TOPIC 3
Lecture 2
Register and the mode continuum

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Topics

- Register as a continuum

- The mode continuum

- Complexities of spoken and written language

- Introducing register in verbal text and image

Register in a functional model of context

Genre:

Why?
social purpose

Register:

The field (What?)

The tenor (Who?)

The mode (How?)
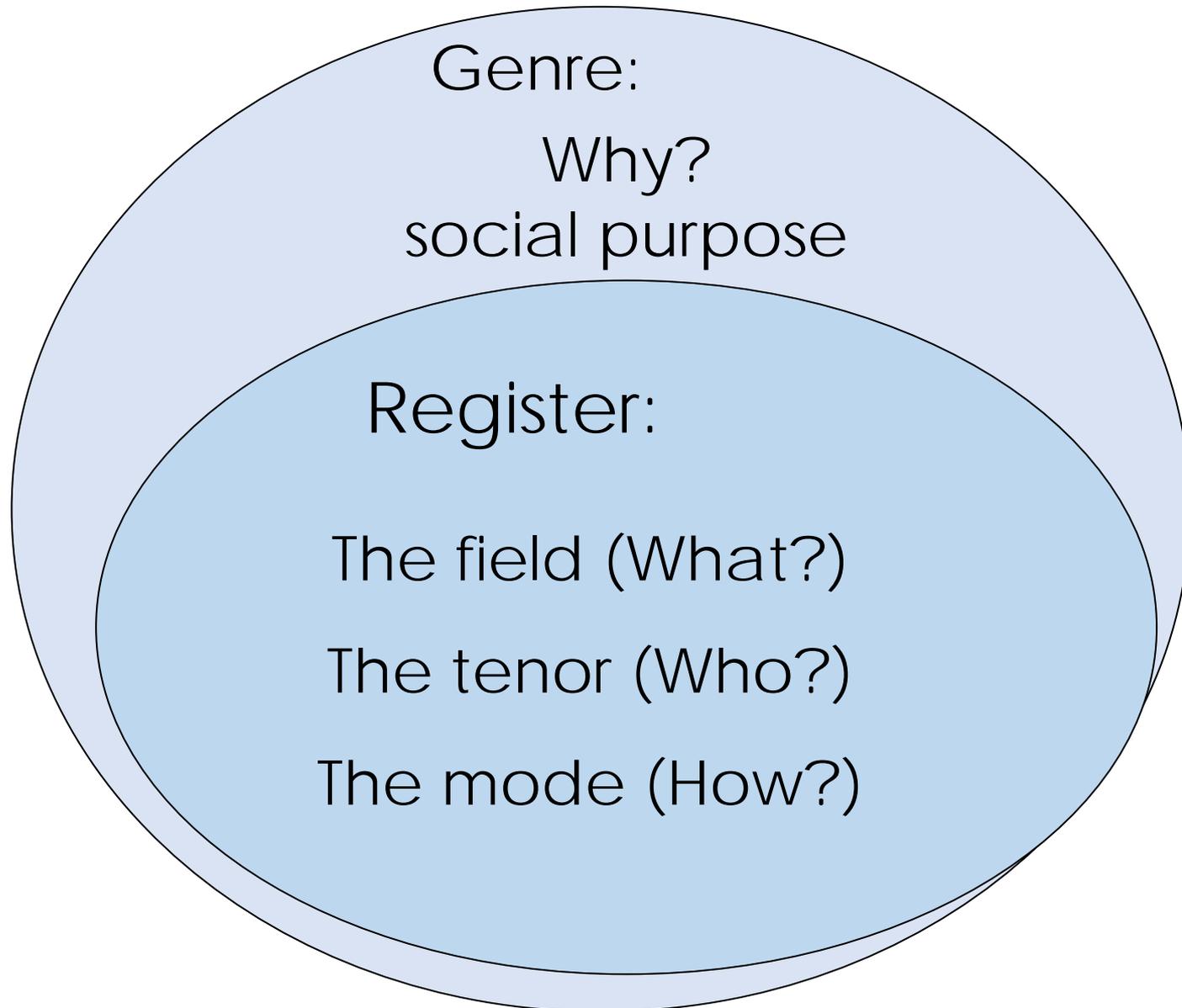
Register as a continuum to map language variation

Register continuum
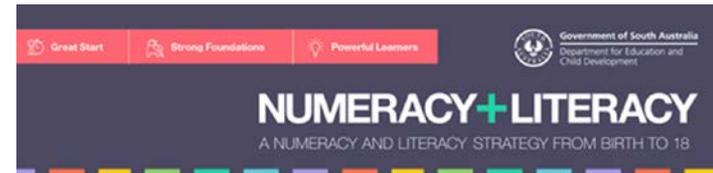
Figure 1 The Register Continuum

everyday
concrete

Expressing and developing ideas –Subject matter
What is the topic?
How is it treated?

technical
abstract

informal
personal
novice

Interacting with others – Roles & relationships
Who is involved?
What are their roles and relationships?

formal
impersonal
informed/expert

most spoken
'here and now' context
language with action

Text structure and organisation – Mode of communication
How is the message conveyed?
How spoken or written-like is it?
What technologies are used?

most written
generalised context
language of reflection

Figure 1 The Register Continuum

The mode continuum

| playing | commentary | recounting | news time | Recording in a journal |

action   reflection

Using language
while the experience
is happening – most
'spoken-like'

Using language to reflect
on the experience (later)
most 'written-like'

A spoken interaction

Mother: What are you going to be when you grow up?

Child: A meteorologist

Mother: What do they do?

Child: They study weather.

Mother: What kind of weather?

Child   Tornadoes

Mother: Can you tell me anything about tornados? I don't know anything about them?

Child: They come from hot air and cold air but they mix up and since they don't know what to
                 do they just swirl around and they swirl around and that's how you make a tornado
                 with the cold air and the hot air

Mother: Oh my goodness.

A written text

How tornados are formed

A large thunderstorm occurs in a cumulonimbus cloud.

A change in wind direction and wind speed at high altitudes creates swirling air. Rising air from the ground pushes up on the swirling air and tips it over. The funnel of swirling air begins to suck up more warm air from the ground. The funnel grows longer and stretches toward the ground. When the funnel touches the ground, it becomes a tornado

Some distinguishing features of spoken and written language

spoken ⟷ written

spoken

- speaker/ listener share time and space

- Spontaneous, off the top of the head

- dialogue

- voice/ gesture etc contribute meaning

- can be grammatically more complex

written

- writer/ reader distant in time and place

- Rehearsed, organised

- monologue

- punctuation/ layout contributes meaning

- more lexical density- content words

Different kinds of complexity

Spoken language
- Complex grammar – events joined inside sentences
- Simple vocabulary

⟷

Written language
- Simple grammar. Events have their own sentences
- Dense vocabulary

M: Tell me about tornados

Ch: They *come from* hot air and cold air **but** they *mix up* **and since** they *don't know what to do* they just *swirl around* **and** they *swirl around* **and so** you *make* a tornado, with the cold air and the hot air.

How many events in each sentence??

1. A large thunderstorm *occurs* in a cumulonimbus cloud.
2. A change in wind direction and wind speed at high altitudes *creates* swirling air
3. Rising air from the ground *pushes up* on the swirling air **and** *tips* it over
4. The funnel of swirling air *begins to suck up* more warm air from the ground
5. The funnel *grows* longer **and** *stretches* toward the ground
6. **When** the funnel *touches* the ground it *becomes* a tornado

Analysing a spoken interaction: classifying

Mother: Are there different kinds of tornados?

Child: No

Mother   No, there's just one kind of tornado?

Child   No I know. An EF 1, an EF0, a EF2, a EF4,a EF3, a EF5

Mother: What does EF 5 mean?

Child: EF5 is the biggest tornado

Mother: The biggest?

Child: Yep. It can even pick up trains

Mother: Really? Oh my goodness. What's EF 0?

Child: EF0? I think EF0 is the smallest

Mother: Oh, so that's not dangerous?

Child: It can still be dangerous.

Mother   What about EF4?

Child: EF4 is kinda dangerous and kinda not

Putting it together: verbal text & image

Dolphins

Snakes

I love Dolphins a lot.

Some snakes eat other snakes. They eat mice, guinea pigs, frogs, hamsters and other small animals.

Year 1 children's presentations from their inquiry on 'Living Things'?

THANK YOU

THE END