

REGISTERS

No language is used in a uniform way in all situations. Languages vary according to situation and use. Variation according to use is known as **register**. **Registers** are functional varieties of language.

Look at the following instances of language use:

1. Good morning Sir.
Good morning Vivek. How are you?
Very well Sir. Thank you.
2. 'Hi Abhishek'.
"Hi Vivek. How are you? Haven't seen you for some time. Gone home, had you?
Not really.....was busy with this and that."

Can you see the difference in the two instances of language use given above? The variety of language used in the first conversation is from the **formal register**. The variety used in the second is from the **informal register**. Both the varieties have certain features on the basis of which we can say that they belong to two different registers. Can you find out the features? Look at the choice of words in the two registers and then look at the structure of sentences. That should tell you something about the features of formal and informal varieties. The words used in the formal variety are those that are normally used in formal situations such as in an interview, or when talking to persons senior to you in age and status. When you talk to your Principal or your teacher, you use this variety. When you talk to your friends you use the second variety. Here the words are from the informal register. Compare **Good morning** with **Hi** as forms of greeting. Now look at the structure of the sentences. The sentences in the formal register are well-formed and complete. In the informal register they are incomplete and broken.