

The history of the double negative english language essay

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



The English Language has become increasingly corrupted over the years with new words but more importantly new meanings attached to " old" words with words being used in a completely different context to previously. In addition to this, there are some words and phrases which have become uncool, some which are O. K., some which were socially unacceptable and are now fine and some which really need to be re-introduced after a lengthy period of absence. An understanding of what's what in this respect will help you to achieve credibility and status in your particular social network. This is not a definitive guide. It is really intended to open a debate about what we should or should not be saying and to make us think about how we should use the English Language.

Uncool

These are words and phrases that you should avoid at all costs. Use them at your peril as some of them are potentially socially fatal. Here are some examples. You guys An expression which emanated from a culture which is completely alien to its main users today. It's been hi-jacked by the English middle class and turned into some sort of matey, familiar phrase used in situations where it is entirely inappropriate, for example during new business calls (" just calling to find out whether you guys" ...). This completely unacceptable. In this situation one should use " your company" instead. Even if used on a genuinely familiar situation (to some friends..." what are you guys doing...") it still isn't good. Better to say " what are you bunch of wasters/losers doing..." instead. You will gain more respect and put them on the back foot. Touch base As in " let's". An irritating term from day one. Never, ever, use this. Shag A word which had some credibility, but since its'

hi-jacking by middle class English women who think it's cool to say it, it's completely lost it. Far better to use the f**k word instead. GayLight hearted, cheerful. Originally anyway. The problem is that it's been hi-jacked twice, firstly by the " gay" community although I'm not sure whether they hi-jacked it or whether some liberal dude gave it to them because it was a nice cosy label and, secondly, by today's youth who use it in an entirely inappropriate, derogatory manner. It's completely unnecessary and used in the wrong place or with the wrong people could lead to extreme tension or a broken nose. Having said that, if used in its' original way, it may also cause offence to someone, so basically you can't win with this one. So not ...You know you shouldn't. WhateverNo. Not any more. AppalledAs in " I'm absolutely appalled..." At the risk of being accused of being sexist, this is another (originally used to convey extreme disgust of the highest order) word that has been hi-jacked by women, usually of a certain age (it should never, ever, be used by anybody under 40) but is also, on occasions, used by politicians and that about sums it up. It's always been a middle class word. Unfortunately for the people that tend to use it these days it's lost all impact and it's more likely to provoke laughter than shock or sympathy. Tough shit eh? Young people are highly unlikely to use this; however, be very wary of anybody who does. I'm sorryi) Not the genuine apology, but the prelude to a statement. Usually followed by the word " but". It is used as a sort of emphasis, maybe preceding a negative comment, but not necessarily in debate or in disagreement. It's completely irrelevant and unnecessary and you should move away from anybody who uses this as they will generally use it time and time again. ii) Possibly even worse, used by tiny people who

want to try to impose some sort of authority on the proceedings. People who use it like this are so sad that they actually believe they are in a position of sufficient importance to have to apologise for making some devastating statement of fact that may upset their audience. It allows them to incorrectly assume a position of false status. Quite Interesting only because it also appears under "Cool". Used in it's usual way - "quite nice" - it's just lost it. This definition should really be taken out of the English Dictionary.

Cool

Quite Used in an entirely different way, as a single word response to a (sometimes lengthy or controversial) statement that you agree with or even don't agree with, it can have an impact that is completely out of proportion to its' size. Be careful, though, because much of the impact depends upon timing and delivery. Quite. See what I mean. Disingenuous Although there may be a subtle difference, it's still preferable to calling someone "a lying b*****d". Definitely it's just good. Penultimate It's long, but easy to say and far better than "next but last". Exacerbate A fantastic word, under-utilised largely because of ignorance and poor standards of education. You must use this at every (relevant) available opportunity. Many people won't know what you mean but they will still be impressed. Notwithstanding Another fantastic word. Far better than "in spite of" - it's only one word but with four syllables - and it's so easy to say. Again use it liberally. Inasmuch (as) Obviously this needs to be followed by the word "as". Why would anybody use a word like "since" when you could use this is beyond me. Imperative Best preceded by the word "absolutely". It's a classic inasmuch as (see what I mean) it is

actually quite popular but has retained its' credibility. Also, it transcends virtually all classes.

Old Favourites

RumNo, not the drink. A term to describe someone who's maybe a bit of a character, eccentric or perhaps just odd. Rarely heard but is still there lurking in the background. Quite often (and best) used in an affectionate manner ... " you're a rum c**t you are" Shit HotNot " Hot Shit" as the Royal chap was recently quoted. Shit or HaircutAn absolute classic. Rarely heard these days, at least not in the refined circles in which I now move. As in... " I didn't know whether I wanted a shit or haircut". A state of mild confusion, not knowing what to do; possible result of excessive socialising... " where am I"... " what day is it". You know what I mean. FabThis is a funny one. It's a word from the sixties that made a brief comeback a few years ago, usually with female sales executives from glossy magazines. It didn't really work and it seems to have disappeared.

The Double Negative

I don't about you, but I just love double negatives. Best epitomised up by the phrase " not unattractive" to describe a (usually) female who is basically, well, notunattractive, the only problem with this phrase is that it's been taken to the extreme by some males - what they really mean is that there's a pulse." Not unreasonable" is a funny one, inasmuch as (there you go) it's fine but not that cool. It's still far preferable to " fairly reasonable" or whatever.