

Fings ain't wot they used to be with the use of English

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■ The art of thatching – or, according to some modern pronunciation, ‘fatching’.

Dear EDP Letters Page,

Am I the only reader who's getting rather fed up with all these older people who keep on writing to your newspaper to say how much they appreciate the speech of youngsters today?

I entirely agree that youth speech is greatly superior to the English which we remember our parents and grandparents speaking, and which we use ourselves.

I, too, therefore feel extremely optimistic about our language – it is clearly getting better all the time, and we may actually be approaching a Golden Age in the development of English.

But do these people have to keep going on about it? And do you have to keep publishing their letters? Can we not, please, call a moratorium on all this praise for modern speech?

I totally agree with the correspondent from Ashwellthorpe who so much appreciates the glottal stop in words like butter (bu'er), better (be'er) and city (ci'y) that she felt moved to write to the EDP to express her enthusiasm. I like it too, and am increasingly finding the older pronuncia-

tion ugly and unpleasant. But I don't see why it was necessary for her to write to the paper and say so.

It's also true, as the gentleman from Taverham wrote, that we all feel positive about the usage of 'f' rather than 'th' in words like fink, fistle, and fimble. Getting rid of unnecessary consonants like th is an excellent thing, as he quite rightly says, because it increases efficiency. Why talk about thatching your roof when you can just as well say fatching? But there's no need to keep belabouring the point is there? Can't we just accept that things are getting better and leave it at that? Why write a

letter to the paper just to impart the information that you really like people saying "fink" and "bruvver"? Would you write a letter to the EDP to say "I really like porridge"? I don't think so.

I admit that I too personally rejoice in locutions such as "She was just like walking along the pavement when this cyclist like ran into her" – it's so much better, I feel, than using "sort of" or "kind of" as we used to. And I so enjoy hearing 'was like' instead of 'said': "I was like 'wow' and he was like 'yeah!'. Wonderful.

But I wouldn't dream of writing a letter to the paper about it.