LEVELS OF FORMALITY

1.

a) Jargon, very formal
This is the style of language used in official reports, technical studies, etc. It is exclusively a style of written English, full of **verbal nouns, technical** words and **passives**.
Consequent to the appreciation in the exchange value of Sterling against other currencies, necessary fiscal measures were introduced by the government in order to reduce the likelihood of an import-led consumer spending surge.

b) Written, formal, clear
This is clear, written English, as found in the press or in documents aimed at ordinary educated readers.
After the international value of Sterling rose, the government was obliged to take fiscal measures to reduce the likelihood of a surge in consumer spending led by cheaper imports.

c) Written style for the general public, discourse, scripted radio or TV news style
As the value of Sterling increased compared to other currencies, the government was forced to take tax measures to head off a rapid increase in consumer spending spurred on by cheaper imports.

d) Formal spoken style - radio, seminar, talk
As Sterling's international value went up, the government had to take tax measures to head off a consumer spending boom spurred on by cheaper imports.

e) Relaxed, informal spoken style: discussion
There is plenty of use of **prepositional verbs.** All actions are now expressed through **verbs**, not verbal nouns
As Sterling went up in value, the government had to put up taxes to stop consumers splashing out on too many cheap imports.

f) relaxed, simplified, chat, very informal spoken style
Note the addition of **repetition** and **fillers**.
And you see, Sterling got more and more valuable, so as a result, the government had to go round putting up taxes, you see, to stop everyone going out and splashing out, spending all their money on cheap imports. styles

(Adapted from: The Essential English Usage http://website.lineone.net/~eshp/styles.htm (no longer available))

2. *Read the three dialogues on the same topic given in different levels of formality. Decide which one is very formal, which casual and which quite informal.*

1)
A: Maybe you could say a little about what you're currently working on Brian.
B: Well, yes, my interest is in Artificial Intelligence – people working in this field abbreviate it to AI.
A: This sounds very interesting, Brian, tell us more.
B: Pleased to. The AI area is pretty large; in fact so huge it's divided into more than 100 mini-sectors. I work on the planning side of things.
A: That sounds a lot more boring than AI. Can we read anything you have written on this?
B: Well, hmm, my publications, I've not published anything for more than 20 years.
A: Really!
B: You might be surprised by this but I am now more interested in ' interdisciplinary socio-cognitive modeling' – ISCM for short.
A: That sounds intriguing. Continue.
B: I hope to publish something dealing with ISCM – it will be in the style of a mind map showing how people go about their daily lives. We plan to put tiny cameras into volunteers – a small operation to have them ingested. Then we can map out what they do every day.
A: Very intriguing, if not a little preposterous. Would you like to continue over a pint?

2)
A: Wow, it's you! How are you, and what're you up-to now?
B: Hi Brian, nice to see you. I'm still at the chalk face. You're no longer at 'uni' huh?
A: No. I got bogged down for a while with Astro-physics but now I work on stuff that – you know - relates to AI. That's Artificial Intelligence for the uninitiated.
B: Ouch, that hurts. But what part of AI are you working on right now?
A: It's kind of got something to do with planning, err, working things out so trials can take place and be written up.
B: This sounds great. Can I read some of your findings?
A: Well, I've done zip on the cutting edge for years -err about 20 years give or take a couple of decades, And anyway what I've put down on paper is dead old and you would be bored to death.
B: Well are you out of work, on welfare, or what?
A: Hell, no! Even though I've written nothing I'm still interested in yer know AI, only now there's other stuff that I like to work on. Right now I'm making models – mapping out what the average person does every day. We get the punters to swallow tiny cameras so we can follow their every move.
B: Sounds weird, got time for a coffee so you can fill me in?

3)
A: Welcome Brian Fitzpatrick. I am honoured you could spare the time to talk on this special occasion.
B: The pleasure is all mine.
A: Could you explain a little about your research?
B: Of course. My background is actually in Artificial Intelligence, specifically the sub-field of Planning.
A: I have heard that you are not as prolific in terms of written works as you once were. Could you reveal – what, if anything, have you published to date.

B: It is true I have published nothing on my subject since the 1980s, and what I have written previously is hopelessly dated but I am by no means retired or insolvent.

A: Hmm. Can we then assume you are retired from the cutting edge of AI then?

B: Not at all! I retain a fervent interest in AI – that is Artificial Intelligence, but I am currently more concerned with research relating to interdisciplinary socio-cognitive modeling.

A: I am sure your devotees will be relieved to hear you quash the negative rumors.