

**TEXT 1****The power of swearing: how words influence your mind, body, and relationships**

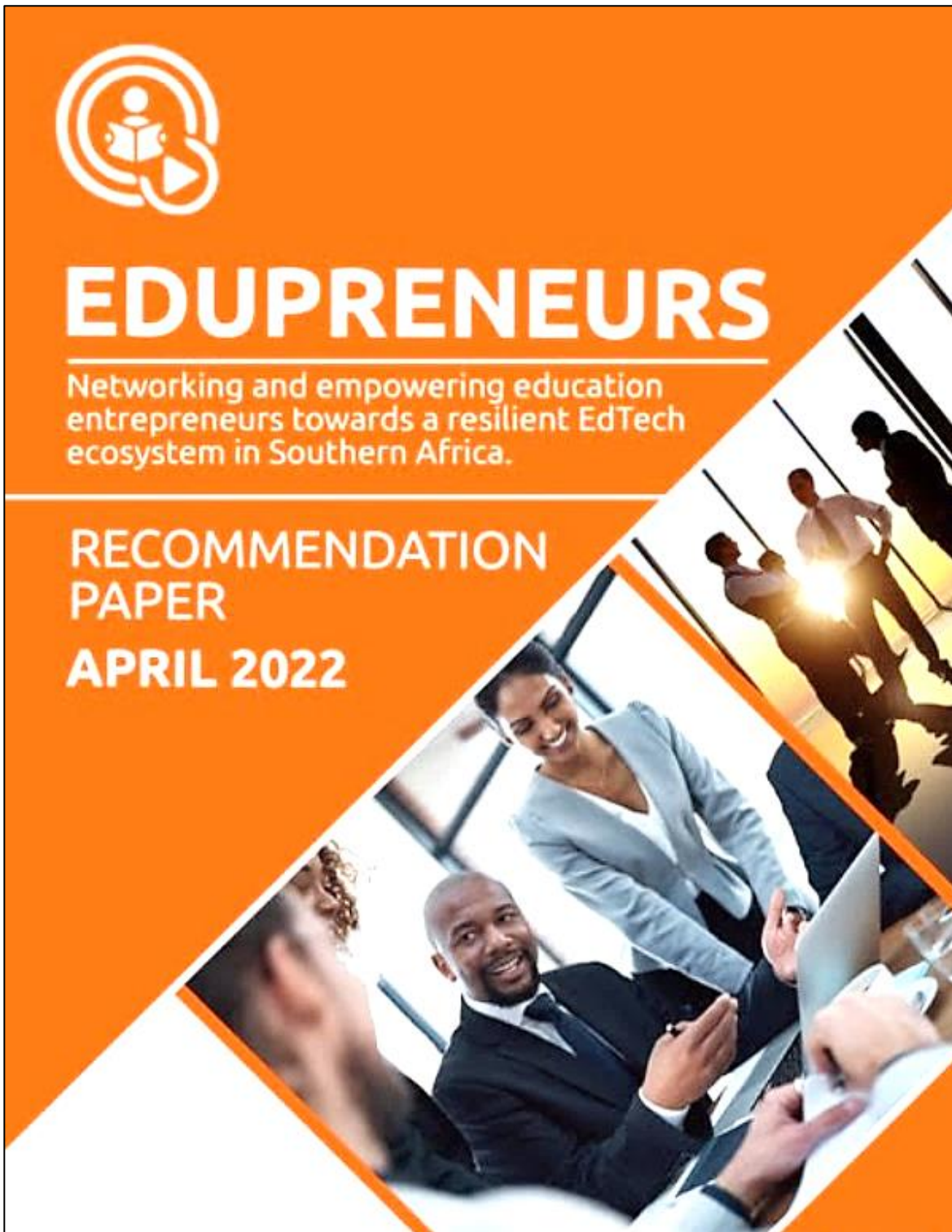
Richard Stephens


- 1 Swearing was long dismissed as a topic of serious research because it was believed to be simply a sign of aggression, weak language ability or even low intelligence. We now have quite a lot of evidence that challenges this view, leading us to reconsider the nature – and power – of swearing.
- 2 Whether we are fans of swearing or not, many of us are likely to resort to it now and again. To estimate the power of swearing, and work out where it comes from, we recently conducted a review of more than one hundred research papers on the subject from different approaches.
- 3 People often associate swearing with catharsis – the release of strong emotion. It is undeniably different from – and more powerful than – other forms of language use. Interestingly, for speakers of more than one language, the catharsis is nearly always greater when swearing in one's first language than any languages learned subsequently.
- 4 Swearing stirs the emotions. This can be measured in our bodily responses such as increased sweating and sometimes increased heart rate. These changes suggest that swearing can trigger the 'fight or flight' function. Research suggests that swearing might be located in different parts of the brain from other speech regions. This might explain why swearing can remain intact in people who have suffered brain damage and struggle to speak as a result.
- 5 Laboratory-based experiments also show intellectual effects. We know that swear words command more attention and are better remembered than other words. But they also interfere with the cognitive processing of other stimuli – so it seems swearing can sometimes get in the way of thinking, too.
- 6 This may, however, be worth it – at least sometimes. In experiments requiring people to submerge a hand in icy water, swearing produces pain relief. In these studies, vocalising a swear word leads to higher pain tolerance and a higher pain threshold compared with neutral words. Other studies have found increased physical strength in people after swearing.
- 7 But swearing does not just influence our physical and mental selves – it also affects our relationships with others. Research in communication and linguistics has shown a variety of social purposes of swearing – from expressing violence and causing offence to social bonding, humour, and storytelling. Bad language can even help us manage our identities and display connection and trust as well as boosting attention and dominance over other people.
- 8 Despite having such a noticeable effect on our lives, we currently know very little about where swearing gets its power. Interestingly, when we hear a swear word in an unfamiliar language, it seems just like any other word and will not produce any of these outcomes – there is nothing particular about the sound of the word itself that is universally offensive.

- 9 So, the power does not come from the words themselves. Equally, it is not essential in the word meanings or sounds but neither euphemisms nor similar sounding words have such a deep effect on us.
- 10 One explanation is that 'aversive conditioning' – the use of punishment to prevent continued swearing – typically occurs during childhood. This may establish an instinctive connection between language use and emotional response. While this sounds correct, it is weakly evidenced by only a handful of studies that have investigated memories of childhood punishment for swearing. There are almost no studies of links between such memories and adult responses to swearing.
- 11 To get to the bottom of why swearing has such a profound effect on us, we need to investigate the nature of people's memories for swearing. What were their significant swearing incidents? Did swearing always bring about unpleasant consequences, such as punishment, or were there benefits too? What about people's ongoing experiences of swearing throughout the lifespan? After all, our research shows that swearing can sometimes help people bond with one another.
- 12 We think it might be possible for swearing to show a similar memory pattern to that for music – we remember and like the songs best that we listened to during adolescence. That is because, like music, swearing possibly takes on new meaning in adolescence. It becomes an important way to respond to the intense emotions we tend to have during this time, and an act that signals independence from parents and connection with friends. So, swear words and songs used during this time may become forever linked with important and highly memorable experiences.
- 13 Research also needs to examine whether there is a link between memories of swearing and the effects observed in experiments. This could show whether people with more positive memories respond differently to those with negative memories.
- 14 A final idea to consider is whether swearing will start to lose its power if it becomes more socially acceptable and therefore loses its offensiveness. For now, however, it certainly remains taboo.

[Adapted from: <<https://theconversation.com/the-power-of-swearing-how-obscene-words-influence-your-mind-body-and-relationships-192104>>]

**TEXT 2**





# EDUPRENEURS

Networking and empowering education entrepreneurs towards a resilient EdTech ecosystem in Southern Africa.

**RECOMMENDATION PAPER**

**APRIL 2022**

[Adapted from: <<https://eduiX.com/blog/category/announcement/>>]

TEXT 3

African Union 20 YEARS

unicef for every child

**Transforming Education in Africa**

**Youth Track**  
AU High Level Side Event  
**September 20<sup>th</sup>**

#Africa Youth Led  
#TransformingEducation

au.int

[Source: <<https://au.int/en/newsevents/20220920/high-level-side-event-transforming-education-africa-margins-global-transforming>>]

TEXT 4



**REGENT**  
**BUSINESS SCHOOL**

---

HONORIS UNITED UNIVERSITIES

**DISRUPT. RETHINK. INNOVATE.**

[Source: <<https://regent.ac.za/>>]

TEXT 5

EARN YOUR  
TEACHING  
CREDENTIAL

THE  
FUTURE  
DEPENDS  
ON YOU

LEARN MORE

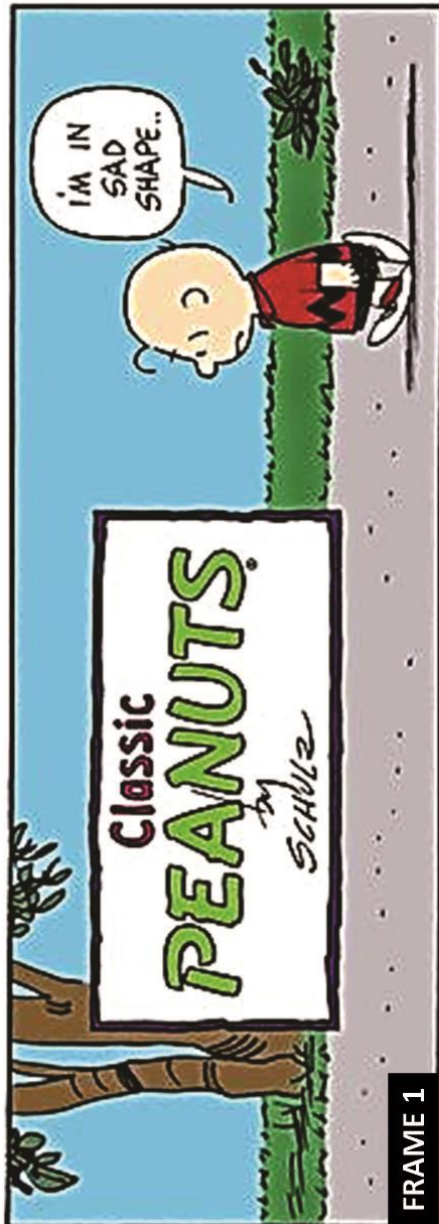


REX AND MARGARET  
**FORTUNE**  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

FORTUNESCHOOLOFED.ORG

[Source: <<https://www.linkedin.com/company/fortune-school/>>]

TEXT 6



[Source: <<https://za.pinterest.com/pin/173107179403761770/>>]

**TEXT 7**

Let me tell you, Gideon is a social butterfly! He can charm his way into anyone's heart. I'm always amazed at how effortlessly he makes friends and keeps people laughing. He's just got this magnetic personality that draws people to him, and it's no wonder he's involved in like a million clubs and groups. He's taught me so much about being confident and outgoing.

[School friend]

Dude, playing soccer with Gideon is awesome! He's always ready to go, and he's got mad skills on the field. Even when we're down, he keeps us motivated and working together. Plus, off the field he's a super cool guy, always high-fiving and cheering on the rest of the team. I'm glad Gideon's on our team – he's definitely one of the best players around!

[Soccer teammate]

Gideon is my big brother, and he's like, totally awesome! He's always playing sports and doing cool stuff that I wish I could do. Even though he's a lot older than me, he always makes time to play games and hang out with me. He's also super smart and helps me with my homework, and he taught me how to do bike tricks. I hope I can be just like him when I'm a big kid!

[Little brother]

Gideon is my friend and he's amazing! He's always up for a good laugh and knows how to pull off the best pranks. Whether it's surprising me with a fake email or putting a plastic spider in my backpack, he keeps me on my toes. But beyond his silly side, he's also one of the kindest people I know. He's always there to listen and offer support when I need it. I feel lucky to have him a friend, and I know we'll have many more adventures (and pranks) to come.

[Close friend]

We couldn't be prouder of Gideon. He's always been a diligent worker, whether it's on his studies or at his part-time job. We're amazed by his dedication and drive to excel, and we're continually impressed by his achievements. But what we admire most about Gideon is his kind and empathetic nature. He always thinks of others and looks for ways to support those in need. We're excited to see where his passions and pursuits take him.

[Parents]

Man, it's gonna be tough saying goodbye to our drummer, Gideon. He's been a total rockstar in our band, always keeping us on beat and bringing the hype to our parties. But he's off to university now, and we know he's gonna crush it in whatever he does. We'll miss his sick beats and hilarious jokes, but we'll always remember the good times.

[Fellow band member]

[Adapted from: <<https://chat.openai.com/chat>>]