

Key Words

- **Sociolinguistics** - the study of the aspects of society that affect the way people use language.
- **Idiolect** – a person’s individual way of speaking
- **Accent** – the way you pronounce words
- **Dialect** – the words and grammar used in a particular place
- **British Standard English** – The standard written dialect used in the UK

Key Skills

- **Explore how gender, age, ethnicity and location affects language use and learn some key theories that discuss these issues**
- **Analyse spoken data to help develop ideas about language use**
- **Analyse the language used in articles that explore language use**
- **Develop your persuasive writing skills**

Persuasive Writing Skills:

- **Rhetorical Questions** (Do you really believe that slang should be banned?)
- **Triple** (Ignorant, outdated and futile: the banning of slang is a preposterous ideas)
- **Direct Address** (You must be wondering why we are even considering banning slang)
- **Alliteration** (Superior Slang: why teens use of language is the most creative in history!)

Essential information

Gender

- Deficit theory (1970s) – this theory says that women use weaker and more powerless language features because they are in a lower position than men in society
- Dominance theory (1980s) – this theory says that men dominate conversations because of a patriarchal society
- Difference theory (1990s) – this theory says that men and women use different language because they are brought up in different sub-cultures (groups)
- Dynamic theory (2000s) – this theory says that actually the speech of men and women are very similar, and it is the context of conversations that affect how language is used.

Age

- Theory 1 – Vivian DeKlerk. She said that teenagers use different language because they want to diverge from adults and children and they want to converge to their friends.
- Theory 2 – Penelope Eckert. She said that teenagers use different language (specifically slang) because they want to have a connection to youth culture

Features that have been found in teenage language are:

- Slang
- Overlaps (talking over each other)
- Word shortenings (cutting down words)

Accent and Dialect

- A person’s accent is created solely by the way a person pronounces their words.
- A person’s dialect is created by the way a person pronounces their words AND also the differences in the words and grammar they use.
- Research shows that people from Essex and London were judged to be less intelligent than in other areas, solely due to their accent.

Ethnicity

- MLE: Multicultural English
- A dialect that originated in London and is a blend of different dialects from other ethnicities. It began due to the high levels in immigration in London
- It has elements of Cockney, Caribbean, African and Pakistani language alongside many others