitely | garden | dear | children |
| stones | room | numer- | room | good | girl |
| tree | man | ous | table | lovely | fellow |
| towns | ship | relatively | town | neat | man |
| amount | step | | amount | nice | animal |
| extent | Apple | | degree | pretty | bird |
| majority | Bang | | fraction | sweet | boat |
| number | Brother | | number | tiny | creature |
| part | business | | portion | curious | house |
| propor- | guns | | propor- | dirty | room |
| tion | head | | tion | funny | town |
| quantity | league | | quantity | poor | village |
| scale | mouth | | | wretched | |
| size | time | | | | |
| sum | words | | | | |
| volume | | | | | |

Register

A variety of a language determined by circumstances of use (contrast with **dialect**: a variety of language determined by social and geographic distinctions). A given speaker may, within one dialect, use a variety of registers according to situation. Per Halliday et al., registers may be distinguished by **field** (context), **mode** (medium), and **style** of discourse.

Collocations

Words that commonly travel together. Play “word association” and you’ll produce a pretty good corpus of common collocations.

Leech’s seven kinds of meaning

- conceptual** (i.e., denotative – what’s in the dictionary)
- connotative** (properties generally expected to inhere in the object referred to, including positive or negative valuations)
- stylistic** (what the word or utterance conveys about the social circumstances of use – slang? formalism?)
- affective** (what is communicated about the feelings of the utterer – for instance, deliberate defiance of social norms and apparent intention of offensiveness in the case of vulgarities)
- reflected** (overtones gained by association with other meanings of the same word and with homophones – this includes phon-aesthetics, which shapes our expectations of a word’s meaning on the basis of its sounds: words that start with *gl-* in English tend to be associated with things shiny or fat; the *louche* associations of the *sh-* beginning are such that the words “swag” is often rendered as “schwag”)
- collocative** (meaning through association with words that tend to occur in the same environment)
- thematic** (meaning created through the organization of the expression)

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