

# What on earth is happening to English

ELTAM Conference, Struga

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What do these words mean?

bad

slow

# Words that have changed their meaning (1)

- awful
- cute (partly)
- decimate
- fantastic
- nice
- weird
- bumf

# Words that have changed their meaning (2)

- dollar                      house owner
- caterpillar                ignorant
- salad                        related to destiny or fate
- whisky                      from the valley
- barbarian                 salty
- hazard                      hairy cat
- husband                    the dice
- weird                        water of life

# Where from?

- robot Hindi/Urdu
- cockroach Russian
- coach Swedish
- gin Czech
- bard Hungarian
- shampoo Spanish
- bistro Dutch
- tungsten Welsh

# Eponyms

- hooligan an 18<sup>th</sup>c French physician
- hooker a 16<sup>th</sup>c French diplomat
- guillotine a 19<sup>th</sup>c Irish family
- nicotine an 18<sup>th</sup>c English diplomat
- saxophone an Italian inventor
- jacuzzi a 19<sup>th</sup>c Scottish engineer
- sandwich a Belgian musician
- macadam a US Civil War general

# When?

- carbon footprint 1910s
- Have a nice day 1940s
- cringeworthy 1960s
- phone number 1970s
- Big Brother 1980s
- eco-friendly 1990s
- selfie 2000s
- microchip 2010s

# When - key

- phone number 1910s
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# Blends

- cronut
- glamping
- fablet
- mockney
- coatigan
- netiquette
- biopic
- malware

# “Verbing”

- to deplane
- to podium
- to parent
- to trend
- to dialogue
- to trial
- to party
- to access

# Euphemisms

- senior citizen
- between jobs
- previously owned
- traveller
- tired and emotional
- no longer with us
- chemical dependency
- economical with the truth

# RAILSPEAK

- патник
- проводник
- втора класа
- следна станица
- коридор

# RAILSPEAK (2)

- overbridge
- on-board shop
- accommodation
- quiet coach
- closed, cold food product
- mobile catering vehicle
- arrive into ...
- to be platformed

# Widely used Americanisms

- Can I get a ...
- I could care less
- rookie
- dude
- train station
- touch base
- heads up

# ... and some that (probably) won't catch on

- soccer
- cleats
- expiration date
- bachelor party
- bachelorette
- rest room
- momentarily (for 'soon' or 'in a moment')
- fanny pack

# Some new words

- vape
- slactivism (also clictivism)
- budtender
- dark web
- brexit (also fexit, grexit and czexit)
- contactless
- emoji (Oxford dictionaries Word of the Year, 2015)



# The most misused word?

“My legs literally turned to jelly.”

... and another

“I’d never danced before. I’ve literally got two left feet.”

... yet another example

“Everyone was literally glued to their television sets.”

... the last one

“The Bulgarians were quite literally not at the match.”

# Contacts

[www.pilgrims.co.uk](http://www.pilgrims.co.uk)

HumanisingLanguage Teaching

[www.hltmag.co.uk](http://www.hltmag.co.uk)

[www.onestopenglish.com](http://www.onestopenglish.com)

timwbowen@gmail.com

Facebook:

Tim Bowen

