

Let's combine some factors, then, looking at three frequent words so we have plenty of data to go into the different little buckets that we've created. Bloody, fucking, and shit. And first of all, we'll look at gender and how it interacts with age.

Interestingly, as you can see, there is a difference between males and females here. If you look especially at the word bloody, you'll see that this is most typical in the male category of the under 35 age group. However, the female category, it's the under 25 age group. So this seems to be a word which peaks earlier with females and declines, we might argue, if we think that it's a change focused upon age and the passage of the individual through time. But otherwise, the broad distribution of that word is similar. Have a look at that table.

Let's move on to think now of another way that gender might interact, this time with class. Here, actually, we see a much more complex picture than the one that I've just described. If we look at the word bloody, for example, with females, this seems to be most typical of speakers in the DE social class. Yet with males, it seems to be a word that's most typical of the C1 social class.

Things get yet more interesting with fucking. So for females, for example, that word is most frequently used by the DE social class. When we look at males, yes, it's also most frequently used by the DE social class, but note for males how the figure for the C2 social class is much closer to the DE social class than the figure for C2 females is similar to the DE social female class. So if you like, it's something which seems to be distributed more broadly for males between the social classes, where for females it seems to be strongly discriminating of all of the social classes against DE.

Similarly, the word shit is interesting. If we look at females, it's the social class DE once again that most frequently use that word. Yet if we look at males, it's actually the social class C1 which most frequently uses that word, with the DE group using it second most frequently. Probably the answer, of course, being right above that cell there for the DE male use of shit. It's because they're more frequently selecting this word, fucking, in order to undertake the use of bad language.

Let me just conclude this series of lectures with a couple of thoughts that you might want to pursue either in your own time or even in the forum associated with the course. What's the cause of the differences that we've seen? Do you want to argue, perhaps, that women in some sense are the fairer

sex and that they're predisposed not to swear or not to use as strong bad language as males are? I reject that notion. I think that what we're looking at here is socially constructed. It's an artefact of the society in which these two genders are operating. It's nothing to do with genetics, I would argue. But that might be an interesting point for you to discuss.

But if it is an artefact of society that we're seeing, these class-based differences, gender-based differences, age-based differences, where did the distinctions come from? What were the social processes that drove along these distinctions? That's something for us all to ponder.