

Title:

Birmingham

Shelfmark:

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Recording date:

11.02.2005

Speakers:

Chohan, Deena, b. 1979 Birmingham; female

Dhillon, Herjot, b. 1977; female

Patel, Meera, b. 1980 Bolton; female (father b. Kenya; mother b. Burma)

Surdhar, Kiran, b. 1979 Birmingham; female

The interviewees are all media colleagues at BBC Asian Network.

PLEASE NOTE: this recording is still awaiting full linguistic description (i.e. phonological, grammatical and spontaneous lexical items).

A summary of the specific lexis elicited by the interviewer is given below.

ELICITED LEXIS

- see English Dialect Dictionary (1898-1905)
- △ see New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English (2006)
- ◇ see Green's Dictionary of Slang (2010)
- ▼ see Dictionary of Contemporary Slang (2014)
- ◆ see Urban Dictionary (online)
- ◊ no previous source (with this sense) identified

pleased	<i>cool, sorted, safe</i> (used frequently as terms of approval); <i>happy as Larry; happy; chuffed; buzzing</i> (“ <i>I’m buzzing, me/well buzzing</i> ”); <i>well chuffed</i> ; “ <i>I’m top, me</i> ”; <i>spot on</i> ◆
tired	<i>knackered</i> (disliked); <i>shattered; need a kip</i>
unwell	<i>sick; under the weather</i> (not used); <i>ill; rough</i> (“ <i>I feel a bit rough</i> ”); <i>poorly</i> (used in Coventry, used by old teacher)
hot	<i>boiling; raging hot</i> (of emotion); <i>scorching</i> (“ <i>it’s scorching outside</i> ” of weather); <i>boiling-point</i> (of emotion)

cold	<i>freezing; chapping</i> [♥] (“ <i>proper chapping</i> ”), <i>chilly</i> (“ <i>it’s chilly/chapping outside</i> ” of weather); <i>freezing my bollocks off</i> ^{Δ1} (“ <i>rude</i> ”)
annoyed	<i>pissed off; mithered</i> (“ <i>stop mithering me</i> ”, not in dictionary but considered “ <i>proper word up north</i> ”); <i>cheesed off</i> (used frequently); <i>effed off</i> ² ; “ <i>stop doing my head in</i> ” ^Δ
throw	<i>chuck; wazz</i> ^Δ (“ <i>wazz it over</i> ”); <i>lob</i> (“ <i>lob it over</i> ” used as child); <i>send it us; send it over</i>
play truant	<i>bunk; wag; skive; bunk off school; skiving</i>
sleep	(not discussed)
play a game	<i>let’s go for a kick-about</i> (of e.g. football); <i>play</i> (of e.g. Monopoly ³ /music)
hit hard	<i>whack; smack; give it some</i> ^{Δ4} ; <i>beat; knocked out</i> (“ <i>I’m gonna knock you out</i> ”)
clothes	<i>clothes; clobber</i> (liked); <i>rags</i> (“ <i>I can’t come out I haven’t got me rags on</i> ”); <i>scrag</i> ^Δ (“ <i>stick me scrag on</i> ”); <i>gear</i> (“ <i>got me gear on</i> ”); <i>tramps</i> ^Δ (“ <i>I’m looking well smart got me tramps on</i> ”); <i>kecks</i> ⁵ (“ <i>get your kecks on/off</i> ”); <i>kappre</i> ⁶
trousers	<i>paint</i> ⁶ (commonly pronounced “ <i>pain</i> ” [p=ænt], “ <i>pant-shant</i> ” ⁷); <i>pants</i> (“ <i>where’s my pants</i> ” used for ‘trousers’ in north but frequently misunderstood in Midlands, used exclusively for ‘underwear’ in Coventry, also considered American); <i>bottoms; trousers; patlun</i> ⁶ (used frequently by Gujarati speakers, also used by grandfather)
child’s shoe	(not discussed)
mother	<i>mum; mom</i> (associated with Bollywood films/American English, disliked); <i>mam</i> (“ <i>all right, mam?</i> ”); <i>mama; old dear</i> (used by brother, disliked); <i>old lady</i>
gmother	<i>nani</i> ^Δ , <i>dadi</i> ⁶ ; <i>grandma, grandmamma, gran, nanny</i> (not used); <i>ajima</i> ⁶ , <i>baba</i> ^Δ
m partner	<i>old man</i> (“ <i>such and such’s old man</i> ” used locally of husband, also used in Bolton for ‘father’)
friend	<i>mate</i> (“ <i>me mate</i> ”); <i>bredrin</i> ^Δ (“ <i>whagwan</i> ^Δ , <i>bredrin?</i> ” used jokingly as form of address with close friends, thought to be derived from ‘brethren’); <i>spar</i> ^Δ (heard used, thought to be derived from “ <i>sparring partner</i> ”, i.e. “ <i>boxing buddy</i> ”); <i>pal; bird</i> (“ <i>all right, bird?</i> ” of female friend); <i>my boys</i> (used by males); <i>me girls/gals</i> (of female friends); <i>homie; dost</i> ^Δ , <i>dost</i> ^Δ , <i>yar</i> ^Δ (used by Gujarati/Punjabi speakers); <i>friend</i> (often pronounced “ <i>friend</i> ” [fɹend] by Gujarati speakers)
gfather	<i>dada</i> ⁶ , <i>ajababa</i> ⁶
forgot name	<i>thingymajig</i> ^Δ ; <i>what’s-her-name; whatchamacallit; what’s-his-face</i> ^Δ (“ <i>oh, what’s-his-face did that</i> ” used frequently); <i>thingy; thingymajiggy</i> ^Δ
kit of tools	<i>gear</i> (“ <i>get our gear</i> ”); <i>tool-box; box of tricks</i> ^Δ
trendy	<i>bling; chav</i> (“ <i>Essex word</i> ”); <i>scally</i> (“ <i>proper scallified</i> ” used in North West); <i>gangster wannabe</i> ^Δ ; <i>scrubber; Kev</i> ^Δ (“ <i>Brummy</i> ”); <i>pigeon</i> [♥] ; <i>Sharon</i> ^Δ , <i>Waynetta</i> ^{♥8} (“ <i>Brummy</i> ”); <i>Kevin</i> ^Δ

¹ *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (2006) records ‘freeze one’s nuts off’ in this sense.

² *Wiktionary* (<https://en.wiktionary.org>) records ‘effed off’ in this sense.

³ Popular board game published by Parker Brothers since 1934.

⁴ *New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (2006) records ‘give it some’ in sense of ‘to put a great deal of effort into something’.

⁵ *OED* (online edition) records ‘kecks’ in sense of ‘underwear’.

⁶ Transliteration of lexical items based on *Digital Dictionaries of South Asia* (<http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/>).

⁷ Blog post ‘Love Shuv tey Chicken Khurana’ by Rajesh Krishnamurthy (03.11.2012 - see *matineefilms: Film reviews for Bollywood buffs and the Indian diaspora* at <http://matineefilms.blogspot.co.uk/2012/11/love-shuv-tey-chicken-khurana.html>) includes ‘Roti-shoti Chai-shai Pant-shant’ as ‘quintessentially punjabi’ reduplication process.

⁸ *Dictionary of Contemporary Slang* (2014) records ‘Wayne’ in this sense; reference, presumably, to Waynetta Slob, fictional created and played by British comedian Kathy Burke (b.1964) in BBC TV sketch shows, *Harry Enfield’s Television Programme* (1992) and *Harry Enfield and Chums* (1994-1997).

(associated with Harry Enfield characters Kevin and Perry⁹) *Tracey*[◇] (“*Sharon and Trace/Kev[△] and Trace*” used in Birmingham, associated with ‘Birds of a Feather’¹⁰); *Southall boy*[◇]; *gangster*; *bad boy*; *rude boy*; *lotia*[△]; *lafunga*[△]; *innit boys*¹¹ (used by housemate from Birmingham, considered very “*Asianfied*”)

f partner (not discussed)

baby *baby*; *little ‘un*[△]; *sprog*; *kid*; *bab*[○] (“*Coventry term*”); *little shit*[♦] (suggested jokingly); *our kid* (“*our kids got one of them*” used in Leeds/Bolton of brother/sister, associated with Shameless¹²/Oasis¹³, “*goes quite fast, does our kid*” also used by friend from Leeds of car)

rain heavily *varasad*¹⁴ (Punjabi for ‘to rain’); *pissing* (“*it’s pissing down*”); *pissing it down*; *chucking it down*[△]; *bucketing*; *hammering*[♦] (“*hammering it outside*” used occasionally)

toilet *loo*; *bog* (“*I’m going bog*” used with friends in north); *lavvy*; *ladies*, *bathroom* (used in e.g. restaurant); *toilet* (used at home)

walkway *alleyway*; *gali*⁶; *ginnel*; *ginnelway*¹⁵; *passage*; *back street*; *entry*; *side-entry*

long seat *sofa* (frequently pronounced “*sofa*” [so:fa] by Punjabi/Gujarati speakers, thought to be Indian word); *comfy chair*[△]; *couch*; *settee* (frequently pronounced “*settee*” [seti:] by Punjabi/Gujarati speakers)

run water *stream*; *canal*; *pond* (suggested jokingly)

main room *front room*; *lounge* (used when e.g. selling house); *back room*; *den* (heard used); *living-room* (used with visitors); *TV room* (used as child)

rain lightly *drizzle* (considered “*posh*” in north); *spit* (“*spitting outside*” most common in north); *drizzling*; *mipenda*[△] (means ‘to rain’)

rich *minted*

left-handed *sajja*⁶ (Punjabi for ‘left’); *clever*[△] (used of own left-handed brother); *lefty*; *left-handed*; *weirdo*[△] (suggested jokingly)

unattractive (not discussed)

lack money *skint*; *poor*; *pepped out*¹⁶; *cleaned out*

drunk *pissed*; *hammered*[△]; *tipsy*; *trolleyed*; *mashed*; *lashed*; *on one*¹⁷; *caned*; *tull*⁶ (Hindi for ‘drunk’); *pidhelum*¹⁸; *twatted*[△] (“*rude*”, of extreme drunkenness, disliked)

pregnant *up the duff*; *bread in the oven*[△] (confused with “*bun in the oven*”); *bun in the oven*; *knocked up*

attractive *fit* (“*well fit*”); *fine* (“*looking fine*”); *sexy*; *gorgeous* (“*she’s gorgeous, she is*”); “*she’s a babe*”; *a sex god*; *tasty* (used by males); *dishy*; *tight*[△]; *tick*[♥] (“*she’s tick, man*” considered southern); *banging* (“*that girl’s banging*”); *hotty* (“*he’s a hotty*”), *hot* (of males)

insane *crazy*; *loopy*; *madhead* (“*he’s a madhead*” considered “*Manc way of saying it*”, i.e. used in Manchester); *psycho*; *mad*; *off his head*; *dumbhead*

moody *mardy* (only heard since living in Midlands, associated with Leicester); *got a cob on*[△]; *miserable git*; *stropky*; *sulking*; *longface*[♦]; *PMT*⁶¹⁹

⁹ Reference, presumably, to characters created and played by British comedians Harry Enfield (b.1961) and Kathy Burke (b.1964) respectively in BBC TV sketch shows and feature film, *Kevin and Perry Go Large* (2000).

¹⁰ British sit-com set in Chigwell originally broadcast on BBC 1989-1998.

¹¹ Judy Astley’s *I Should Be So Lucky* (2012, p.15) includes ‘innit boy’ in this sense.

¹² British adult comedy drama series set in Manchester originally broadcast on Channel 4 2004-2013.

¹³ English rock band formed in Manchester 1999.

¹⁴ *Shabdkosh English Gujarati Dictionary* (online at <http://www.shabdkosh.com/gu>) includes ‘varasad’ in this sense.

¹⁵ *OED* (online edition) records ‘ginnel’ & ‘alleyway’ in this sense.

¹⁶ *Urban Dictionary* (online) records ‘peppered’ in this sense.

¹⁷ *Dictionary of Contemporary Slang* (2014) records ‘on one’ in sense of ‘under the influence of drugs’

¹⁸ *Shabdkosh English Gujarati Dictionary* (online at <http://www.shabdkosh.com/gu>) includes ‘pidhelum’ in this sense.

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¹⁹ *Green's Dictionary of Slang* (2010) records 'p.m.s' [= abbreviation of 'pre-menstrual syndrome'] in this sense.