

The Registers of Language

Register One

could display very informal, casual, colloquial expressions, used familiarly. The latest catch phrase, or word expressing an opinion such as 'cool' would be used indiscriminately including words that come into fashion seemingly overnight and leave just as quickly. R1 will also be prone to shortened words, ellipses, incorrect grammar, slang, and vulgarisms. It is also likely to include regional variations.

Register Two

could be described as standard, used in polite circles, educated, equivalent to the language traditionally found in BBC English and falling between the two extremes of R1 and R3.

Register Three

could be recognized by its formal quality, literary ring, official tone, with a certain archaic quality, the language of scholars and those aware of vocabulary and grammar in use. Correct and always 'looking out' to resist new expressions and using words whose meaning is under review.