

# THE PRAGMATICS OF SWEARING

## How It Contextually Counts

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### Abstract

This paper explores swearing utterances in English language use, the hearers referred to, and the functions the utterances imply. Accounts on the issue are taken from the English-language-affiliated Websites in the Internet. This research is a literature review with interpretative techniques and employs a coding analysis with three proposed premises. As the findings, swearing utterances belong to informal English with notorious, casual, heterogeneous, inconsistent, irregular, and speaker-dependent aspects. Swearing utterances have elaborated literal meaning and creative meaning to various contexts, which are personal and private. Swearing utterances to others are rude, offensive, profane, or obscene, as expressions of anger; however, when adjusted to the context of hearer, the meanings or functions vary. Swearing utterances to others create rude and offensive situations. However, swearing utterances to close people through jokes and positive connotations may instill solidarity or confirm camaraderie. Swearing utterances concerning internal expressions or expletives function to intensify the messages.

**Keywords:** pragmatics, politeness, informal English, rude situation, swearing

### Introduction

Swearing or saying badwords in this research paper may be something we experience or live in. Utterances in English like saying the words *fuck*, *damn*, *bloody*, and *shit* will probably sound very rude, as they are usually driven out by a deep feeling of anger or burstout of emotion to others due to disappointment, unfulfilled expectation, terrible friction, or else. Swearing is always or usually regarded as impolite by a particular hearer or a particular hearer's group; however, we or even people in general swear as part of our language use every day. Why this happens is something intriguing to research on. Why people swear is something else that interests us to conduct this research. The swearing utterances happen in formal situations or even before public. They may also occur in a particular context within a circle of close people. As swearing sounds like something negative, is there any positive aspect of the act? Why are most swearwords negative? What senses are there behind the act? These are questions encouraging the writing of this research paper.

Pragmatics is the study of language use within context to reveal the hidden message or meaning. Pragmatics is the study of meaning interaction. Meaning is conveyed through utterances perceived (heard or read) by a hearer or a particular hearer's group. Swearing or saying bad words may lead to this phenomenon, whether it suggests to a rude situation or it does not, but, instead, creates a feeling of solidarity. This is in line with the assertion that language use is a matter of probabilities [1], [2], which has stood on theories of negative and positive face [3], negative and positive politeness strategies [4] respect politeness and solidarity politeness [5], and politeness and friendship [6].

The aspect power and solidarity in the side of a hearer [7] is crucial in pragmatics, as it is the factor indirectly considered or consciously affects a speaker to elaborate their language in use. This paper is basically talking about the core aspects of pragmatics, i.e. locution, illocution, and perlocution on the act of swearing, and is directed more contextually into the accounts of what form and meaning contributes to swearing, and what potential

effects the act brings to the side of hearer. The word *potential* here means that this research is based on opinions, examples, statements, arguments, as well as descriptions or accounts provided by English language users in the Internet, the data of which are called *web-data* in this study. Web-data here are, thus, the data on opinions, examples, statements, arguments, as well as descriptions or accounts on swear words provided by English language users in their URLs or websites in the Internet. However, a further ethnographically *actual* research is not covered by this study, but expectedly can follow up the results of this study.

### Methodology

As an explorative literature review, this research requires different kinds of activities and ways of thinking, creates a firm foundation for advancing knowledge, facilitates theory development, closes areas where most researches exist, and uncovers new research areas [8], [9]. New ideas from others' works are synthesized and summarized, and new theories and directions can be built and suggested for future research [10]. Interpreting through interpretive techniques is the main way of thinking in this literature review. Some premises are set up before the interpreting process. A premise as an assumption on something true or believed to be true states that an argument claim will induce or justify a conclusion [11]. The premises then function to limit areas for verification on the data and to advance knowledge and develop theories on swearing utterances in this research.

Other techniques of thinking in this research are presenting, identifying, and categorizing the data. Synthesizing the data into discussions then verifies the premises. Upon the synthesizing process completes, the concluding process follows. This is inline with a coding technique in qualitative researches, i.e. an analysis consisting of three steps: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding [12], [13], [14], [15]. In the open coding, the data are presented, identified, and separated with particular concepts, and then

reunited in the axial coding to make categories. Then, the selective coding select the categories to highlight the main phenomena to produce a story line.

The data of this research are taken from URLs or websites (web-data) as sources of swearing utterances, and necessary accounts and probable examples are discussed and verified. The web-data are numbered accordingly (i.e. Web-Data 1; Web-Data 2; Web-Data 3; etc.), for the easy referencing. This way, the data verified and the sources referred to are open for further justification or elaboration by other researchers.

As swearing or saying badwords or swearing utterances is part of English language use, the premises employed in this research are accounted for by theories of language use. Theories on language use applied here are those concerning two poles or two tendencies of politeness, i.e. distancing politeness or closeness politeness, or what were coined as *distant language* and *close language* [16]. The former is to bring politeness to superiors, to public, or even to strangers, while the latter is to bring friendship, solidarity, or camaraderie to close people. These two points in language use has been developed from the notions of distancing politeness which refers to Goffman's *negative face* [3], Brown and Levinson's *negative politeness strategies* [4], Renkema's *respect politeness* [5], and Jumanto's *politeness* [6], and closeness politeness which refers to Goffman's *positive face* [3], Brown and Levinson's *positive politeness strategies* [4], Renkema's *solidarity politeness* [5], and Jumanto's *friendship* or *camaraderie* [6]. Meanwhile, the division of superiors and close people advocates the theory of power and solidarity by Brown and Gilman [7]. Through these dyadic theories, swearing utterances are then mirrored and elaborated from the two analysis tools, i.e. politeness and camaraderie.

Based on the methodological accounts above, the pragmatics of swearing or saying badwords in this research are accounted for from the three Premises (Ps) built and proposed as follows:

- (1) The form of swearing utterances belongs to informal English (P1);
- (2) The meaning of swearing utterances is personal or private (P2);
- (3) The function of swearing utterances is bound to context (P3).

These three premises will be employed to induce synthesized discussions in the next accounts and to justify points of findings later in the conclusions. In the name of learning, the swearing utterances employed in this research appear in their actual spelling. We pragmatically apologize that we do not include any dashes, stars, or hashtags to shield our delicate eyes.

## Findings and Discussion

### 1. The Premise 1 (P1)

This P1 states that the form of swearing utterances belongs to informal English. Informal English involves the notorious, casual, heterogeneous, inconsistent, irregular, unorganized, incomplete, shorter, cut-down, reversed-up, and speaker-dependent aspects [17]. Web-data 1 [18] shows 20 bloody brilliant British swear words we are about to use all the time. Three words are given as examples here, i.e. *arse*, *arsehole*, and *bastard*. In this data, Namina Forna explains that British people have decided to make the utterance more difficult by adding an “r”, so that we are struggling to draw out the words *ass* and *asshole*, i.e. it is not easy for us to utter the swear words. Meanwhile, the word *bastard* is originally meant to signify an illegitimate child, which American equivalent would be the equally objectionable *fucchoi*. From this account we can see that the form of the utterances *arse*, *arsehole*, and *bastard* is notorious, casual, irregular, inconsistent, and speaker-dependent. These aspects are all part of informal English.

Web-data 2 [19] accounts that English swear words are recognized all around the world, used in movies, literature, and TV shows and asserts that swear words are one kind of the first English words most people learn before they properly learn English. Web-data 2 shows 26 English swear words that we thought were harmless, among others

of which are: *fuck*, *fuck you*, *shit*, *piss off*, and *dick head*. The word *fuck* is one of the most recognized swear words in the English language, the literal of which is a shortened version of *Fornication Under the Consent of the King*. The word *fuck you* makes the direction to someone else. The other words, i.e. *shit*, *piss off*, and *dick head* are not much accounted for from their form, probably taken for granted as their literal meanings are clear from the dictionary, or can be visually imagined. From this account we can see that the form of the utterances *fuck*, *fuck you*, *shit*, *piss off*, and *dick head* is notorious, casual, heterogeneous, inconsistent, and speaker-dependent. These aspects are all part of informal English.

Web-data 3 [20] accounts for 77 of the best (bleeping) dirty words from around the world. Benny Lewis explains that the post is not family-friendly and that the dirty words are not found in textbooks. He explains that within our honesty, whenever we learn a new language, we all get curious about how to swear and want to know those dirty words, the banned words, the bad words our mother would have washed our mouth out for saying. Some words from the list of this account are: *fuck*, *prick*, *bastard*, *bellend*, *ass/arse*, and *cunt*, which respectively literally mean *sex*, *terrible person*, *illegitimate child*, *penis head*, *butt*, and *vagina*. From this account we can see that the form of the utterances *fuck*, *prick*, *bastard*, *bellend*, *ass/arse*, and *cunt* is notorious, casual, heterogeneous, inconsistent, and speaker-dependent. These aspects are all part of informal English.

In Web-data 4 [21] Christ Kirk accounts for the most popular swear words in the world. From his research using the new facebook developer tool, he estimates the number of user interactions, i.e. public or private status updates, photo captions, and comments, that mention a word or phrase, and then breaks up the results by gender, age group, and region. In a three-day period query, he found out that the five most popular swear words in the world are: *shit*, *fuck*, *damn*, *bitch*, and *crap*. The word *shit* appeared in 10.5 million US Facebook interactions, *fuck*

in 9.5 million, *damn* in 6.3 million, *bitch* in 4.5 million, and *crap* in 2 million. After the five rank, male and female users split for the swear word *fag*. The word is more popular for males than for females. The words *pussy* and *dick* are more common among male users, while *cock* is more popular among females. The word *darn* is more popular among females. The words *slut* and *douche* are also more popular among female users. From this account we can see that the form of the utterances *shit*, *fuck*, *damn*, *bitch*, and *crap* is notorious, casual, heterogeneous, inconsistent, and speaker-dependent, and so is the form of the utterances *dick*, *pussy*, *cock*, *slut*, and *douche*. These aspects are all part of informal English.

In Web-data 5 [22] Taylor Dennis asserts that most swear words have to do with three things: bodily functions, God, and sex. He accounts for seven swear words, i.e. *shit*, *piss*, *ass*, *hell*, *damn*, *bitch*, and *fuck*. Etimologically, the word *shit* comes from the Old English *scitte* (*diorrhoea*), meaning essentially *poop* or *to poop*, i.e. *to part with*, *separate*, or *cut off*. The word *piss* comes from the Middle English to refer to our bodily waste. The word *ass* comes from the Old English, referring to the body part responsible for that particularly (but very necessary) function. The word *ass* may also refer to a donkey. The word *hell* comes from the Old English, meaning *to cover* or *hide*, with the basic meaning in the Christian faith as a place or state of eternal suffering and separation from God. Meanwhile, with the origin from the Middle English, the word *damn* means *to inflict loss on* or *loss* or *damage*. The word *bitch* comes from the Old English *bicce*, meaning a female dog, as it still means the same in its literal sense in many different animal-related contexts. The word *fuck* comes from the early 16th century, with its Indo-European or Latin root meaning *strike* or *fist*. Literally, nowadays the word is defined as *the act of sexual intercourse* or refers to *copulation in a vulgar way*. From this account by Taylor Dennis, we can see that the form of the utterances *shit*, *piss*, *ass*, *hell*, *damn*, *bitch*, and *fuck* is notorious, casual, heterogeneous,

inconsistent, and speaker-dependent. These aspects are all part of informal English.

In Web-data 6 [23] Jessica Brown asserts that every swear word in the English language has been ranked in order of offensiveness. Upon her research on 150 words in total to more than 200 people across the UK, she rates the swear words into 4 categories: mild, medium, strong, and strongest. The 150 swear words include general swear words, words linked to race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, body parts and health conditions, religious insults, sexual references, and certain hand gestures. In the mild list swear words, among others, are: *arse*, *bloody*, *bugger*, and in the medium list, among others, are: *arsehole*, *balls*, *bint*. The swear words *bastard*, *beaver*, and *beef curtains* belong to the strong list, while the swear words *cunt*, *fuck*, and *motherfucker* rate as the strongest list. From this account by Jessica Brown, we can see that the form of all the utterances in the four list, i.e. *arse*, *bloody*, *bugger*, *arsehole*, *balls*, *bint*, *bastard*, *beaver*, *beef curtains*, *cunt*, *fuck*, and *motherfucker* is notorious, casual, heterogeneous, inconsistent, and speaker-dependent. These aspects are all part of informal English.

In Web-data 7 [24] Rory Lewarne defines and publishes 49 British swear words as a guide for the bewildered. Among the list are the swear words: *arse/arsehole*, *bastard*, *bell/bellend*, *berk*, *bint*, *blimey*, *blighter*, *bloody*, *blooming*, and *bollocks*. The literal meanings of the swearwords are as follows:

- (1) Arse, arsehole => variants of ass and asshole.
- (2) Bastard => illegitimate child
- (3) Bell, bellend => head of a penis
- (4) Berk => idiot
- (5) Bint => derogatory synonym for woman appropriated from the Arabic word for daughter or girl.
- (6) Blimey => expression of astonishment.
- (7) Blighter => person or thing to be regarded with contempt/envy.

- (8) Bloody => intensifier, popularly used in the phrase "Bloody hell!"
- (9) Blooming => basically a very mild, somewhat archaic form of "bloody"
- (10) Bollocks => testicles

From this account by Rory Lewarne, we can see that the form of all the utterances in the list is notorious, casual, heterogeneous, inconsistent, and speaker-dependent. These aspects are all part of informal English.

## 2. The Premise 2 (P2)

This P2 states that the meaning of swearing utterances is personal or private. As the starting point we will have a look at three famous dictionaries on this matter. A swear word is *a rude or offensive word* [25], or *a profane or obscene oath or word* [26], or *an offensive word, used especially as an expression of anger* [27]. Thus, we may make a viewpoint here that a swear word is a word or an oath which is rude, offensive, profane, or obscene, used especially as an expression of anger. The web-data analysis can be done through elaboration of this viewpoint.

Web-data 1 [18] shows that the swearing utterances *arse* or *arsehole* which are in the same meaning as *ass* and *asshole* refer to the bodily functions. Meanwhile, the swearing utterance *bastard* which means *fuccboi* is to signify an illegitimate child or means an unpleasant person or situation and both *bastard* and *fuccboi* are equally objectionable. From this account we can see that the bodily functions are all personal or private, while an illegitimate child or an unpleasant person or situation is usually objectionable. Something objectionable is thus not for public, but is also personal or private.

Web-data 2 [19] accounts for the swearing utterances: *fuck*, *fuck you*, *shit*, *piss off*, and *dick head*. The swearing utterances *fuck* originally means a sexual activity and *fuck you* with the additional meaning of directing the sexual activity (as an offense) on to someone else. However, besides an offense, as when we are angry at someone else, these words are often used as a joke. The swearing

utterance *shit* means literally *poo*, but it is also used internally when something unexpected comes up in our life, e.g. *Shit! I totally forgot about that*, meaning that we forgot that we have a project that is due this week. The swearing utterance *piss off* is used to make space, just like if we want someone to step away from our personal space, we can simply tell them to piss off. The swearing utterance *dick head* with its literal meaning of *penis head* can be used to commonly call someone who is being unfair or unjust. However, this swearing utterance can also be used as a joke with friends. From this account we can see that the sexual activity, the internal expression or intention, and a bodily function are all personal or private.

Web-data 3 [20] accounts for the swearing utterances: *fuck*, *prick*, *bastard*, *bellend*, *ass/arse*, and *cunt*. The swearing utterance *fuck* or *sex* can be used for sexual references, but it is most commonly used now as an intensifier to show anger or irritation. The milder variant of this utterance in Ireland is *feck*. The swearing utterance *prick* is used to mean someone being obnoxious, stupid, or rude. The swearing utterance *bastard* originally means a child born out of wedlock, and now is used to call someone a jerk or to say a situation is unpleasant. Meanwhile, the swearing utterance *bellend* (or *knobend/dickhead*) associated with a certain body part, i.e. *a penis* is used to call someone an idiot. The swearing utterance *ass/arse* with the literal meaning *butt* is used to call someone a jerk or a fool, e.g. *You asshole!*, or to say we could not give a damn, e.g. *I don't give an arse*, or *I can't be arsed*. The swearing utterance *cunt* with the literal meaning *vagina* is typically used to call people stupid. In the UK, this utterance can mean a movie is rated "18", so it can only be seen by adults, i.e. a porn-movie. From this account we can see that a sexual reference, an unpleasant person/situation, or a certain body part is all personal or private.

Web-data 4 [21] accounts for popularity of the swearing utterances: *shit*, *fuck*, *damn*, *bitch*, and *crap* in Facebook in the 21st century user interactions in a three-day query,

i.e. public or private status updates, photo captions, and comments, that mention a word or phrase, and then breaks up the results by gender, age group, and region. The swearing utterances: *shit*, *fuck*, *damn*, *bitch*, and *crap* have been confirmed by the research as the five most popular swear words in the world. The web-data does not provide accounts for the meaning of the swearing utterances.

Web-data 5 [22] accounts for the 7 swearing utterances: *shit*, *piss*, *ass*, *hell*, *damn*, *bitch*, and *fuck*. The swearing utterance *shit* which refers to *poop* or *to poop* previously in history means *to part with*, *separate*, or *cut off*. Factually, this swearing utterance actually used to be neutral, with no vulgar connotations. This utterance can be used as an expletive in various contexts, e.g. *Oh no – I stepped in dog shit; He’s behaving like a little shit; Don’t you dare give me that shit; This is a really shitty movie; Don’t touch my shit!* Meanwhile, the swearing utterance *piss* with reference to our bodily waste is a relatively mild swear word. Like the swearing utterance *shit*, the utterance *piss* can be used in various contexts, e.g. *I need to take a piss; That cat just pissed all over the carpet; Oh, piss off!; I’m so pissed that you just ate my last French fry.* The swearing utterance *ass* or *arse* with also reference to our bodily part or *butt*, can be used for many jokes or insults. The swearing utterance *ass* can also mean a donkey, which is then often used as an insult essentially meaning *a stupid* or *a foolish person*. The utterance *ass* can be used in various contexts, e.g. *He fell right on his ass; Don’t be such an ass; That asshole called me ugly!* The swearing utterance *hell* with its literal meaning *to cover* or *hide*, or a place or state of eternal suffering and separation from God, has evolved over time into the meaning of blasphemy or of a relatively mild expletive, e.g. *Who in the hell do you think you are; Go to Hell; What the hell is going on here?* The swearing utterance *damn* with its literal meaning *to inflict loss on* or *loss* or *damage* can also be a pretty insulting thing to say. Here, damning someone to Hell means wishing them to suffer great pain and agony for the rest of eternity. However, the utterance

*damn* is not a very strong or harsh swear word compared to others, e.g. *Oh, damn it! Damn it to Hell; Damn, I forgot my keys; Oh, damn it, I’m late again.* Meanwhile, the swearing utterance *bitch* with its literal meaning *a female dog*, has also evolved as an insulting term used to refer to an unpleasant woman. The utterance used to be one of the most insulting things to call a woman. Saying someone is behaving like *a bitch in heat*, for example, means reducing the person to dog status as well as commenting on the person’s reproductive cycle. The wide variety of meanings of the utterance *bitch*, some have positive connotations, can be seen in the examples: *She was being so rude to me. She’s such a bitch; Quit your bitching and get your work done; Bad bitches like me are hard to come by; Bitches get stuff done!* The last account in this web-data is the swearing utterance *fuck* with its literal meaning *strike* or *fist* has come down to the act of sexual intercourse. This swearing utterance is probably the most offensive in modern speech or writing; however, most people keep using it creatively on a regular basis, e.g. *What the fuck are you doing; Oh, fuck! I stubbed my toe; I’m so fucking tired; That is fucked up.* From this account we can see that internal expressions or expletives, bodily waste or bodily parts, blasphemy, animal-reference (a donkey, a female dog), and sexual-intercourse reference within swearing utterances are all personal or private.

Web-data 6 [23] accounts for the order of offensiveness of 150 swearing utterances to more than 200 people across the UK. The order of offensiveness has four categories: mild, medium, strong, and strongest. It was found out that most words relating to gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity were seen as strong, while most relating to disability were seen as mild or medium. In the mild list, the examples of swearing utterances are *arse*, *bloody*, *bugger*, and in the medium list, the examples are: *arsehole*, *balls*, *bint*. The swearing utterances: *bastard*, *beaver*, and *beef curtains* belong to the strong list, while the swear words *cunt*, *fuck*, and *motherfucker* rate as the strongest list. It was also found out

that the mild list was thought to be okay to use around children. The medium list was seen to be potentially unacceptable before 9 PM, while the strong list should be saved for after 9 PM. From this account we can see that swearing utterances relating to gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity are personal and private, not suitable for children, and potentially acceptable within close contexts, i.e. after 9 PM.

Web-data 7 [24] accounts for exemplarily 10 swearing utterances as a guide for the bewildered: *arse/arsehole*, *bastard*, *bell/bellend*, *berk*, *bint*, *blimey*, *blighter*, *bloody*, *blooming*, and *bollocks*. The literal meanings of the 10 swearing utterances from the previous list, with their respective interpreted meanings, are as follows:

- (1) Arse, arsehole => variants of ass and asshole (bodily function)
- (2) Bastard => illegitimate child (blasphemy)
- (3) Bell, bellend => head of a penis (bodily function)
- (4) Berk => idiot (unpleasant person)
- (5) Bint => derogatory synonym for woman appropriated from the Arabic word for daughter or girl (ethnicity)
- (6) Blimey => expression of astonishment (internal expression/expletive)
- (7) Blighter => person or thing to be regarded with contempt/envy (unpleasant person)
- (8) Bloody => intensifier, popularly used in the phrase "Bloody hell!" (internal expression/expletive)
- (9) Blooming => basically a very mild, somewhat archaic form of "bloody" (internal expression/expletive)
- 10) Bollocks => testicles (bodily function)

From this account we can see that bodily functions, blasphemy, unpleasant persons, ethnicity, and internal expressions/expletives within swearing utterances are all personal or private.

### 3. The Premise 3 (P3)

This P3 states that the function of swearing utterances is bound to context. The context we would like to employ here is the aspects of power and solidarity in the part of hearer in the theory of Brown and Gilman [7]. From this grand theory, we will elaborate two types of hearer, i.e. superiors and close people. Superiors are hearers with power factors, usually linked to formal situations, including strangers, while close people are hearers with solidarity factor, usually related to informal situations. A research on language use [16], [28] and its finding implementations [29], [30], [31], has elaborated this context, and has differed distant language from close language, upon elaboration of theories of negative and positive face [3], negative and positive politeness strategies [4], respect and solidarity politeness [5], and politeness and friendship or camaraderie [6]. Distant language is used to superiors to bring politeness, while close language is spoken to close people for friendship or camaraderie. The mistaken use of distant language and close language will lead to impoliteness, i.e. distant language to close people (*awkward situations*) or close language to superiors (*rude situations*). Distant language comprises formal, indirect, and non-literal utterances within common and safe topics, while close language involves informal, direct, and literal utterances within any topics: common, personal [16], [28].

From all the web-data analyses, swearing or saying bad word/dirty words/swearing utterances/swear words concerning bodily functions/waste/parts, unpleasant persons/situations, sexual activities/intercourse/reference, internal expressions/intentions/expletives, blasphemy, animal-reference, gender, race, ethnicity, and others are personal and private, thus part of close language. Close language is spoken to close people for friendship of camaraderie. Use of close language to superiors or strangers or in public will lead to impoliteness. A friction or a rude situation may entail, and hearers of this not-close type will probably get angry or even mad at us. In

this context, swearing *fuck you*, or *shit*, or even the mild one *damn* is rude and offensive to them.

Meanwhile, use of swearing utterances or swear words to close people through jokes will instill positive connotations or solidarity and confirm friendship or camaraderie. Similarly uttered, the swear words *fuck you*, or *shit*, or the mild one *damn* is probably very okay among close people, as the swearing utterances instill or confirm the feeling of friendship, solidarity, or camaraderie.

Aside from the distant language and close language, but still within the web-data analyses above, swearing utterances like *Hell*, *fuck*, *shit*, and *damn* are used not to show anger to others nor to confirm friendship or solidarity to close people, but are uttered to show internal expressions or intentions on a particular message. Swearing utterances like these belong to expletives, which function to put an emphasis on or intensify the message being delivered, e.g.

What the hell is going on here?  
I'm so fucking tire!  
Shit! I totally forgot about that.  
Oh, damn it! I'm late again.

### Conclusions

Based on the proposed premises, the findings and discussions on the web-data verification and the accounts given, some points to bring this paper to an end are given below.

A swear word is a word or an oath which is rude, offensive, profane, or obscene, used especially as an expression of anger. Swearing or using swear words or saying bad words belongs to informal English. The form of swearing is notorious, casual, heterogeneous, inconsistent, irregular, and speaker-dependent.

Swearing has elaborated two kinds of meaning, i.e. literal meaning and creative meaning to various contexts. Swearing utterances have elaborated the literal words into various meanings concerning bodily functions/waste/parts, unpleasant persons/situations, sexual activities/intercourse/reference, internal

expressions/intentions/expletives, blasphemy, animal-reference, gender, race, ethnicity, and others. The meanings of swearing utterances are personal and private.

Swearing to others in public is rude, offensive, profane, or obscene, as an expression of anger; however, when it is adjusted to the context of types of hearer, the meanings or senses vary. Swearing to others in public creates situations which are rude, offensive, profane, or obscene, as an expression of anger. Meanwhile, swearing to close people through jokes may instill solidarity or confirm friendship or camaraderie. Swearing utterances concerning internal expressions/intentions/expletives function to intensify the messages.

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