

Linguistic




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Class in Modern English Culture



Since 1960's "*How do you do ?*" was out of use and the class system was no more.

So, what rules must the English stick to nowadays?

The English are still very **class-conscious.**

Class of the person can be defined by:

- Talk
- Car
- Dress
- Food
- House exc.



Classes

Upper	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Middle	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Lower	Upper
	Middle
	Lower

The English Talk

The way HOW and WHAT the English speak is always connected with class.

The main factors are:

- Terminology**
- Pronunciation**

The vowels vs Consonants Rule

Upper class drops vowels:

Lower class drops consonants:

“hnkrchf”

“hpstn”

Handkerchief

Half past ten

“ankercheef”

“alf past ten”

Upper	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Middle	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Lower	Upper
	Middle
	Lower

- Upper and middle classes pronounce consonants correctly

- Lower class:

- Th → f/v :

- “that” → *“vat”*;

“teeth” → *“teef”*

- Final g → k:

- Something → *“somefink”*,

Nothing → *“nuffink”*

- Say ‘a’ longer: *“Daaave”*



Upper	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Middle	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Lower	Upper
	Middle
	Lower

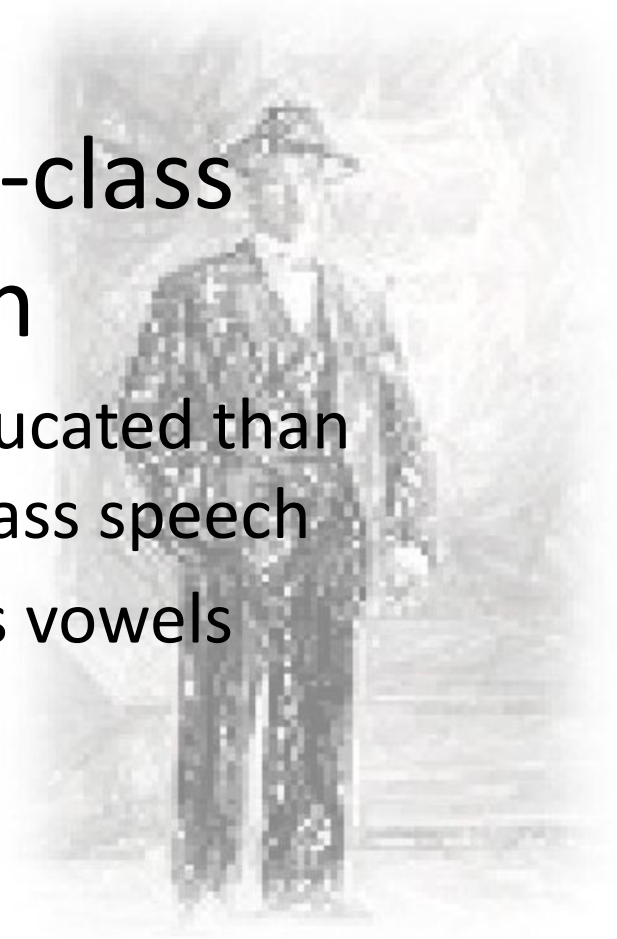
Mispronunciation is a Lower-class marker.

“BBC English”

- ‘educated’ English
- Pronounces all the sounds

Upper-class English

- More educated than Lower-class speech
- Swallows vowels



Regional Accents



- Are getting more popular on TV/radio
- BUT they were and are *automatically Lower-class.*

Seven Deadly Sins

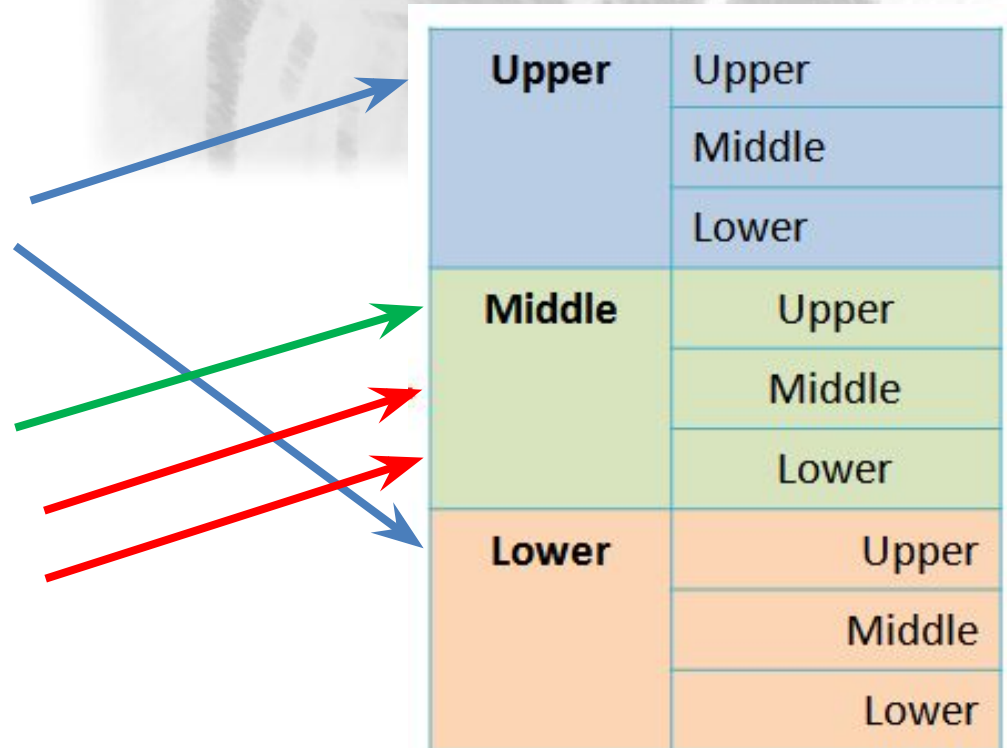
There were and still are plenty of *class-indicator* words.

Some are outdated already, but these “Seven Deadly Sins” are class-defining.



Pardon

For Upper “Pardon” is worse than swearing.
Say something
too quietly and
people will
answer:



Toilet

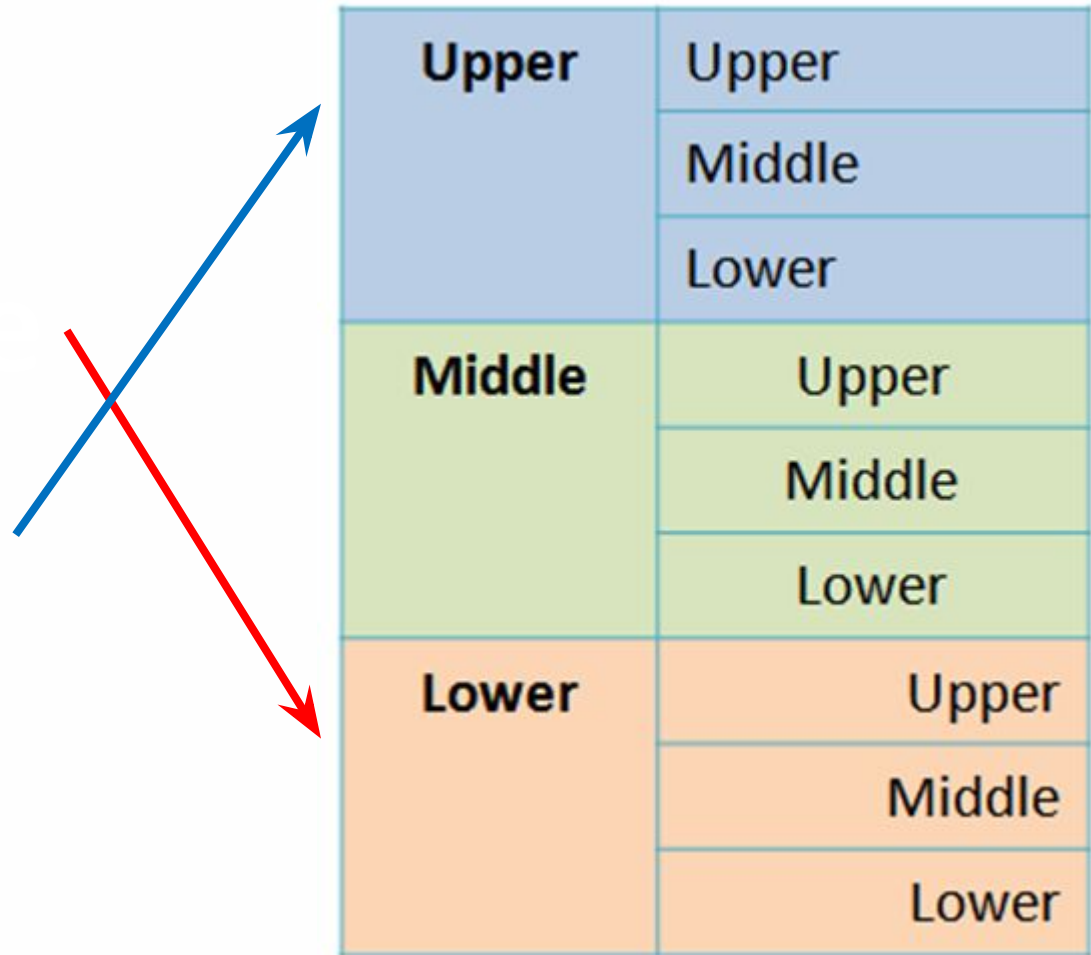
Toilet

**Bathroom, heads,
gents/ladies, privy**

Lavatory, loo, bog

Upper	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Middle	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Lower	Upper
	Middle
	Lower

Serviette



Dinner

Midday meal
Big evening meal
Tea:
4
o'clock
8

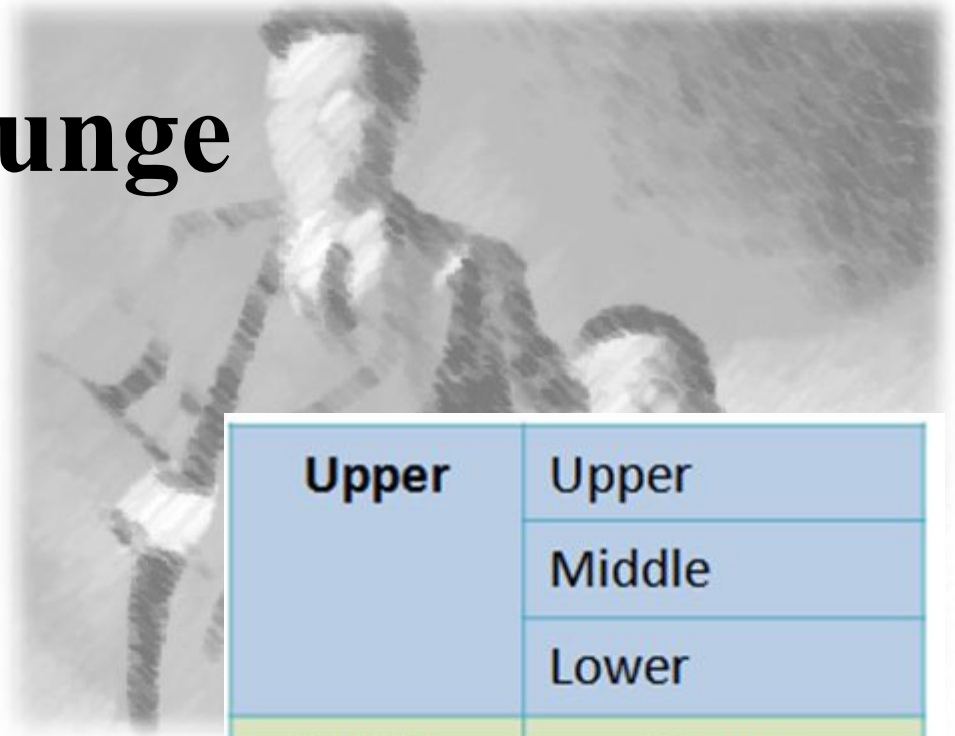
Upper	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Middle	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Lower	Upper
	Middle
	Lower

Settee



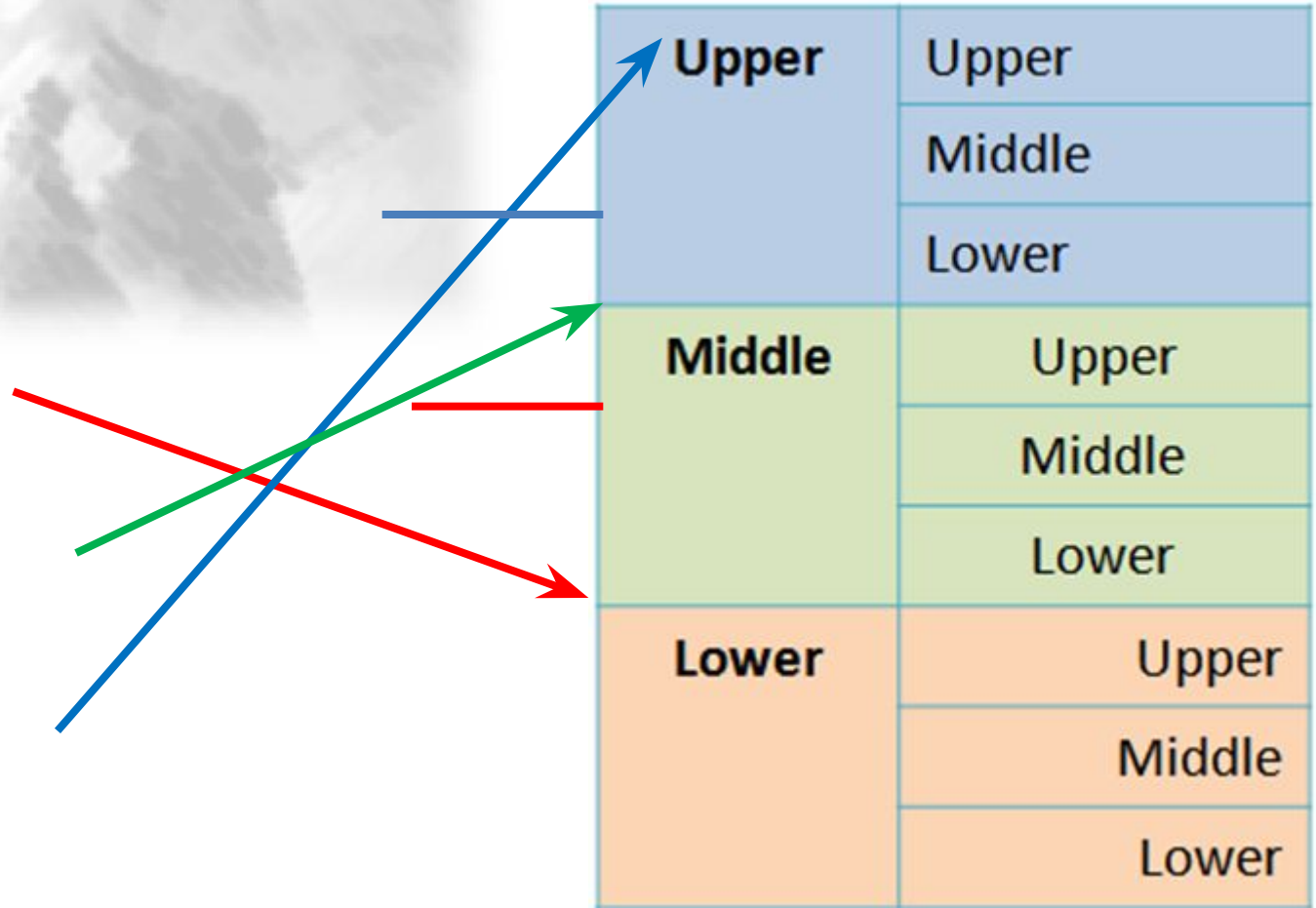
Upper	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Middle	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Lower	Upper
	Middle
	Lower

Lounge



Upper	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Middle	Upper
	Middle
	Lower
Lower	Upper
	Middle
	Lower

Sweet



'smart' and 'Common' Rules

- **'common'** - working class = 'Naff'
- Is used to identify lower class.
- Or bad taste.
- Something uncool or mainstream.
- **'posh'** = **'smart'**



Class-denial Rules

To avoid class-consciousness there are 'politically correct words – euphemisms.

- **“Working class”** → “low-income groups”, “ordinary people”, “less educated”
- Use the word “Background” to state class.

Conclusion

- All cultures have a social hierarchy and methods to mark social status.
- In modern changing english society speech is more important then job clothes and occupation and can tell more about person.

