



School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences  
Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6AL

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## Study: Curse Words and the Clock: How Expletives Alter Our Sense of Time

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### STUDY CONSENT FORM

Supervisor:  
Prof. Philip Beaman

Email  
[c.p.beaman@reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.p.beaman@reading.ac.uk)

Phone:  
0118 378 7637

Experimenter:  
Christopher Dobson

[c.g.dobson@pgr.reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.g.dobson@pgr.reading.ac.uk)

Please read the following, and tick the box preceding it, to confirm you have read and agree to it.

- ☐ I understand participation is entirely voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without detriment, by simply closing my browser window.
- ☐ I have read the information sheet regarding the project: 'Curse Words and the Clock: How Expletives Alter Our Sense of Time' and understand the experimental procedure – especially that it involves seeing and hearing a list of words that includes 28 swear words some people may considered offensive (e.g., c\*\*t).
- ☐ I confirm that I have contacted the researchers prior to starting this study to ask any questions that I may have about the study, and that these have been answered to my satisfaction.
- ☐ I understand what information is collected about me, how it will be used in relation to the study, how it will be kept safe, and my rights in relation to my data.
- ☐ I understand that the data collected as part of this study will be preserved and made openly available in an anonymized form, so that they can be consulted and re-used by others.
- ☐ I understand that I can download the study 'Information Sheet' and this 'Consent Form' by clicking the link at the bottom of this form, or by requesting copies by emailing the experimenter listed above.
- ☐ I confirm that I am over the age of 18.
- ☐ I confirm that I am a native English speaker – *defined as someone born in, or having moved to before the age of 2, a country with English as it's main language.*
- ☐ Please tick the preceding box if you are happy to be contacted about future studies (optional)
- ☐ I understand that by clicking '**Continue**' that I provide **informed consent** to take part in this study.

Name:

Email Address:

*This study has been reviewed by the School Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct (2025-015-PB; expiry date: 17/09/2027).*

Thank you for taking part in our study.  
Prof. Philip Beaman and Christopher Dobson



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### STUDY INFORMATION SHEET

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Prof. Philip Beaman

Email  
[c.p.beaman@reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.p.beaman@reading.ac.uk)

Phone:  
0118 378 7637

Experimenter:  
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We would be grateful if you could assist us by participating in our study '*Curse Words and the Clock: How Expletives Alter Our Sense of Time*'.

#### What will I be asked to do?

This study requires you to complete an experimental task in which you must judge the length of time an audio tone was heard for. Before and after the audio tone is played, you will hear and see a pair of words, these act to 'bookend' the audio tone (e.g., 'chair' *tone* 'chair'). The words used include 28 swear words some people may consider offensive (e.g., c\*\*t). You do not need to remember the words that are used, you only need to state how long the audio tone played between the words lasted. The words are spoken at a normal, conversational level (i.e., no louder than a normal conversation) but we recommend that you complete the experiment in a quiet, private place due to the nature of the words used. We also recommend that, if possible, you use headphones (or earbuds) when participating in this study so that you do not disturb or offend anyone within earshot. Once you have completed the above task, you will be required to state how positive or negative, as well as how arousing, the "bookend" words were along with whether you consider each word a swear word. We are also collecting basic demographic information to monitor the diversity and inclusivity of those who take part.

For your data to be useful in the experiment, we need data from a continuous session of 50 minutes. So, we ask that you do not pause the study and continue to the end (about 50 minutes). However, you are of course free to stop the experiment at any point and cease your participation without giving any reason.

#### Who can participate in this study and are there any benefits to taking part?

You can take part if you are over 18 years old and a native English speaker (*defined as someone born in, or having moved to before the age of 2, a country with English as its main language*). While there is no financial payment for taking part in this study, you will be automatically entered into a draw to win a £50 Amazon gift voucher as a thank you for taking part. Students recruited through the School of Psychology & Clinical Language Sciences' SONA recruitment system can swap their entry to that draw if they would prefer to earn 1 course credit for their participation instead.



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### **Are there any risks or disadvantages to taking part?**

This study is investigating how being exposed to swear words influences your perception of the passage of time and how that relates to other types of words with regards to making time appear to go faster or slower. If you are at all uncomfortable with being exposed to swear words, we would advise you do not take part in this study.

### **What will happen to my data/how will it be protected?**

Your data will be kept anonymous, confidential, and securely stored, with only a random ID identifying it. The final dataset generated from this study will be preserved and made available in that anonymised form, so that it can be re-used by others. This dataset will contain the descriptive data of your experimental task performance, along with your demographic information. No identifiable information will be contained within this dataset, and it cannot be linked back to you by anyone using it.

### **Who can I contact about data privacy and storage?**

The organisation responsible for protection of your personal information is the University of Reading (the Data Controller). Queries regarding data protection and your rights should be directed to the University Data Protection Officer at [imps@reading.ac.uk](mailto:imps@reading.ac.uk), or in writing to: University of Reading, Information Management & Policy Services, Whiteknights House, Pepper Lane, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6UR.

The University of Reading collects, analyses, uses, shares, and retains personal data for the purposes of research in the public interest. Under data protection law we are required to inform you that this use of the personal data we may hold about you is on the lawful basis of being a public task in the public interest and where it is necessary for scientific or historical research purposes. If you withdraw from a research study, which processes your personal data, dependant on the stage of withdrawal, we may still rely on this lawful basis to continue using your data if your withdrawal would be of significant detriment to the research study aims. We will always have in place appropriate safeguards to protect your personal data.

As part of consenting to take part in this study, you will be asked if you are happy to be contacted about future research. This is entirely optional; you can still take part in the study even if you do not wish to be contacted in the future about other studies. Additionally, if you agree to be contacted but later change your mind, you can be removed from the list by emailing the study supervisor – Prof. Philip Beaman ([c.p.beaman@reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.p.beaman@reading.ac.uk)).



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You have certain rights under data protection law which are:

- Withdraw your consent, for example if you opted in to be added to a participant register
- Access your personal data or ask for a copy
- Rectify inaccuracies in personal data that we hold about you
- Be forgotten (i.e., remove your details from systems that we use to process your personal data)
- Restrict uses of your data
- Object to uses of your data, for example retention after you have withdrawn from a study

Some restrictions apply to the above rights where data is collected and used for research purposes. You can find out more about your rights on the website of the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) at <https://ico.org.uk>. You also have a right to complain the ICO if you are unhappy with how your data has been handled. Please contact the University Data Protection Officer in the first instance.

### **Who has reviewed this study?**

This application has been reviewed by the School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences Research Ethics Committee and given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct (2025-015-PB; expiry date: 17/09/2027).

### **Where can I get more information/who I can contact about this study?**

Before taking part in this study, please make sure that you have asked any questions you may have and that you have received a satisfactory answer. If you do have questions and/or concerns about this study, please contact Christopher Dobson ([c.g.dobson@pgr.reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.g.dobson@pgr.reading.ac.uk)) before continuing.

Thank you for taking part in our study.

**Prof. Philip Beaman and Christopher Dobson**