

Register and Contextual Meaning in the Facebook Group “*In My Omegaverse Era*”

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Abstract This study investigates the use of registers and their contextual meanings in posts and comments from a Facebook group titled *In My Omegaverse Era*. The group represents a niche digital fan group centered on the Omegaverse subgenre, which features a distinct character hierarchy, alternative social roles, and specialized vocabulary. The objective of this study is to examine how language is structured and functionally used within this group, with particular attention to how certain lexical items act as registers that convey meanings shaped by context and shared experience. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, drawing on Halliday’s theory of register (field, tenor, mode) and Lyons’ theory of contextual meaning (physical situation, participants, shared knowledge). The data source consists of 100 posts and comments collected throughout 2024. Based on the findings, this study identified 21 different registers that frequently appear in the group’s discourse. The findings show that the registers identified in the group are characterized by distinctive word choices and are influenced by the situational context and patterns of interaction in discussions related to Omegaverse fiction. Many of the terms diverge significantly from their conventional meanings, evolving into expressions that reflect the group’s collective understanding of specific narrative elements. These meanings are often implicit and can only be interpreted accurately within the context of shared references. The study concludes that registers in digital fan group function not only to facilitate communication but also to reinforce group identity and narrative immersion, demonstrating how language adapts creatively to specific fictional settings and interactive practices in online environments.

Keywords: *contextual meaning, facebook, group, omegaverse, register*

INTRODUCTION

Language variation plays a key role in sociolinguistics, particularly in how individuals adapt their speech to different contexts and communities. One such variation is register, a variety of language used by groups with shared interests or activities. Scholars like Hudson (1980) and Holmes (2001) define register as the type of language shaped by what people do and who they engage with. It includes specific vocabulary and expressions that serve particular communicative functions, often influenced by cultural and contextual factors (Biber & Conrad, 2019). Register emerges from cultural differences that shape the function of language in communication.

Register refers to the way language changes depending on the context of use. Different registers are shaped by factors such as the relationship between interlocutors, the level of formality, and the communicative purpose. By adjusting their language, speakers are able to respond appropriately to different social situations and meet the expectations of particular settings. In certain communities, especially those centered around shared knowledge or practices, register can become especially marked, often featuring specialized vocabulary, informal grammatical structures like sentence fragments, and distinctive patterns of discourse.

Various studies have examined language variation in various fields, communities, or digital spaces that form specific register. Herlina & Simatupang (2024) emphasize that each group forms its own set of register terms based on its experiences and expertise. For instance, Pratiwi and Susanto (2022) investigated English-language registers that emerged during the COVID-19 outbreak in Indonesia, with a focus on how these terms were understood by the public. Their findings emphasized the importance of contextual meaning in helping people interpret and use unfamiliar terms effectively. However, the study centered primarily on public health discourse and did not address smaller, more specialized communities.

With the advancement of technology, people from all over the world increasingly connect online, leading to a more frequent and diverse use of registers. Online communities, whether in entertainment, education, or professional sectors, create and adapt their own linguistic styles, integrating new terms and modifying existing ones to suit digital interactions. In online communities, especially those formed around niche interests, registers become increasingly specialized. The rise of digital platforms has facilitated the emergence of new linguistic styles and vocabularies adapted for fast-paced, informal, and highly contextual communication. These digital registers are not only functional but also play a significant role in expressing identity and group belonging.

A particularly unique case is the Facebook group, *In My Omegaverse Era*. This group is part of the broader Omegaverse subgenre (also referred to as A/B/O, short for alpha/beta/omega) which originates from fanfiction subculture. Omegaverse is a subgenre of erotic fiction that focuses on a set of power relations between humans with speculative biology based on wolf pack hierarchies. This group uses a series of distinct terms which have specific meanings within their context and differ significantly from conventional definitions.

Although interest in online language use is growing, most research on register has focused on formal or professional fields such as education, journalism, or health communication. In contrast, studies that explore how language functions in informal online communities, particularly those centered around fictional fan cultures like Omegaverse, are still relatively rare. This limited attention creates a gap in understanding how linguistic variation emerges and operates in niche digital environments. To address this gap, the present study analyzes the registers used in the Facebook group *In My Omegaverse Era*, with particular attention to their forms and contextual meanings as reflected in member interactions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding how language operates within different communities has long been a central concern in sociolinguistic research. In recent years, a growing number of studies have explored these concepts across a variety of settings from political groups to hobby communities and online platforms, revealing the dynamic ways in which language reflects identity, intention, and situational context.

Zahra (2022) investigates the specialized language used by ISIS and Al-Qaeda in Indonesia using a qualitative descriptive method based on data from electronic media. The study shows that these groups use specific registers for propaganda, recruitment, coordination, and ideological reinforcement. Two types of registers are identified. The first is used by ISIS and features strong Arabic influence. The second is used by Al-Qaeda and is characterized by English vocabulary. This research contributes to counterterrorism, media literacy, and public awareness by revealing how extremist groups manipulate language.

Nuratika and Fikri (2022) explored how registers function within the Aquascape Lovers Community by comparing their use in closed and open group interactions. In closed groups, specific abbreviations and borrowed terms such as WC, kebo, and sticky rice carried meanings understood only by members. In open groups, terms like pH, lily pipe, and surface scum were more technical and functioned in interactive, heuristic, and regulatory ways. Their findings show how register choice reflects levels of group intimacy, shared knowledge, and communicative goals, reinforcing both inclusion and differentiation within the community.

In the context of social media, Nashiroh (2023) provides insights into the registers evolving in a Facebook-based facial care community. Findings show that the registers of facial care enthusiasts include words, phrases, and abbreviations. These registers also undergo meaning changes, such as narrowing, broadening, shifting, and the use of metaphor. The forms and meaning changes in these registers are influenced by situational factors, including user characteristics, relationships, communicative goals, medium of delivery, and topics.

These studies demonstrate the richness of linguistic practices across various communities from extremist groups to hobby forums. However, few have specifically focused on fictional fandom spaces like the Omegaverse, where language use is shaped not only by real-world social dynamics but also by constructed narratives. This study addresses that gap by analyzing how register and contextual meaning function in an Omegaverse-focused Facebook group. This study employs a sociolinguistic perspective to explore language variation within a digital fan-based group. Register, as a concept within sociolinguistics, refers to systematic language variation influenced by contextual factors such as communicative purpose, social setting, and speaker relationship.

Sociolinguistics

According to Holmes (2013), sociolinguistics is concerned with the relationship between language and the social context in which it is used. Effendi & Sugiharti (2023) state in their study that sociolinguistics investigates the use of language in social interactions, its variation in relation to social factors such as class, gender, ethnicity, and age, and the extent to which it reflects and maintains social norms and attitudes. Sociolinguistics, according to Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015), is the study of how language is used in society, particularly how individuals talk differently in various social contexts and how language choices convey elements of social identity. Sociolinguistics focuses on how language is used to communicate between members of society with one another to exchange opinions and interact between individuals with one another.

Register

Halliday's (1994) theory of register provides a way to understand how language varies according to use. There are several components for analyzing register based on the situation which employ the use of register. It includes tenor, mode, and field. Field, pertains to the subject matter or the nature of the activity being conducted. It refers to the current situation, the type of social action occurring, and the activity in which the participants are involved. Tenor concerns the roles and relationship among participants. It relates to the nature of the participants, their status, and their roles, and also relates to the type of role relationships acquired among the participants. Mode concerns to the medium of communication. Mode refers to the role language plays in a situation, including how it is structured, the medium used (spoken/written), and its function within the context of communication.

Contextual Meaning

Understanding contextual meaning is critical in register studies, because a same lexical item can have different meanings depending on its use in a specific context. Lyons (1981) introduced the concept of contextual meaning to explain how meaning is shaped by setting, participant roles, and shared background knowledge. The evolution of meaning can be analyzed in two different but interconnected ways. First, through lexical definitions, which are the standard meanings of words as found in dictionaries. However, word meanings often shift based on the context in which they are used. Therefore, contextual meanings are also important to understand how a word is understood in a particular domain, society, or discourse context.

METHOD

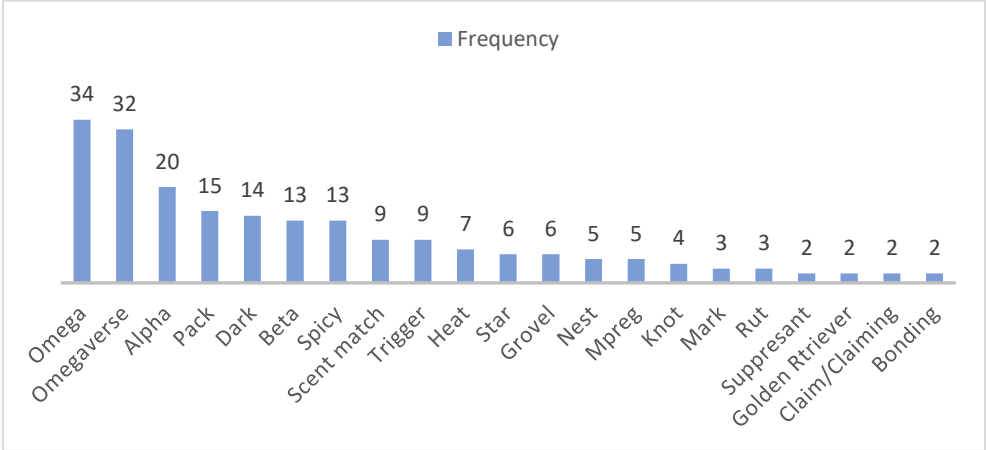
This study employed a qualitative approach to examine language variation, particularly the use of register, within the *In My Omegaverse Era* Facebook group. The qualitative method allowed the researcher to explore and interpret the forms and contextual meanings of register as they naturally occur in social media interactions. Descriptive analysis was used to classify and explain the register forms and their contextual meanings.

The data source was taken from 100 posts and comments made by group members in 2024, which were randomly selected to include texts that reflect distinctive lexical choices or recurring terms related to the Omegaverse theme. Data collection involved identifying relevant posts and comments, filtering out irrelevant ones, and highlighting words or phrases that reflect specific registers. The analysis was conducted in two stages: (1) categorizing words/phrases into registers using Halliday’s framework, and (2) interpreting their contextual meanings based on social context using Lyons’ framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines 100 posts and comments from the *In My Omegaverse Era* Facebook group collected throughout 2024. From the posts and comments, 21 distinct register terms were identified, consisting of specific words and phrases shaped by the context in which they appear. These terms reflect how members of the group communicate shared ideas, represent character roles, and engage with the narrative world of Omegaverse fiction. The following section presents selected examples to show how these registers are used and understood within the group’s interactions.

Chart 1. The frequency of register used in the *In My Omegaverse Era* group



(1) *Are there any books where the **omega** destroys their nest for whatever reason? Thanks*

The field in this post is a request for story recommendation with certain scenario, specifically the behavior of omega characters. The tenor is informal between members of the group, and the mode is written text on social media. The word *omega* in this post does not refer to its literal meaning in the dictionary, which is the last letter in the Greek alphabet. In the Omegaverse list, omega represents a character with a submissive or vulnerable nature, which is often associated with comfort-seeking behaviors such as nest-building. However, in this context, the act of destroying the nest implies emotional instability or psychological disturbance. This suggests that the term *omega* has undergone a shift in contextual meaning that is specific to the genre-based community.

(2) *For a chance to win an ebook copy of any one of my **omegaverse** ebooks, tell me which you'd prefer!*

The field in this post is an *omegaverse* themed e-book giveaway promotion. The tenor is informal between an author and readers in the group, and the mode is written text on social media. The term *omegaverse* here cannot be found in a standard dictionary, but in this online group, it is understood as a subgenre of erotic fiction that builds a world based on a social hierarchy of alpha, beta, and omega roles. This post uses the *omegaverse* as part of a marketing strategy, with the hope that the audience will recognize and be attracted to this particular genre. As such, the *omegaverse* serves as a specialized term that signifies shared knowledge among members and brings commercial appeal within this fan space.

(3) *Looking for a sweet light story where the **alpha** males are virgins until they find their mate!*

The field in this post is a request for lighthearted story recommendations featuring specific characters roles. The tenor is informal between members of the *In My Omegaverse Era* group, and the mode is written text on social media. In dictionary terms, *alpha* refers to the first letter of the Greek alphabet and is often used metaphorically to describe dominance or leadership. In Omegaverse fiction, *alpha* typically denotes a character who is physically and socially dominant, often paired with assertiveness and sexual experience. However, in this post, the uploader is specifically requesting stories that depict alpha males as virgins, subverting the dominant stereotype. The contextual meaning of *alpha* here still carries the core idea of social leadership and power, but is softened to accommodate innocence and emotional depth. This usage reflects a shift in character portrayal, driven by fan preferences for more tender and emotionally nuanced narratives within dominant roles.

(4) *I'm new to omegaverse trope. Are there ever **packs** where the males mate with each other?*

The field in this post is a question from a new member seeking information about same gender relationships in the omegaverse story. The tenor is informal between members of the *In My Omegaverse Era* group, and the mode is written text on social media. In general English, *pack* means a group, set, or collection of something. However, in this post, *pack* is used in the context of Omegaverse fiction, where it refers to a social group made up of alphas, betas, and omegas. Traditionally, such groups are portrayed with heterosexual dynamics. The uploader, identifying as new to the trope, asks whether same-sex relationships exist within these structures. This shows that the contextual

meaning of *pack* includes a social unit with specific roles and relational expectations, but also opens space for variation.

Registers such as *omega*, *omegaverse*, *alpha*, and *pack* are among the most frequently occurring lexical items and serve as indicators of the group's collective discourse practices. The dominance of *omega* and *alpha* reflects a recurring focus on hierarchical structures and role differentiation based on gendered and social dynamics that are central to Omegaverse narratives. These terms function as both descriptors of fictional character roles and as linguistic tools for categorizing and interpreting story elements within the group.

The frequent appearance of *omegaverse* as a register not only underscores its role in representing the narrative genre, but also as a shared conceptual framework that shapes interaction within the group. It represents a broader pattern of language use within the Omegaverse narrative that includes common themes, character roles, and social norms recognized by the group member. The high usage of these core registers suggests that group discussions are heavily centered on the exploration of interpersonal relationships, character roles, and genre identity.

(5) Question about **claiming** bites. So, when you imagine it in your head, do you imagine top and bottom teeth, or just top?

The field in this post is a discussion about the physical depiction of claiming bites in Omegaverse stories. The tenor is informal between fellow group members, and the mode is written text on social media. In general English, *claim* means a statement that something is true or fact and a right to have something. However, in this context, *claiming* refers to a symbolic and often physical act (commonly in the form of a bite) that marks one character as emotionally or sexually bonded to another. In this post, the uploader is discussing the imagined visualization of such a bite, asking whether readers picture both top and bottom teeth involved. The contextual meaning of *claiming* here is deeply tied to themes of possession, commitment, and emotional intensity between characters, typically an alpha and an omega.

(6) Hey, guys! I'm looking for recs with accidental **bonding**. I have already read and loved Pack Gamble. Thanks

The field of this post is a request for story recommendations involving the trope of accidental bonding between characters. The tenor is informal between group members, and the mode is written text on a social media. In general usage, *bonding* refers to the process of forming close emotional connections, such as between friends or family members. However, in this context, *bonding* takes on a more specialized meaning. It refers to a transformative connection (usually between an alpha and omega) that is often physical, emotional, or both, and is typically irreversible once it happens. The uploader in this post is requesting stories where this *bonding* occurs unintentionally, showing that the term also carries narrative weight and functions as a recognized trope within the genre. Therefore, the contextual meaning of *bonding* here extends beyond general emotional closeness to represent a pivotal plot mechanism that permanently changes character dynamics.

(7) So I recall reading blurb for a book and I have no idea what book it was. Here's what I remember: There are 2 omega sisters and I is favorite, I think one of the sisters didn't actually know she was omega, the family was giving her **suppressants**? Maybe yall can help.

The field of this post is a recollection of a story blurb involving familial concealment of a character's true secondary gender through the use of *suppressants*. The tenor is casual between readers within an online fandom space, and the mode is written communication via social media. Literally, *suppressant* is a thing or substance that prevents something from happening. In the Omegaverse context, however, *suppressants* take on a specific narrative function. They are often portrayed as medication used to conceal an omega's biological traits, particularly to delay or prevent biological cycles. This post discusses a storyline where a character's identity is hidden through such medication, introducing themes of secrecy and control. The contextual meaning of *suppressants* here is deeply tied to issues of bodily autonomy and concealed identity within the omegaverse hierarchy of alphas, betas, and omegas.

(8) Rut Bar by Alexis B. Osborne has a himbo **golden retriever** alpha named Jamie and he's so precious

The field of this post is a personal recommendation and brief character commentary regarding a specific book and character. The tenor is informal among group members, while the mode is written text on social media. The term *golden retriever* in this context does not refer to a golden-haired breed of dog, but functions as a metaphor to describe a particular kind of alpha character. Instead of being dominant and aggressive as commonly portrayed, this golden retriever alpha is soft, affectionate, eager to please, and emotionally warm. The post highlights this contrast to show how the group embraces alternative representations of alpha roles. Thus, *golden retriever* carries a contextual meaning tied to personality traits, portraying warmth, sweetness, and loyalty in a male character, especially one who subverts traditional dominance tropes.

On the other hand, registers such as *claiming*, *bonding*, *suppressant*, and *golden retriever* that have lower frequencies indicate that the terms are used in more specific contexts or appear in discussions with specific topics that are not always the main conversation. This shows that not all aspects of Omegaverse receive the same amount of attention from the group. Their limited use indicates that these registers are context-dependent and associated with particular narrative scenarios rather than general discourse. This variation in frequency highlights that certain aspect of Omegaverse fiction receive more communal attention than others, reflecting both individual and group-level topic preferences.

The use of the register as a whole also indicates a shared understanding between members, which strengthens social cohesion and differentiates this group from other groups. Moreover, the language variety used serves as a symbolic marker of the closeness, exclusivity, and solidarity, and forms a clear boundary between group members and outsiders. The use of registers in this group not only shows linguistic variation, but also strengthens collective identity and maintains the continuity of social interaction in the digital realm. The analysis of register use in the *In My Omegaverse Era* Facebook group demonstrates that language within this online group serves not only a communicative function but also plays a central role in constructing identity, reinforcing social relationships, and expressing shared values.

CONCLUSION

The use of registers in the *In My Omegaverse Era* group on Facebook shows the existence of a distinctive and internally developed language system. The registers not only reflect the distinctiveness of the group language, but also show a shift in meaning from literal meaning to deeper and more complex contextual meaning. Registers such as *omega*, *alpha*, and *omegaverse* are central to group communication and mark a collective identity that can only be understood by members who share a common background of understanding.

The contextual meaning of each register is shaped by the situation of use, the participants involved, and the shared knowledge within the group. The social function of these registers is not only as a means of communication, but also as a tool for building solidarity, showing emotions, sharing information, as well as affirming group identity. Thus, the use of registers in the *In My Omegaverse Era* group is a reflection of the close relationship between language and social reality in the digital space, which shows that language plays an important role in shaping the interaction patterns and structure of online communities.

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