

ISLE Online Forum 2025

Vulgarity in English
Language, Creativity, and Social Meaning



Friday, December 12, 2025
10 AM CET (Stockholm) | 8 PM AEDT (Melbourne)

Details:

<https://www.isle-linguistics.org/activities/outreach>



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This ISLE Online Forum examines the functions and forms of vulgarity in English, highlighting its role as a site of linguistic creativity, identity expression, and social negotiation. Far from being merely offensive, vulgar language serves diverse pragmatic functions – from humour and solidarity to aggression and resistance. The session discusses the discursive functions and explores regional and cultural variation in the use and perception of vulgarity, as well as the challenges it poses for English learners, for whom appropriate use requires nuanced pragmatic competence. Key questions include:

- Why study vulgarity?
- How does vulgarity differ across Englishes?
- How do speakers learn to navigate its social boundaries?
- What makes vulgarity creative and a hotspot of linguistic innovation?

Watch recordings of previous events via ISLE's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/@isle2008)