
DANGEROUS ENGLISH

— Words, phrases & topics to avoid —





OUTLINE

- Icebreaker
- Taboos
- Mispronunciations
- Social Contexts & Word Usage
- Activity

Icebreaker

Common Bonds

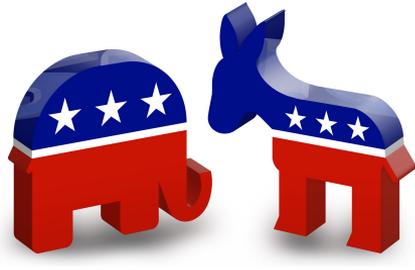
What does 'taboo' mean?

And where do they come from?



- Taboos are things that have been declared inappropriate at some point in history.
 - In the US religious taboos stem from Puritans and fundamental Christians who thought of sex only for creating children.
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TABOO TOPICS



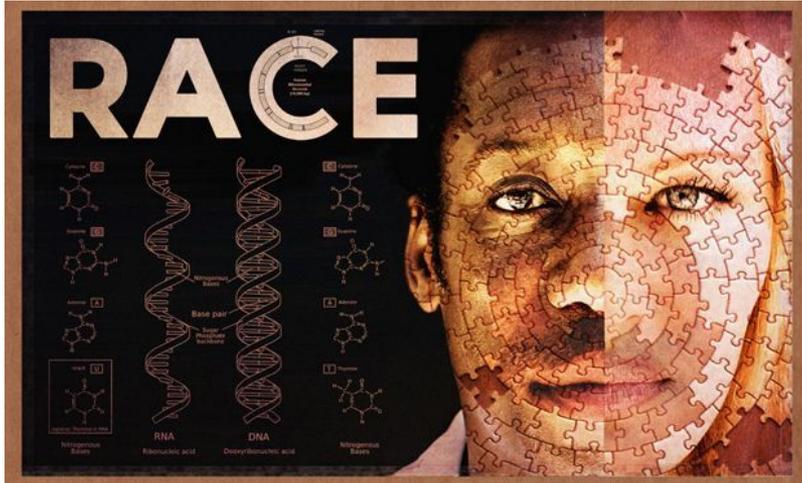
- RELIGION
 - POLITICS
 - RACIAL ISSUES
 - SEXUAL ACTIVITIES
 - BATHROOM FUNCTIONS
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TABOO WORDS



- OBSCENITIES
 - Vulgar words
 - BLASPHEMY
 - Insulting a religion
 - DOUBLE MEANINGS
 - Some words have a taboo second meaning
 - SLURS
 - Insulting a race, nationality, sexual orientation, etc.
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Taboo: Racial Slurs



America has a history of cruel race relations.

From 1619-1863 many Americans kept African people as slaves.

Native American's lost many battles with the U.S government.

Many derogatory words were formed and still hold power today to degrade and insult people.

Discussion:

What are taboos in your country?



What Taboo topics does your language share with English?

What taboos are different?

Who created the taboos in your language?

Pronunciation



— How to avoid saying words you —
don't mean

Common Mistakes in English

- Using L and R interchangeably
 - EX: blessed/ breast, clap/crap
- Vowel Sounds
 - English has 23 different vowel sounds
 - EX: sick/seek, sin/seen
- TH sounds
 - Don't exist in most other languages
 - EX: third/turd, teeth/teat, farther/farter

R and L tongue twister

Rory is the really wiley, wiry and weird lab rat in the rear.



eslcommando.blogspot.com

Pronunciation Practice: Can you hear the difference between these words?

List One

1. Sick
2. Sin
3. Ship
4. Did
5. Chip
6. Fill
7. Lip
8. Pill
9. Still

List Two

1. Seek
2. Seen
3. Sheep
4. Deed
5. Cheap
6. Feel
7. Leap
8. Peel
9. Steal

Discussion

Mispronunciations



- Have you had any embarrassing experiences when speaking English?
 - What dangerous mispronunciations do Americans or other English speakers use when they learn your native language?
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Pronunciation Practice: Round 2

List One

1. Sheet
2. Piece
3. Beach
4. Six
5. Fork
6. Folks
7. Fox
8. Slot
9. City
10. Peanuts

List Two

1. Shit
2. Piss
3. Bitch
4. Sex
5. Fuck
6. Fuck
7. Fuck
8. Slut
9. Shitty
10. Penis

Social Context & Word Usage

— Where and when to speak a certain way —



POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

“conforming to a belief that language and practices which could offend political sensibilities (as in matters of sex or race) should be eliminated” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

INCORRECT

1. Retarded
2. Fat
3. Stewardess, fireman, policeman
4. Do you have a boyfriend / girlfriend?
5. Black/ White person

CORRECT

1. Learning-disabled
2. Overweight; heavy
 - Although, there is no polite way to say this.
3. Flight attendant, firefighter, police officer
 - (Avoid gendering professions)
4. Do you have a partner / significant other?
5. Often when discussing race, it is best to ask an individual what they prefer
 - i.e Black or African American , White or caucasian

*Political correctness is often changing and is hard to follow for native English speakers as well. We all make mistakes and it is best to listen/ask affected groups about their preferences.

TSK--
POLITICAL
CORRECTNESS
HAS GONE
MAD!

YOU MEAN
"PSYCHOLOGICALLY
CHALLENGED"



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Language Types

- Formal/ Polite: Very polite and/or academic language;
 - use with professors, coworkers and bosses, etc.
- Casual: informal, but not impolite
 - use with other classmates, acquaintance etc.
- Slang: words that often have new meanings and may have “an attitude”
 - use with friends and significant others
- Vulgar: impolite words for people, body parts, sexual acts, etc.
 - Cautiously use with close friends as some people will not like this language in any setting
 - Using any vulgar language in the workplace is considered sexual harassment in the U.S.

Words that become taboo in different contexts

Formal

1. Buttocks/ Bottom
2. Go to the bathroom/ Restroom
3. Bowel Movement/ Feces
4. Pregnant
5. Sex Worker

Casual

1. Bum/ Butt/Booty
2. Go pee
3. poo/ poop
4. Pregnant
5. Prostitute, call girl

Informal / Impolite

1. Ass
2. Go take a piss
3. shit/ crap
4. Knocked up
5. Hooker, slut, whore

Can you think of any others?

Words With Double Meanings

— Learn how to avoid misusing words



Words that have multiple meanings

- Bang
 - a. A loud noise, type of haircut, to hit something **OR**
 - b. To have sexual intercourse
- Fairy
 - a. A tiny magical creature with wings **OR**
 - b. A male homosexual (impolite)
- Come
 - a. To approach or move toward a particular person or place **OR**
 - b. To ejaculate or have an orgasm
- Blow
 - a. To expel air **OR**
 - b. Cocaine or to give oral sex
- Hard
 - a. Solid, difficult **OR**
 - b. Erection
- Moon
 - a. Large round object that circles the Earth and that shines at night by reflecting light from the sun **OR**
 - b. To expose one's buttocks to someone
- Gas
 - a. Fuel, type of substance **OR**
 - b. Air in your stomach and intestines that causes pain or discomfort
- Laid
 - a. Past tense form of "lay" **OR**
 - b. Had sexual intercourse
- Period
 - a. Length of time, type of punctuation **OR**
 - b. Menstrual cycle
- Fly
 - a. To move through the air **OR**
 - b. Bottom garment opening zipper

Discussion



In your native language, are there pronouns for different sexes?

Do you think using 'politically correct' English is helpful?

Have you already learned politically correct English when studying English?

Activity

Word List

- Advance
- Barge
- Current
- Rare
- Stuff
- Head
- Table
- Last
- Temple
- Trace
- Upset
- Suit
- Jam
- Level
- Alarm
- Bore
- Dab

QUESTIONS?