



ДОНСКОЙ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ ТЕХНИЧЕСКИЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
УПРАВЛЕНИЕ ЦИФРОВЫХ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫХ ТЕХНОЛОГИЙ

Кафедра «Научно-технический перевод и
профессиональная коммуникация»

Учебное пособие

English Phonetics

Part two – Intonation

Фонетика английского языка.

Часть 2. Интонация

по дисциплинам

«Практическая фонетика», «Теория языка»

Авторы
Аведова Р. П.

Ростов-на-Дону, 2019

Аннотация

Данное учебное пособие предназначено для студентов специальности 45.05.01 «Перевод и переводоведение», изучающих английский, а также для всех студентов-лингвистов, желающих углубить знания фонетических особенностей английского языка.

Цель пособия – познакомить студентов со спецификой фонетической организации речи, существующими нормами интонационного оформления англоязычной речи

Авторы

к.ф.н., доцент кафедры «Научно-технический перевод и профессиональная коммуникация»
Аведова Р.П.



Оглавление

Предисловие	5
PART ONE INTONATION	6
Tune shapes	7
The falling tune-the Glide-Down	8
The first rising tune - the Glide-Up	11
The second rising tune - the Take-Off	11
The falling-rising tune - the Dive	12
How to use the tunes	13
PART TWO Practice conversations. Mind intonation patterns.	15
Text 1. To be all downhill	15
Text 2. Fireworks	16
Text 3. To have all your Christmases come at once	18
Text 4. It's the thought that counts	19
Text 5. Digital detox: What's the meaning?.....	21
Text 6. 'It leaves a bad taste in your mouth'	22
Text 7. A walk in the park.....	24
Text 8. Throw in the towel.....	25
Text 9. Pea-souper	27
Text 10. Dumbphone.....	28
Text 11. No fear.....	30
Text 12. Something to chew on.....	31
Text 13. Waffle on	32
Text 14. skew-whiff.....	34
Text 15. To play a blinder	36
Text 16. Miffed	38
Text 17. Humblebrag.....	40
Text 18. Out of your depth	41
Text 19. Mardy	43
Text 20. Take the biscuit	44
Text 21. Step on it	46
Text 22. Ping.....	47
Text 23. Have a pop.....	48
Text 24.A necessary evil	50
Text 25. If the cap fits.....	51
PART THREE Practice reading news reports. Mind	

pronunciation models while reading. Provide transcription for the words in bold.53

Text 1. US nuclear force still uses floppy disks	53
Text 2. Remembering Orlando victims	53
Text 3. Muhammad Ali's funeral	53
Text 4. Superbug threat	54
Text 5. Australian bat invasion	54
Text 6. Demand for biofuel in US hits bee numbers	54
Text 7. A fifth of world's plants in danger	54
Text 8. Leicester City win the Premier League	54
Text 9. Chernobyl remembered	55
Text 10. Sharapova's failed drug test.....	55
Text 11. Calais 'Jungle' clearance	55
Text 12. Delhi water crisis.....	55
Text 13. Taylor Swift breaks Grammy record.....	55
Text 14. Violence on streets of Hong Kong	56
Text 15. Zika – 'no risk' to Rio Olympics.....	56
Text 16. Beatrix Potter story discovered	56
Text 17. China growth slows	56
Text 18. Recycling light	57
Text 19. Japan whaling.....	57
Text 20. Star Wars premiere	57
Text 21. Beijing smog.....	57
Text 22. Licence to kiss	57
Text 23. Brussels lockdown.....	57
Text 24. Paris terror	58
Text 25. Red meat and cancer	58
Text 26. Myanmar election.....	58
Text 27. Russian plane crash	58
Text 28. Migrants blocked in Balkans.....	59
Text 29. Pioneering 'in womb' clinical trial.....	59
Text 30. Missing mammal link found.....	59
Text 31. Nationalists win Catalonia vote.....	59
Text 32. Greece re-elects Tsipras	60
Text 33. Tourists killed by Egyptian forces	60
Text 34. Germany's plan for migrants	60
Text 35. Historic temple destroyed	60
Text 36. Water filter book.....	61
Text 37. Man shot at Ferguson protest	61

Литература.....61

ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

Предлагаемое учебное пособие «English Phonetics (Part Two – Intonation). Фонетика английского языка. Часть 2. Интонация» рекомендуется для студентов 1 и 2 курсов очного и очно-заочного отделений, а также для преподавателей английского языка как первого и второго иностранного.

Задача данного пособия заключается в системном ознакомлении студентов с особенностями интонационного оформления речи в английском языке. В работе представлены материалы по теоретической и практической фонетике, приводится описание различных интонационных моделей высказывания, рассматриваются особенности тонов и специфики их употребления в тех или иных типах высказываний.

Учебное пособие даёт возможность сочетать самостоятельную и аудиторную работу студентов, позволяет осознать процессы и явления языка в целом.

На занятиях студенты выявляют свои знания теоретического материала и приобретают (или укрепляют) навыки правильного говорения, интонирования. Кроме того, контролируемая преподавателем самостоятельная работа студентов дает им возможность получить более системное представление о предмете.

Содержание учебного издания полностью соответствует требованиям квалификационной характеристики выпускника согласно ГОС ВПО по данной основной образовательной программе.

Цель пособия систематизировать знания студентов, развить навыки правильного говорения.

Достижение данной цели предполагает решение следующих **задач**:

- познакомить студентов с общими закономерностями фонетической организации английского языка;
- сформировать у студентов представление о системности английского языка;
- рассмотреть основную проблематику ан-

глийского национального языка;

- научить самостоятельной работе над произношением;
- уметь разобраться в структуре английского языка.

PART ONE INTONATION

Every language has melody in it; no language is spoken on the same musical note all the time. The voice goes up and down and the different notes of the voice combine to make tunes. In some languages the tune mainly belongs to the *word*, being part of its shape, and if the tune of the word is wrong its shape is spoiled. The Chinese languages are like this and so are many others in south-east Asia, Africa and America. In these languages the same sounds said with different tunes may make quite different words: in Mandarin Chinese *ma*: said with a level tune means *mother* but *ma*: with a rising tune means *horse*, an important difference! In many other languages, of which English is one, the tune belongs not to the word but to the word group. If you say the English word *No* with different tunes it is still the same word, but nevertheless tune plays an important part in English. We can say a word group definitely or we can say it hesitantly, we can say it angrily or kindly, we can say it with interest or without interest, and these differences are largely made by the tunes we use: the words do not change their meaning but the tune we use adds something to the words, and what it adds is the speaker's feelings at that moment; this way of using tunes is called *intonation*.

English intonation is *English*; it is not the same as the intonation of any other language. Some people imagine that intonation is the same for all languages, but this is not true. You must learn the *shapes* of the English tunes, and these may be quite different from the normal tunes of your own language; and you must learn the *meanings* of the English tunes too, because they are important. For example, *thank you* may be said in two ways: in the first the voice starts high and ends low, and this shows real gratitude; in the second the voice starts low and ends high, and this shows a rather casual acknowledgement of something not very important. A bus conductor will say *thank you* in this second way when he collects your money

and this is quite reasonable since he does not feel great gratitude. But if an English friend invites you to spend a week-end at his home and you reply with the second *thank you* instead of the first your friend will be offended because you don't sound really grateful. You may have made an honest mistake but it is difficult for him to realize that; he will think that you are being impolite.

Tune shapes

The shape of a tune is decided partly by the number of important words in the group and partly by the exact attitude you wish to express. What do we mean by 'important words'? These are the words which carry most of the meaning in a word group: for example, suppose that in answer to the question *How was John?* you say *He was in an appallingly bad temper.* The first four words are not especially helpful to the meaning, not important, but the last three words *are* important; each of them adds quite a lot to the picture you are giving of John.

Let's see how it might be said:

*He was in an ap*pallingly *bad * temper.*

This diagram shows the approximate height of the voice on each syllable: the first five syllables have low pitch; then there is a jump to the stressed syllable of *appallingly* and the next two syllables are on the same rather high pitch; then *had* is a little lower and *temper* glides downwards from the stressed to the unstressed syllable.

Notice that there are three changes of pitch connected with stressed syllables. This shows that these words are important. An important word *always* has a stressed syllable and usually has a change of pitch connected to it.

Now suppose that the question is *Was John in a good temper?* In this case *temper* occurs in the question so that in the answer it is not specially important, it doesn't add anything to the picture, it gives little information; and the tune shows this:

*He was in an ap*pallingly *bad * temper*

Both *bad* and *temper* are still stressed, but they are shown to be unimportant because they have no change of pitch. Important words are not the same as stressed words. Stressed words may not be important, though important words *must* be stressed. It is not only the normally stressed words, like *appallingly* and *bad* and *temper* in

our example, which may be felt to be important by the speaker; *any* word may be important if the situation makes it important. For example, if the first speaker refuses to believe in John's bad temper and says *He can't have been in an appallingly bad temper*, then our example would be:

In answer to the question *What is John like?* we might reply:
He
seems very nice and the usual way of saying this is:

*He *seems *very *nice*

Here *seems* is not marked as important; even though it is stressed it is on a low pitch like the unimportant initial words in our first example; the meaning of the group is approximately the same as *He's very nice*.

Before we think about the speaker's attitudes let's see what tunes you must learn to use in speaking English: we cannot teach you *all* the tunes that English speakers use, but we shall describe the ones you *must* know to make your English sound like English.

The falling tune-the Glide-Down

In the shortest word-groups, where we use just one important word, the falling tune consists of a fall in the voice from a fairly high pitch to a very low one. The fall is on the stressed syllable or from the stressed syllable to a following one:

*No *Two *Tenpence *Excellent *Definitely

Notice:

1. On a single syllable the voice falls within the syllable.
2. On more than one syllable the voice either falls within the stressed syllable or it jumps down from that syllable to the next.
3. Unstressed syllables at the end are all very low.

Start with * *Tenpence* and start by *singing* it it doesn't matter if your singing is not very good, it will be good enough for this! Sing the first syllable on a fairly high note, but not *very* high. I cannot tell you exactly what note to sing because I don't know whether you have a naturally high voice or a naturally low one, but sing a note rather above the middle of your voice. Then sing the second syllable on the lowest possible note growl it! Do this several times and hear the fall in pitch, then gradually go more quickly and stop singing. Say it, but

with the same tune as before. Do the same with * *Excellent* and * *Definitely* and be sure that the unstressed syllables are as low as possible. Don't let them rise at the end; keep growling!

If there are other words following the fall they may still have stress, as in our previous example.

But they are still said on that very low pitch, just like the unstressed syllables. Keep them right down.

When there is more than one important word in the group, the last one has the fall but the others are treated differently.

Now try *No. Sing it on two notes, the high one, then the low one, as if it had two syllables, and again increase your speed and*stop singing, but keep the same tune. Be sure that you finish with the pitch as low as you possibly can, right down in your boots.

When there is more than one important word in the group, the last one has the fall but the others are treated differently.

**What's* **that*?

**What was* **that*?

**What was the* ^*matter with* **that*?

- 1 The stressed syllable of the first important word is high and any unstressed syllables following it are on the same pitch.
- 2 The stressed syllable of the second important word is a little lower and any unstressed syllables following it are on the same pitch.
- 3 The fall starts at the same pitch as the syllable just before it.

In groups with more than three important words the stressed syllable of each one is lower than the one before; this is why we call the tune the Glide-Down.

Start with * *What's* said on a rather high pitch in your voice; keep the voice level, don't let it rise or fall. Then add **that* with the same fall as before. Then put *was* between the two, at the same level as * *What* and the beginning of **that*; don't let it be higher or lower than * *What*. If necessary start by singing it. Then try * *What was the* * *matter with* **that* in three parts: * *What* *urns* *the* all on the high note, then * *matter with* all a little lower; put them together: * *What was the* * *matter with* to form a high step followed by a lower step. Then add **that*, falling as before from the same pitch as *with*. Similarly practise the longest example in parts, each part a little lower than the one before, and the fall at the end from the pitch of the syllable before. Try to keep the unstressed syllables on the same pitch as

the stressed ones, and not to let them jump either up or down. This treatment of the important words in downward 'steps' occurs also in other tunes, as we shall see later.

If there are any unstressed syllables before the stressed syllable of the first important word, these are all said on a rather low pitch.

Also, any stressed syllable near the beginning which belongs to a word which is not important is said on this same rather low pitch.

These low syllables at the beginning are not at the lowest possible pitch like the ones at the end, but they must be lower than the high pitch which follows.

We have a way of showing the Glide-Down which is simpler and quicker than the dots and lines used up to now. Before the stressed syllable where the voice falls we put ('). So: 'No 'Two 'Tence 'Excellent 'Definitely . Notice that no other mark is needed to show the very low unstressed syllables at the end - any unstressed syllables after a fall are *always* low.

Before the stressed syllable of each other important word we put ('). So: 'What's 'that 'What was 'that 'What was the 'matter with 'that How can I 'possibly 'pay him 'two 'hundred 'pounds. Each of these marks shows a step, beginning with a high one and gradually coming lower until the fall is reached.

Unstressed syllables at the beginning have no mark before them: I was 'glad I was 'very 'glad 1 But it was ri'diculous . If there is a low- pitched stress near the beginning (as in He *seems *very *nice) it is marked by (,); so: He ,Seems `very 'nice I ,taught him 'all I 'know . And the same mark is used for stressed syllables which come after the fall. So: He was in an ap'pallingly ,bad , temper.

So with these few marks we can show all the features of the Glide- Down. In the following examples, first write them out in the longer way with dots and lines, to make sure you understand what the simpler system means, then practise them carefully.

'Take it 'Have them 'Splendid 'Nonsense 'Wonderful 'John's,coming 'Susan's .knocking at the,door 'Ten 'Two 'Five 'Eight 'Six 'Half 'This 'Which 'Fifty' pounds ¹ Seventy 'five One and a 'half It was im'possible I could have 'cried They were in a 'terrible 'mess I'll see you on 'Thursday 'night It's 'just 'after 'midnight There were 'too 'many 'people ithere 'Why did you 'tell him he was 'wrong? It,wasn't 'halfas 'difficult as I 'thought it,would be You can,phone me at 'any 'time of the 'day or 'night I, waited, almost 'twenty-'five 'minutes for the ,wretched, man.

The first rising tune - the Glide-Up

The Glide-Up is just like the Glide-Down except that it ends with a rise in the voice instead of a fall. Both important and unimportant words before the rise are treated exactly as in the Glide-Down. An example is *But is it true that you re changing your job?*

The last important word is *job* and here the voice rises from a low pitch to one just above the middle of the voice. Apart from this the tune is the same as in the Glide-Down: the unstressed syllable at the beginning is low, and there is a step at the stressed syllable of each important word. Notice that the stressed syllable of the last important word is low and that the voice jumps up to the unstressed syllable. And notice too that in *Have you posted it to him ?* we have *Have you ^posted it to him? where again the stressed syllable of the last important word is low and each following unstressed syllable is a little higher, the last one of all being on the same fairly high note as in the previous examples.

Once again there may be stressed words within the rise, but they are not felt to be important:

*Have you been at *work to*day, *John?

Work is the last important word, and although *today* and *John* are stressed they behave just like the unstressed syllables of the last example and are not considered important by the speaker.

Practise with the following:

*Forty

*Forty of them

*Forty of them were *there

The first syllable must be low, and the last syllable fairly high; concentrate on these and let any syllables between these points take care of themselves. How you get from the low to the higher note at the end doesn't matter, but be sure that you start low and end fairly high (not *very* high!).

The second rising tune - the Take-Off

After the Glide-Down and the Glide-Up we have the Take-Off; this also ends with a rise in the voice, like the Glide-Up, but any words and syllables before the rise are low. An example is: *I was *only *trying to *help.*

We call it the Take-Off because, like an aeroplane taking off, it starts by running along at a low level and finally rises into the air.

The rise, as in the Glide- Up, either takes place on one

syllable, like *help*, or it is spread over several syllables.

Before the rise any stressed word is felt to be important, even though there is no change of pitch. All the syllables before the rise are said on the same low pitch as the beginning of the rise; they must not be higher than this, or you will have a Glide-Up instead of a Take-Off.

Practice the following examples and be sure to keep the syllables before the rise low: | You /liked it 11 You eii/joyed it | You were enjoying it I .didn't /hurt you .No-one's /Stopping you) | It was .perfectly .understandable I .wasn't ex .peering him at .six o .clock in the /morning | I .didn't .think he'd .mind me .borrowing it for a /while |]You .shouldn't have .given him .all that /money, you -silly -boy|.

The falling-rising tune - the Dive

The last of our tunes that you must learn is the Dive. In its shortest form this consists of a fall from rather high to low and then a rise to about the middle of the voice.

*Five

*Why?

*Soon

This fall-rise is connected with the stressed syllable of the last important word, like the fall and the rise of the other tunes. But it is only completed on one syllable if that syllable is final in the group. If there is one or several syllables following, the fall and the rise are separated.

The fall is on the stressed syllable of the last important word and the rise on the last syllable of all.

If the stressed syllable of the last important word is final in the group, or if it is followed only by unstressed syllables, we put(^) before it in the simpler intonation marking.

Notice that when the first syllable has a short vowel there may be a jump down to the next syllable rather than a fall.

The voicing of the final consonant will help you with those the rising part of the Dive is on the final consonant, so use it.

More difficult are the short vowels followed by consonants with no voice, but you may lengthen the vowel a little to give you time to make both the fall and the rise.

Always be sure that you start high, go low and finish higher. Now some longer examples, which are easier, rather like a fall followed by a Take-Off. Keep the syllables after the fall down low until you reach the rise.

How to use the tunes

Statements:

1. Use the Glide-Down for statements which are *complete* and *definite*:

/ It was 'quite 'good I 'liked it 'very 'much

2. If the statement is intended to be *soothing* or *encouraging* use the Glide-Up:

I 'won't 'drive 'too /fast (so don't worry).

3. If the statement is a *grumble*, use the Take-Off:

I ,didn't /hurt you (so why make all that fuss?)

You ,can't (possibly ,do /that (you ought to know better)

I/did (grumbling contradiction).

4. If the statement is *not complete* but leading to a following word- group, use the Dive:

I "'looked at him (and recognized him at once)

5. If the statement is intended *as a question* use the Glide-Up:

You /like it?

You 'can't /go?

6. For statements which show *reservations* on the part of the speaker and which might be followed by *but...* or by *you must admit* or

I must admit use the Dive:

He's ^generous (but I don't trust him).

7. If the statement is a *correction* of what someone else has said, use the Dive:

(He's forty-five) 'Forty"six

(I like him a lot) You 'used to /like him

8. If the statement is a *warning*, use the Dive:

You'll be^late I 'shan't 'tell you a^gain | You 'mustn't Shake it ,too ,much .

9. If the statement has two parts, of which the first is *more important* than the second, use the Dive, with the fall at the end of the first part and the rise at the end of the second:

I 'went to 'London on ,Monday You can 'keep it if you ,really

*/want it He was 'very 'well when I ,last ,saw him I'm 'very 'com-
fortable /thank you .*

Wh-questions (containing Which, What, Who, etc.)

10. Use the Glide-Up if you want to show as much *interest* in the other person as in the sub-ject:

'How's your /laughter?

'When are you 'coming to /ee us?

'When did you get 'back from /holiday? |

11. Use the Glide-Down if you want the question to sound more *business-like* and interested in the subject, and also for one-word questions (unless they are repetition-questions, see 12):

'Why did you 'change your 'mind?

'Who on 'earth was 'that? |

'Which? .

12. For repetition-questions, when you are repeating someone else's question or when you want the other person to repeat some information, use the Take-Off:

*/When did I *go? (Or where?)*

I /Why ? (Bee ause I wanted to)

(I arrived at ten o'clock) /When? |

(It took me two hours) ,How 'long?

(John told me to do it) /Who 'told you to 'do it? |.

Notice that in examples like the last three, where the other person is being asked to repeat information, the rise begins on the *wh*-word.

Yes-No questions (questions answerable by Yes or No)

13. For *short questions* used as responses, like *Did you?*, *Has she* ?, etc., use the Glide-Down:

(John's on holiday) | is he?

(I went to the theatre last night) | 'Did you? |.

14. For all other Yes-No questions use the Glide-Up:

*'Have you /Seen him *yet? |*

'Did 'John 'post 'that /letter?

'Can I /Seeit?

Notice that the Glide-Up is also used for repetition-questions of this type:

*(Have you seen him yet?) 'Have I /Seen him *yet? |*

Tag-questions (short Yes-No questions added on to statements or commands)

15. For tag-questions *after commands*, use the Take-Off:

'Come over 'here /will you?

'Let's have some 'music | /Shall we?

'Hold 'this for me /would you?

16. If neither the statement nor the tag-question have the word *not* in them, use the Take-Off:

You 'liked it >did you ?

They'd 'like some 'more | /would they?|

17. Where the word *not* occurs in either the statement or the tag-question use the Glide-Down to force the other person to *agree* with you:

It's 'cold to, day | 'isn't it? (Forcing the answer Yes.)

It was a 'very 'good 'film 'wasn't it? |

You , won't /Worry 'will you ? (Forcing the answer No)

He 'can't 'really "help it | 'can he?

18. When you don't want the other person to agree with you, but to give his opinion, use the Take-Off:

You're 'coming to 'tea with us /aren't you?|

You 'weren't 'here on , Wednesday /were you?

He ,didn't ,look ill | /did he? .

Commands

19. For *strong commands* use the Glide-Down:

'Don't be a 'stupid 'idiot 'Take your 'feet off the 'chair 'Come and have 'dinner with us 'Have some 'cheese .

Exclamations

20. For *greetings* and for *saying goodbye* use the Glide-Up:

'Good/bye |

21. If the exclamation is *questioning* use the Take-Off:

/Well?

22. For exclamations which refer to something not very exciting or unexpected, use the Glide-Up:

/Thank you

PART TWO PRACTICE CONVERSATIONS. MIND INTONATION PATTERNS.

Text 1. To be all downhill

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Rob

And hello I'm Rob.

Feifei

You're looking pleased with yourself, Rob.

Rob

I am! I've finished all of my work.

Feifei

Really. All of it?

Rob

Yes. Scripts written, programmes recorded and edited, meetings cancelled – I think I deserve a cup of coffee... or maybe something stronger!

Feifei

But it's only Wednesday and you've done all of your work! So what does that mean?

Rob

It means it's all downhill to the weekend.

Feifei

All downhill? Oh I get it! When you are going downhill, on a bike for example, it's easy. So when things are about to get easier, after a difficult or challenging time, we can describe the situation as being 'all downhill'.

Rob

Spot on, Feifei. Once we've heard some examples, it's going to be all downhill until pub time! Examples Yeah! Our building plans have been approved. It's all downhill from here on. Once I've completed this final assignment, it'll be all downhill until I get my qualification.

Text 2. Fireworks

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. You are Rob...

Rob

And you are Feifei. Hello!

Feifei

So, another year over, Rob.

Rob

Yes and what a year it's been – and there's just one more thing to do before the next year begins. Party!

Feifei

Yes, New Year means party season – so are you going to a party, Rob?

Rob

Yeah, Richard's invited me to his New Year bash at his house. Everyone's going – apart from you of course. And I've even invited Zhong.

Feifei

Oh dear.

Rob

Why do you say that?

Feifei

Well, if she goes, there will be fireworks.

Rob

Fireworks! Great!

Feifei

Not great, Rob. When we say there will be 'fireworks' we don't always mean the colourful exploding things we see in the sky. Sometimes 'fireworks' describes a lot of angry shouting. So if Zhong turned up at the party, there's bound to be some shouting and arguing.

Here are some more examples of fireworks...

Examples

The fireworks started when I told her what I really thought about her boyfriend!

Argh! I'm going to be late again. The boss is going to be furious when I get to work. There's going to be fireworks!

There's a public meeting about the new building plans tonight – and there's bound to be fireworks!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. And I'm with Rob, who's off to a party where there might be fireworks... that's a lot of angry shouting. Enjoy the party, Rob!

Rob

Thanks. So why might there be lots of shouting?

Feifei

Well, Zhong is Richard's ex-girlfriend. Their relationship didn't end well.

Rob

Oh dear. The situation sounds a bit 'explosive'. Maybe it won't be such a happy New Year. Errr, what are your plans, Feifei?

Feifei

Me? Well I'm meeting my good friends by the river in London to watch the real fireworks – they're always amazing.

Rob

So, there'll be no angry shouting?

Feifei

Nope. Just cheering and laughter.

Rob

Sounds great. Maybe I could join you?

Feifei

Errr, go on then as it's New Year's Eve.

Rob

Great – it looks like our New Year celebrations will go with a bang!

Text 3. To have all your Christmases come at once

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei...

Rob

And I'm Rob. And I am so excited.

Feifei

Oh yeah? Why's that, Rob?

Rob

You know, Feifei – it's that festive time of year – presents, parties, time with the family, snow... did I mention presents?

Feifei

Yes, Rob. It's Christmas time.

Rob

Come on, Feifei – aren't you excited? Imagine if we had lots of Christmases all at the same time!

Feifei

Oh no, think of the cost of buying all those presents.

Rob

But hopefully you'd receive lots of presents too! Anyway, do you know that for some people, all their Christmases can come at once?

Feifei

I don't think so!

Rob

OK, well, they're not really Christmases, but if someone has extreme good fortune, it's like the feeling of having lots of Christmases all at the same time.

Feifei

Got it. Having all your Christmases come at once just means 'having lots of good luck'.

Rob

Yes! Let's hear from some people who've had all their Christmases come at once – lucky them!

Examples

Yeah! I got a pay rise and I'm off on holiday tomorrow, and I've won the lottery! It seems like all my Christmases have come at once!

The day I got married, I heard I'd passed my exams and got a promotion, so it felt like all my Christmases had come at once.

All my Christmases have come at once: my parents bought me a new car, I got a place at university and I've got a new girlfriend!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're learning about the phrase 'to have all your Christmases come at once' – which means 'to have extreme good fortune'. Did you know, Rob, that I've had lots of good luck?

Rob

No, what's happened?

Feifei

Well, I've been invited to a big swanky Christmas party tonight, I'm going skiing at the weekend and you've bought me an amazing Christmas present.

Rob

Have I?

Feifei

Yes, in that box over there.

Rob

Oh, that's not for you. Sorry. It looks like not all of your Christmases have arrived!

Feifei

Oh well, you may as well have your present now.

Rob

Hmm, a book of English phrases – how useful!

Feifei

It will be. Happy Christmas, Rob!

Rob

Same to you, Feifei.

Text 4. It's the thought that counts

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Neil

And I'm Neil.

Feifei

Oh what's that parcel you've got in your hands there, Neil? Looks exciting...

Neil

It's a present.

Feifei

A present? For who?

Neil

For you! For Christmas!

Feifei

Christmas? It's a bit early, isn't it?

Neil

Well, I saw these and I just knew you'd love them so much – so I bought them! I can't wait till Christmas to see your face. Go on, open it now!

Feifei

You're too kind, Neil. OK... A pair of glasses... Harry Potter glasses.

Neil

Aren't they brilliant?! Go on, try them on.

Feifei

I look ridiculous. And I don't even like Harry Potter. Oh well, it's the thought that counts.

Neil

'It's the thought that counts'. An excellent expression, Feifei. If someone gives you a present which you don't like, you can say 'it's the thought that counts'.

Feifei

It's a polite way of saying you appreciate the effort and the kind thought a person had when they bought you a present – but you don't like what they bought.

Neil

Let's hear some examples of this expression which is particularly useful around Christmas time.

Examples

A: Wow! That Elvis Presley onesie you're wearing is pretty weird.

B: Thanks. My grandmother gave it to me for Christmas. It's the thought that counts, I suppose.

A: I have no idea what to get my auntie for her birthday.

B: Get her anything. It's the thought that counts.

A: Oh no, not more tea towels. I was expecting something more exciting for our wedding presents.

B: You know what they say - it's the thought that counts.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. Our expression is 'it's the thought that counts.' It means the kindness someone shows when they buy you a present is more important than the gift itself.

Neil

A very useful expression for politely saying that a present someone bought you is really not what you wanted. OK, Feifei, lean over.

Feifei

Ouch! What are you doing with that pencil?

Neil

There we go. With that flash of lightning on your forehead now you really look the part - Feifei Potter.

Feifei

Hmm I need a spell to make you vanish, Neil...

Neil

Bye!

Feifei

Bye!

Text 5. Digital detox: What's the meaning?

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Neil

And I'm Neil.

Feifei

Ooo. You don't sound too good, Neil. What's up? Are you sick?

Neil

I feel sick.

Feifei

What are the symptoms?

Neil

OK, Dr Feifei. Here we go: I can't sleep, I feel anxious all the time, I can't concentrate on anything, I have itchy eyes, I'm tired, my neck hurts... I've terrible headaches.

Feifei

Ah, I know what the problem is. Do you happen to spend a lot of time online?

Neil

Yes – all the time.

Feifei

Do you keep your phone with you in bed, at dinner, in the toilet?

Neil

Yes, yes, yes, of course – what's this got to do with how awful I feel?

Feifei

You need a detox.

Neil

A detox? But I haven't drunk any alcohol for months, I exercise every day and I only eat organic food.

Feifei

No – you need a digital detox. A digital detox is a period of time away

from all devices that can connect to the internet.

Neil

I can't do that! It's impossible! It'll get even worse! What if someone likes my status at 4am and I miss it!?

Feifei

Now that IS a sign you're addicted. You really do need a digital detox. Let's hear some examples.

Examples

My phone broke the day I went on holiday which forced me to have a digital detox. I felt so relaxed.

I spend all day and night on Saturdays on social media so I need a digital detox every Sunday or I'm too tired to go to work on Monday. Right. Here's the key to the safe I've locked all my gadgets in. I'm going to do this digital detox even if it kills me!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. And I'm with Neil, who uses his smartphone, tablet and laptop so much, he's made himself ill.

Neil

And Dr Feifei here has prescribed a strict digital detox.

Feifei

We use the word 'detox' more generally to describe a period when you stop doing something harmful – like drinking too much alcohol or eating junk food.

Neil

And so a digital detox is a break from all electronic gadgets. OK, well here's my phone, Feifei.

Feifei

I'll deal with that.

Neil

Oh no... I suppose it's for the best. Goodbye.

Feifei

Dr Feifei always knows best.

Text 6. 'It leaves a bad taste in your mouth'

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Neil

And I'm hungry – I mean Neil. Feifei, why did you book this studio recording session at midday? I'm starving! Do you fancy going for lunch? I've heard that new chicken restaurant just down the road is

excellent!

Feifei

Not sure about that.

Neil

Oh, have you been there before?

Feifei

Yes, and it **left a bad taste in my mouth.**

Neil

Oh really? So the food's bad? Everyone says it's great!

Feifei

Well, the food was great...

Neil

Eh? The food was great but it **left a bad taste in your mouth?** I don't understand!

Feifei

Let me explain. If something **leaves a bad taste in your mouth**, it means you've 'had a bad experience and the memory is unpleasant'.

Neil

Oh I see. So, what went wrong?

Feifei

The bill was twice as much as it should have been!

Neil

Ah, I get it now! We use the expression it **leaves a bad taste in your mouth** when we have a negative experience and feel bad or angry about it afterwards – like being ripped off in a restaurant!

Feifei

Come on, Neil. Let's hear some examples. Then we can go for lunch somewhere that doesn't rip me off!

Examples

I refuse to go back to that hotel. They were so rude! It **left a bad taste in my mouth.**

When my boss sent me that angry email last thing on Friday, it **left a bad taste in my mouth.**

It **left a bad taste in my mouth** when I got fined for going just one mile an hour over the speed limit!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. And I'm with Neil, who was wondering why I've got a bad taste in my mouth when it's got nothing to do with food.

Neil

We use the expression it 'leaves a bad taste in your mouth' when we have a negative experience and feel bad or angry about it afterwards.

So, is it time for lunch?

Feifei

Yes, Neil! I really want you to come and try that new tofu place. The food is just delicious and the service is excellent!

Neil

So, will it leave a good taste in my mouth?

Feifei

It sure will! Bye.

Neil

Bye.

Text 7. A walk in the park

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Neil

And I'm Neil. Hey thanks for joining me today, Feifei.

Feifei

No problem, Neil. I wanted to give you my support for your first run in the park.

Neil

Well, this run in the park is only five kilometres.

Feifei

I know, but you're not particularly fit and you haven't done much training.

Neil

Oh don't worry about that – this will be a walk in the park!

Feifei

Err Neil – I hope you're not thinking of walking around the park – this is a run, a run in the park!

Neil

I have no intention of walking – it's just an expression that means it's easy to do, especially compared to other activities.

Feifei

I'm glad to hear that because it's just about to start – let's hope you really do find it easy!

Neil

Don't worry, I will have finished by the time you hear these examples...

Examples

I've been studying for so long, this exam should be a walk in the park.

Oh don't worry about me, I've trekked in the Himalayas, this hill will be a walk in the park!

The job at the bank will be a walk in the park – you studied economics at university!

Feifei

You're listening to The English We Speak from BBC Learning English – and Neil has been using the phrase 'a walk in the park' to explain that a run in the park is easy, especially when compared to other activities – like running a full marathon, for example. But where is Neil now?

Neil

...here I am. Oh, that was hard.

Feifei

So that run wasn't a walk in the park then? That's a shame.

Neil

Why's that?

Feifei

Well, I thought that if running in the park was too easy, you could train for next year's London Marathon. It's over 42 kilometres - that would be *no* walk in the park.

Neil

Err, could we just park that idea, please?! I'm going to do another activity to keep fit and healthy.

Feifei

Oh yes, what's that?

Neil

Walking. In the park!

Feifei

Good idea. Bye!

Neil

Bye.

Text 8. Throw in the towel

Feifei

Hello, and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Neil

And I'm Neil. Hey, do you know what, Feifei? I've had enough!

Feifei

You've had enough? Enough of what?

Neil

Trying to do all my washing.

Feifei

Really? Is it that hard?

Neil

It is. I just can't keep up with all the clothes I have to wash, dry and iron. It doesn't matter how much washing I do, I keep running out of clean clothes.

Feifei

Yes I can see! Haven't you been wearing that shirt all week? So, what are you going to do?

Neil

I don't know. I think I'll just **throw in the towel**.

Feifei

Washing just one towel won't help – you can't wear that to work.

Neil

That's not what I meant. '**To throw in the towel**' is a saying that means 'to admit defeat'. The phrase comes from boxing. If a boxer is being hit too much, and is losing the fight, sometimes his coach will throw a towel into the boxing ring to signal the fight is over. He's been defeated.

Feifei

Got it! So, it means you've given up. You can't do it. And for you, it means no clean clothes! Let's hear some more examples of this phrase, shall we?

Examples

I've tried my best but this job is just too hard – I'm afraid I'm going to have to **throw in the towel** and quit.

I know the race is tough, but **don't throw in the towel**, keep going and you might actually win!

I've been trying to learn Korean for years but I'm not making any progress so I guess it's time to **throw in the towel**.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak, and Neil's mentioned he's '**throwing in the towel**' which means he's 'admitting defeat' – giving up on doing his washing. You can't cope can you Neil?

Neil

I have tried. There's just too much to do.

Feifei

Maybe you've got too many clothes. But if you're not going to wash them, what are you going to wear?

Neil

I've still got my nightclub gear I used to wear as a student – will that do?

Feifei

I think you'd be better off just wearing a towel, Neil!

Neil

Thanks for the fashion advice. I think my best option is just to take everything to the launderette.

Feifei

Good idea. See you.

Neil

Bye!

Text 9. Pea-souper

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei...

Neil

And I'm Neil.

Feifei

Errr, Neil why are you still here? I thought you were driving to Manchester and Rob was going to present the programme.

Neil

Feifei, have you looked outside the window?

Feifei

Errr, no. Should I?

Neil

It's a pea-souper out there!

Feifei

You want me to look out of the window at pea soup? Is there a big bowl of it or something?

Neil

No, there's no soup – it's an informal way of describing thick fog. It's so thick you can hardly see through it. And that's why I can't drive to Manchester.

Feifei

That is a shame. But why a pea-souper?

Neil

I guess because, like pea soup, it's thick and a dark cloudy colour.

Feifei

Hmm, well I'd rather eat pea soup than be in it! I think we had better hear some examples of this strange phrase...

Examples

It looks like our flight is delayed until this pea-souper clears.

It's a real pea-souper today. When I was driving here I couldn't even see the car in front of me.

There's no way I'm cycling in this pea-souper. It's far too dangerous.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. And I'm with Neil, who can't travel because of a pea-souper – that's a very thick fog that's hard to see through.

Neil

Sometimes you can refer to it as 'smog', if it's fog mixed with air pollution.

Feifei

Yes, that's horrible stuff to be in. Well Neil, if you can't go to Manchester, what are we going to do?

Neil

Well, let's have lunch together.

Feifei

Yes, and what are we going to eat?

Neil

Pea soup of course! It's that kind of day.

Feifei

Oh look, the fog is clearing. Maybe you can drive after all!

Neil

Hmm, I'll get my coat. Bye.

Feifei

See you.

Text 10. Dumbphone

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Neil

And I'm Neil. So how was your holiday, Feifei? Got any photos?

Feifei

Yeah! Aren't they cool?

Neil

Well, I haven't seen them.

Feifei

Haven't seen them? Well check out my social media feeds.

Neil

Erm... well, I'll have to wait till I get to my computer. I can't see anything on this dumbphone.

Feifei

Dumbphone?!

Neil

Yeah, I was getting addicted to my smartphone – I couldn't stop checking it every five seconds - so I got rid of it and now I have this dumbphone! It's brilliant – it does absolutely nothing apart from phone and text!

Feifei

Oh I see. The opposite of 'smart' is 'dumb', so the opposite of a smartphone is a 'dumbphone'.

Neil

You've got it! It's very fashionable, you know. Eddie Redmayne uses one!

Feifei

Hmm, not sure about that... But let's hear some examples.

Examples

Man 1

Argh my arm is killing me from playing around with my phone so much.

Woman 1

Get yourself a dumbphone, like me. There's nothing to check! My sleep has improved so much since I got rid of my smartphone. There's no temptation to stare at this dumbphone in bed! I'm sick of being bullied by my smartphone. I'm going to join the dumbphone revolution!

Feifei

This is The English we Speak from BBC Learning English. We're learning the word 'dumbphone'. A dumbphone is a simple, old-fashioned style mobile phone which can only make calls and send text messages. 'Dumb' is the opposite of 'smart'. Some people are choosing to use them because they think smartphones distract them too much.

Neil

It's a word that's only appeared over the last couple of years, so you probably won't find it in a dictionary – but it's been used a lot in the media. So Feifei, how am I going to see these holiday snaps of yours?

Feifei

Neil, just get a new smartphone.

Neil

No way. The past is the future!

Feifei

What next? Are you going to start coming to work on a horse?

Neil

Now that is a great idea! And maybe I could swap my computer for a typewriter. And who really needs electricity when you can have a nice gas lamp...

Feifei

Good bye!

Neil

Bye.

Text 11. No fear

Feifei

Hello, and welcome to The English We Speak... I'm Feifei... Argh!

Rob

And I'm Rob. Ah Halloween! I love Halloween, Feifei. Are you looking forward to trick or treating?

Feifei

No fear!

Rob

No fear? You mean 'yes fear!' Halloween's all about fear!

Feifei

That's what I don't like about it.

Rob

What's not to like? There's ghosts and witches and jack-o'-lanterns! Come on, Feifei! Get on your broomstick and let's go!

Feifei

No fear, Rob!

Rob

Why do you keep saying 'no fear', Feifei? You're kind of missing the point.

Feifei

No, you are missing the point, Rob. 'No fear' is an expression which actually means 'certainly not', 'no way'.

Rob

Ah, I get it. So by saying 'no fear', you mean 'absolutely not'.

Feifei

That's right. Let's hear some examples before my legs turn to jelly.

Examples

A: Fancy that Justin Bieber concert?

B: No fear! I can't stand him.

A: Why don't we stay in tonight and watch golf on the TV.

B: Golf?! No fear. I'd do anything other than watch golf.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. We're learning the expression 'no fear', which means 'absolutely not', 'no way'.

Rob

So come on Feifei, fear is fun. Let's go trick or treating!

Feifei

No fear, Rob!

Rob

Yes fear!

Feifei

No fear! Actually, Rob, what's that thing... behind you?

Rob

What thing?

Feifei

Don't move but it's just... reaching out a bony hand and... about to touch your shoulder...

Rob

I'm outta here. Argh!

Feifei

Well, at least that gets me out of Halloween for another year. Bye!

Text 12. Something to chew on

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Neil

And I'm Neil.

Feifei

Hey Neil, would you like to try one of my homemade cookies?

Neil

Well, we shouldn't really eat while we're presenting but... go on then...

Feifei

I made them last night and I thought I'd try them out on you! You've got a sweet tooth so I know you can't resist!

Neil

OK then... Mmmm.

Feifei

Well, what do you think?

Neil

Well, they're... OK. Perhaps not the best I've ever had.

Feifei

Oh, so you think my cooking isn't great?

Neil

Let's say it's something to chew on.

Feifei

Right! So you're saying my homemade cookies are chewy?

Neil

No, I'm not. In fact they're... crunchy. But when someone says they need to chew on something, it's an informal way to say they need to think about it before making a decision.

Feifei

Well, Neil, I will chew on a response to your insult about my cooking while we hear some examples...

Examples

Our extension plans are great but we need to chew on it before we give them the go-ahead.

Hmm, it's very expensive to fly to Australia for a holiday. Let's chew on it shall we?

My boyfriend asked me to marry him and I said I'd chew on it. He didn't seem that pleased!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak and Neil has been using the expression 'to chew on something' or 'something to chew on' which means to 'think about something before making a decision'. And Neil, I've made a decision about what to say to you!

Neil

Oh yes?

Feifei

If you don't like my cooking, I will *not* be inviting you to my dinner party tonight.

Neil

Oh Feifei! Ah well, at least I'll avoid your cooking.

Feifei

I'm not cooking. We're getting a takeaway curry and lots of wine. I suppose you could come... if you pay for the take away?

Neil

Hmm that is something I don't need to chew on. The answer's 'no' – I'll stay at home and... bake my own cookies! See ya.

Feifei

Bye.

Text 13. Waffle on

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Rob

And I'm Rob. Feifei, feeling hungry?

Feifei

Rob, they smell amazing!

Rob

Almost there. We're having a special treat today – waffles!

Feifei

Rob is making waffles: those lovely, crispy little cakes with raised squares on the surface.

Rob

Absolutely! My favourite. But what are we going to put on them?

Feifei

Oh that's simple: strawberries and syrup. What about you?

Rob

OK, I'm not so sure. I mean, I used to always love them with honey and bananas. But they do taste amazing with melted chocolate. Or... with cream. You know, I recently tried one with peanut butter: not a good experience. I guess strawberries would be worth trying... Or mango. But only if the mangoes are fresh...

Feifei

Rob?

Rob

Yes?

Feifei

Can you stop waffling on?

Rob

Ah, very clever. Perfect time to use that phrase! I do need to stop waffling on, don't I?

Feifei

Yes, please. To 'waffle on' means to talk and talk without saying anything very useful or interesting.

Rob

I am sometimes guilty of that. Let's hear a few more examples.

Examples

I think I did really badly in the interview. I wasn't sure how to answer the questions, so I just waffled on.

Meetings with Frank are frustrating. He always waffles on about unimportant things. Someone needs to have a word with him.

I used to find her blog really interesting and inspiring, but these days she just waffles on about her pet tortoise.

Feifei

There we are. To waffle on. At least we don't waffle on in this programme, do we Rob?

Rob

Well, I must admit that sometimes people have said I do talk rather a lot, especially when it's about travel or languages... which reminds me I really should book my next holiday... I've been considering Croatia, though I...

Feifei

Rob?

Rob

Ah. Am I waffling on?

Feifei

I'm afraid so.

[‘Ping’ sound of a microwave]

Rob

Ooh, it's waffle time!

Feifei

Great. Hopefully these tasty waffles will keep you quiet for a while.

Rob

Are you saying the waffles will stop me waffling on?

Feifei

Yup! Now, enough talk... Oh, these waffles are delicious.

Rob

Not bad, eh?!

Feifei

Bye.

Rob

Bye.

Text 14. skew-whiff

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Rob

And I'm Rob.

Feifei

And I have to say Rob, you look fantastic! Big night, tonight, eh?

Rob

Well, I like to make an effort sometimes. It's not every night you get invited to a movie premiere.

Feifei

So handsome...

Rob

Do you like my bow tie?

Feifei

Oh yes. Just one thing...

Rob

What's that?

Feifei

It's a bit... skew-whiff.

Rob

Oh, really?

Feifei

Yes. It's not quite straight. Here.

Rob

Oh, thanks. That's better.

Feifei

Absolutely.

Rob

It's a good word, skew-whiff. We use it to describe things that aren't quite straight, or not quite as they should be.

Feifei

Like your tie. And your... hang on... your hair.

Rob

No, no – don't touch the hair. I spent ages getting it just right.

Feifei

Sorry. We can also use skew-whiff to describe things that don't go according to plan.

Rob

Now Feifei, I'm just off to check myself in the mirror. Let's play some examples while I'm gone.

Examples

A: There we go! One perfectly hung picture. What do you think?

B: Hmm, it's a little skew-whiff. Let me hang it straight.

This table is skew-whiff. One of the legs must be too short.

Our journey went a bit skew-whiff after we missed the train this morning.

I wanted to spend the whole weekend working on my dissertation, but everything went a bit skew-whiff when my friend arrived in the afternoon.

Rob

This is the English We Speak from BBC Learning English. We are talking about the word skew-whiff. OK, that's my bow tie looking perfect now, thanks Feifei.

Feifei

Great. There's one more thing.

Rob

Oh yes? What's that?

Feifei

Take some chewing gum. Your breath is fine, I think, but it's always good to have, just in case.

Rob

Yes, you wouldn't want a whiff of bad breath at the premiere.

Feifei

Indeed, the word 'whiff' on its own means 'a sudden smell of something'. No danger of that happening now. Enjoy the show!

Rob

I will!

Feifei and Rob

Bye.

Text 15. To play a blinder

Rob

Welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Rob, and I'm live here with the hero of the day, Feifei.

Feifei

Thanks Rob. Hello everyone.

Rob

Now, let's talk about that fantastic performance. BBC Learning English FC were two goals down, and then you came along and scored three times in the last ten minutes. How do you feel?

Feifei

Well, it was really all down to the team. I was just the right person in the right place today.

Rob

A very modest answer, but the crowd are going wild about you. Just listen... It's fair to say Feifei, you played a blinder!

Feifei

Just doing my job. Though, as a proud BBC Learning English FC player, there is one thing I would like to say to the audience.

Rob

Of course, go ahead.

Feifei

I'd like to explain that phrase you used - 'to play a blinder'. 'To play a blinder' is a phrase used to describe an amazing display of skill, usually in sports, but also in other areas in life.

Rob

Yes, not only did you play a blinder in the football game today, Feifei,

you played a blinder with that definition! Listen to the crowd...

Feifei

I'd like to add a little more, Rob. Why do we use the word 'blinder'? Well, imagine you're watching a dazzling performance – something so good it seems to shine brightly. The idea is that it's so shiny, so dazzling, it could cause someone watching to go blind.

Rob

Like looking at the sun. Thankfully, it's just an expression. If you're watching or listening to this show, we're sure your eyesight won't be affected! Let's have some more examples.

Examples

Theresa played a blinder today in the final. What a simply amazing performance on the tennis court.

Did you see Mexico beating Germany in the World Cup? Mexican forward Hirving Lozano played an absolute blinder!

Darren, what an awesome presentation! You played a blinder. I'm pretty sure we've just won some new clients.

Rob

You are listening to the English We Speak from BBC Learning English. Please notice that in the last example, we weren't talking about sport. You can also play a blinder in a work or business context, or anything that involves skill and performance.

Feifei

Well, Rob, I think we've both played a blinder today.

Rob

Thank you, thank you. Which reminds me... Hang on a second... let's bring back the cheering crowd!

Feifei

I love it. Wouldn't it be great if we could have people cheering us just like that in real life?

Rob

And wouldn't it be fantastic if, in real life, you were actually good at football!

Feifei

Hey, come on! We both know I played a blinder – at least in the programme!

Rob

OK.

Both

Bye.

Text 16. Miffed

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Rob

And I'm Rob.

Feifei

So, Rob, you don't look so happy.

Rob

I'm... ok.

Feifei

I thought you were off to a rock concert for your birthday this weekend.

Rob

Yeah, I was. I love rock music.

Feifei

Oh. What happened?

Rob

Well, I booked my ticket a month ago. It wasn't cheap. Three of my friends said they were coming too. But they just told me they forgot to book the tickets, and now there are none left.

Feifei

What a pain. I'm sorry.

Rob

Yeah, I'm a bit 'miffed'.

Feifei

I'm not surprised. Err, Rob, sorry to mention this while you're feeling upset...

Rob

Yes...?

Feifei

Do you mind if I use 'miffed' as our word today?

Rob

Yeah, OK then.

Feifei

OK, so as you might have worked out, to feel 'miffed' is to feel frustrated or annoyed, usually because of the behaviour of other people. It's what Rob is feeling right now, because his friends didn't book tickets to a concert with him. Let's just give him a minute, while we listen to these examples.

Examples

You know what? I've been working really late all week to finish this

proposal, but my boss hasn't said a word of thanks. Yeah, you could say I'm pretty miffed.

Laura met this guy on holiday. She told me he was really special, and that they seemed serious about each other. But he hasn't called in weeks. She's really miffed about it.

You'd think that when you order a vegetarian pizza, it would come without meat. No wonder Martin was miffed when it arrived with ham on it.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. So, feeling any better yet, Rob?

Rob

Well, I just got a message. Get this - apparently my friends were joking.

Feifei

Err, I knew.

Rob

What?

Feifei

Well, I told them to say that, so we had the opportunity to talk about 'miffed'.

Rob

Seriously?

Feifei

Yeah, you don't mind, do you?

Rob

Of course I mind. You made me feel, well... miffed!

Feifei

Sorry about that.

Rob

And I'm miffed with you now!

Feifei

Rob, you know what?

Rob

What?

Feifei

I got a ticket too. It is your birthday after all - I wouldn't miss it!

Rob

Really? OK, all is forgiven!

Both

Bye.

Text 17. Humblebrag

Rob

Morning Feifei! Nice bike.

Feifei

Thanks Rob, you know I always cycle to work. And what a beautiful sports car!

Rob

Oh this old thing? Hey, Feifei, mind if we take a quick selfie?

Feifei

What, me in my sweaty cycling gear and you leaning on your fancy...?

Rob

Smile! Right! Let me just post that... out there "I really respect my super healthy colleague Feifei cycling to work every day. It saves money and is so good for the environment! Much better than lazy little me driving this old car."

Feifei

Hang on, let me see. You know, Rob, I'm not sure how I feel about this post. I mean, it's a bit of a humblebrag.

Rob

A humblebrag?

Feifei

Sorry – I'll just say it straight. You make it look like you're praising my cycling, but in fact you're just drawing attention to your expensive car.

Rob

Hmm.

Feifei

You look like you're being *humble*, but in fact you're *bragging* – showing off - about your car. It's a humblebrag. False modesty.

Rob

OK, I get it. You're right. I suppose that is what I was doing.

Feifei

You're not the only one. It's everywhere on social media and in the workplace these days. Check out these humblebrags:

Examples

I never thought I was very good at exams, so it's a bit confusing that I got top of the class in all subjects again this year.

I somehow made it to the singing competition final this year. Think the judges need their ears testing!

Feifei

And if you want to take your humblebragging to the next level,

try hiding your brag inside a complaint.

Examples

I'm exhausted because I've just received two promotions in three months. I need a holiday!

Help! I can't believe the cakes in first class aren't sugar-free. I'll be gaining so much weight.

Rob

Some pretty impressive humblebrags there! But what exactly is the problem with it?

Feifei

Well, researchers in Harvard and the University of North Carolina have found that if you humblebrag, people like you less. They say you're better off just bragging.

Rob

Just plain bragging?

Feifei

Apparently so. Humblebragging makes you look less sincere.

Rob

Well, that makes sense. Best to say what I think. Let me change the caption... Right. "I'm not going to lie, I absolutely love my new sports car. Feifei's bike isn't bad either."

Feifei

That'll do! Let me just comment... "Get some exercise!"

Rob

Very funny. Bye bye!

Feifei

Bye!

Text 18. Out of your depth

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei...

Rob

...and hello, I'm Rob. Feifei, why's your hair wet – it's not raining, is it?

Feifei

No, Rob. I've just been for my swimming lesson. It was a bit scary, actually.

Rob

Why's that?

Feifei

Well, for the first time, I swam into the deep end and couldn't stand

up. The lifeguard had to jump in and save me.

Rob

Oh dear, Feifei. It sounds like you were out of your depth!

Feifei

Yes, I suppose I was.

Rob

Well, I'm out my depth too.

Feifei

What - you're learning to swim too?

Rob

No, no, I'm struggling to complete this project about statistics that the boss has asked me to do. I know nothing about statistics and numbers – it's just too difficult and I just can't do it. So I am out of my depth.

Feifei

Ah, I've got it. When you are out of your depth, it can mean you are in a difficult situation that you cannot cope with – it could be because a task exceeds your knowledge or ability. So it's a bit like drowning in a situation – but not literally.

Rob

Exactly. Let's hear some examples...

Examples

I'm so out of my depth in this new job. I haven't got a clue what to do!

When everyone started talking about politics I knew I was out of my depth, so I politely made my excuses and went home.

He was clearly out of his depth in the match – he lacked any skill and couldn't even pass the ball!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're talking about the phrase 'out of your depth'. It describes a situation that is too difficult for you, and you do not have the knowledge or ability to cope with it. Well, Rob, I may be able to save you! I love statistics and can help you out.

Rob

Oh that's great! And I can help you improve your swimming.

Feifei

Oh yes? How can you do that?

Rob

You can borrow my armbands so you'll never sink, even in the deep end. You'll never be out of your depth again!

Feifei

Thanks, but I think I should learn to swim properly. Anyway, when do you need to complete this project for the boss by?

Rob

Errr... now.

Feifei

Oh. Come on then. We had better go and get on with it, otherwise the boss will throw you in the deep end! Bye.

Rob

Bye.

Text 19. Mardy

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei.

Rob

And hi, I'm Rob. Hey, Feifei. Why the long face?

Feifei

What's wrong with my face?

Rob

I mean, why are you looking so... grumpy?

Feifei

Grumpy!?

Rob

Yes... moody.

Feifei

Moody! There is nothing wrong – this is my normal face. Why are you throwing so many insults at me?

Rob

Oh come on, you do look a bit bad-tempered.

Feifei

I'm not bad-tempered. But I'm getting angry now.

Rob

Oh great! Then I can describe you as mardy.

Feifei

Mardy? I hope that's not another insult.

Rob

It's not an insult – but 'mardy' does describe someone who is in a bad mood, moans a lot and gets annoyed easily. So, thanks for demonstrating that, Feifei!

Feifei

My pleasure! Let's hear some examples...

Examples

There are no desks for Pedro to work at today, so he has to sit on the sofa - no wonder he is so mardy.

My boyfriend is always so mardy – nothing seems to please him. Maybe I shouldn't have come home drunk last night!

Steer clear of me today. I only had four hours sleep last night and I'm really mardy today.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English, and we're talking about the word 'mardy', which describes someone in a bad mood. As I was saying, Rob, I am not mardy!

Rob

If you say so, Feifei.

Feifei

But I know something to make you mardy.

Rob

Oh yes?

Feifei

You're going to have to record this programme again.

Rob

What? Again? Why?

Feifei

You forgot to explain that 'mardy' also describes someone who is sulky or grumpy.

Rob

Hmm, you're just being awkward. I'm not going to start this programme again – I'm too busy. Right, I'm off to get a coffee. Goodbye!

Feifei

Who's mardy now? Or he is just acting? Bye!

Text 20. Take the biscuit

Feifei

Welcome to The English We Speak. It's Feifei here with Rob.

Rob

Hi everyone.

Feifei

So Rob, help yourself to a biscuit. I know how much you love them, so I bought some for us to share today.

Rob

Oh right. That's very kind, Feifei, but very odd. You don't normally buy me things. Are you feeling guilty? Have you done something wrong?

Feifei

Of course not! Well... sort of. I hope you don't mind, but I used up all your coffee when I made drinks for the team this morning.

Rob

What?! You used up all my coffee and you didn't make me one? That really takes the biscuit!

Feifei

I haven't taken any biscuits – just your coffee.

Rob

No, Feifei! When I say someone really takes the biscuit, I mean 'what you have done is really surprising, annoying or sometimes just silly.'

Feifei

Oh dear. You're not happy? Sorry, Rob. Let's hear some examples while you calm down...

Examples

I can't believe she copied my work and pretended it was her own – now that really takes the biscuit.

You're really taking the biscuit if you're expecting me to take you to the match and wait outside until it's finished!

Your plan to turn the spare bedroom into a snooker room really takes the biscuit!

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're finding out about the phrase 'to take', or 'to really take the biscuit' which, means we are 'surprised or annoyed by someone's actions'. Oh Rob, I'll buy you some more coffee.

Rob

I hope so. By the way, we can say 'something' as well as 'someone' takes the biscuit. So you take the biscuit by using up my coffee but there is something that really takes the biscuit.

Feifei

Oh yes? What's that?

Rob

These biscuits you bought are ginger nuts – I hate ginger biscuits. Didn't you know? Oh that really takes the biscuit!

Feifei

OK, Rob. You are really taking this badly. Pass them over here then and I'll eat them.

Rob

Oh crumbs, I've dropped them. Sorry!

Feifei

It looks like I won't be taking any of my biscuits today! Come on, Rob.

I'll buy you a coffee.

Rob

Thanks. Bye.

Feifei

Bye.

Text 21. Step on it

Feifei

Welcome to The English We Speak. It's Feifei here with Rob, and we're in a bit of a rush...

Rob

...yes yes, I've hurt my foot and we've got to get to hospital. Ouch!

Feifei

Ooo, it looks nasty, Rob – all red and swollen. It was a good job I was driving by when you hurt it.

Rob

Yes yes, thanks for the lift, Feifei. But it really is hurting, so could you step on it, please?

Feifei

What?

Rob

Step on it!

Feifei

Oh, OK if you say so.

Rob

Ow! That was painful – what did you do that for?

Feifei

You said 'step on it' – I thought that was an odd request, but I did.

Rob

No, Feifei! I meant drive faster – that's what 'step on it' means. It's what you say to someone to ask them to hurry. That hurt so much.

Feifei

Oops, sorry! Right, well hold on tight, Rob, I will step on it while we hear some examples....

Examples

Taxi! Could you take me to the station please? And could you step on it? I'm late!

Our coach told us to step on it if we wanted to get to the match on time.

Please step on it, otherwise we're going to miss the plane.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. And we're finding out about the phrase 'step on it', which means go faster or hurry up. Well, we're nearly at the hospital, Rob.

Rob

Good good, because my foot hurts so much – I need urgent medical attention.

Feifei

How exactly did you hurt it?

Rob

I was playing football and another player stepped on my big toe. It was so painful.

Feifei

What! So you've got me to 'step on it' – and drive at high speed – because someone stepped on your *big toe*? This isn't an emergency Rob - you can get out and walk.

Rob

That's not very nice.

Feifei

You had better step on it, Rob – the casualty department shuts in five minutes. Bye.

Rob

Bye.

Text 22. Ping

Feifei

Welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei...

Rob

...and hello, I'm Rob. Hey Feifei, listen to this...

Feifei

...OK, interesting. Has your ready meal finished cooking in the microwave?

Rob

Yes actually – but I wanted you to name that sound.

Feifei

Errr well, it's a 'ping' sound – obv's. So what's that got to do with today's piece of authentic English?

Rob

Well, we can use the word 'ping' to describe something else.

Feifei

I know that, Rob. 'Ping' is a short sharp sound – like a microwave makes to alert you that the food in it is cooked. But the word 'ping' is

also an informal way of describing sending an email or a text message. So if I ping you an email, I basically send you an email.

Rob

Exactly and... Oh, someone's pinged me a text message. It says "Let's have some examples, Rob!"

Feifei

That was me, Rob. Come on then...

Examples

I need to know the details of the contract. Could you ping them over to me as soon as possible. please.

My friend's just pinged me to say she can't go out tonight, so I suppose I'll have to stay in and watch TV.

I'll ping you over the address of the party and hopefully I'll see you there later.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from the BBC and we're finding out about the word 'ping' which is an informal way to describe sending an email or a text message. And Rob, I'm going to ping you something.

Rob

Oh yes, what's that?

Feifei

I'm going to ping you an email containing a recipe.

Rob

A recipe? What would I need that for?

Feifei

You need to start cooking some real food – you can't live on unhealthy microwave dinners!

Rob

Oh right. And I'm pinging you a message right now ... Send!

Feifei

"If you'd invited me for dinner, I wouldn't have to eat microwave dinners." OK Rob, I get the hint. How about tonight?

Rob

Great! But can you remind me where you live?

Feifei

I'll ping you my address. See ya.

Rob

Don't forget. Bye!

Text 23. Have a pop

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Feifei...

Rob

...and hello, I'm Rob.

Feifei

Rob, I'm having a bit of trouble with my computer...

Rob

What, again! What's the problem this time?

Feifei

Well, I've written the script for this programme, but it won't save. And I can't print it out - this computer just does not work. Can you fix it?

Rob

Let me have a pop at it.

Feifei

A pop? Are you going to make it explode? That's a bit extreme, Rob.

Rob

Don't worry, Feifei. If I have a pop at something, I just mean I'll try and do it – so I'll have a go at doing something, like fixing your computer...

Feifei

Right! OK, Rob, have a pop then. But just don't delete all my work.

Rob

Don't worry, Feifei, I would never do that, would I? Let's hear some more examples of the phrase while I sort this out...

Examples

I'm going to have a pop at doing this online application for a passport – apparently it's really easy.

We had a pop at making a cake but we baked it for too long and it burnt!

Why not have a pop at yoga? I've heard it's good for your mind, body and soul.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're talking about the phrase 'have a pop', which means to try something. So, Rob, you've had a pop at fixing my computer... any luck?

Rob

Ermm, not exactly. Everything seems to have disappeared from the screen.

Feifei

Let me look... no! You have deleted my script. Hmm, Rob, did you know that 'have a pop' has another meaning?

Rob

Oh yeah, what's that?

Feifei

To 'have a pop' also means to criticise or even to try and hit someone. And I'm going to have a pop at you for losing my script.

Rob

Hold... hold on, Feifei. If we don't have a script, we won't know what will happen next.

Feifei

I think the listeners know, Rob, don't they? Bye.

Rob

Bye. Ouch!

Text 24.A necessary evil**Feifei**

Hello I'm Feifei and welcome to The English We Speak.

Rob

And hello, I'm Rob.

Feifei

You're looking pleased with yourself, Rob.

Rob

I am. I've just booked these dirt cheap – I mean really cheap – flights to Ibiza!

Feifei

Wonderful!

Rob

Look at the price - 20 pounds return! That means extra money to spend on food, drink and partying.

Feifei

Let's have a look... hold on. The basic price is 20 pounds, but look at the tax you have to pay on top. One hundred pounds!

Rob

Eh? Let me see. You're right. Grrr, I hate paying tax.

Feifei

I guess you could say it's a necessary evil.

Rob

Hmm, you could say that – if you mean it's something bad that can't be avoided, and you have to accept it in order to achieve a good result.

Feifei

That's exactly what I meant, Rob. If it can't be avoided, like paying tax on a plane ticket, then it's a necessary evil. Let's hear some examples, shall we?

Examples

For me, exams are a necessary evil – you have to do them to get a place at university.

Sitting in traffic for hours is a necessary evil if I want to drive to the seaside on a public holiday!

I hate running, but having to exercise is a necessary evil if I want to stay fit and healthy.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're finding out about the phrase 'a necessary evil'. It describes something that you have to accept in order to achieve something else. And Rob, that tax on your plane ticket is unavoidable – not so cheap now, is it?

Rob

No. Less money for eating, drinking and partying.

Feifei

Can you get a refund? Stay at home and eat, drink and party?

Rob

I could but if I stayed at home, there's another necessary evil I have to deal with.

Feifei

What's that?

Rob

I'll have to spend more time with you.

Feifei

Hmm! What time is your flight exactly?

Rob

Did I say something wrong?

Feifei

Bye.

Rob

Bye.

Text 25. If the cap fits

Feifei

Welcome to The English We Speak. Hello I'm Feifei...

Rob

...and hello, I'm Rob. Feifei, why the sad face?

Feifei

It's not a sad face, it's an angry face.

Rob

Oh no, has someone upset you?

Feifei

They sure have. I've just overheard Neil saying I have no fashion sense – he says I dress like I'm living in the 1980s!

Rob

Ouch!

Feifei

And he says my clothes are uncoordinated and dated!

Rob

Well, Feifei. I hate to say it, but if the cap fits...

Feifei

What cap? I don't wear hats.

Rob

No, Feifei. I mean, the criticism is probably true and you should accept it. In other words, he's probably right.

Feifei

Hmm! Rob, I can't believe you agree with Neil!

Rob

Let's hear some examples, shall we?

Examples

A: My boyfriend calls me messy and untidy - what a cheek!

B: Well, if the cap fits.

You say your teacher thinks you're lazy because you never do your homework? Well, if the cap fits!

A: They think I ate all the biscuits because I was the only one in the kitchen last night.

B: Well, if the cap fits!

Rob

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're finding out about the phrase 'if the cap fits', which means you agree with someone's criticism or an opinion about someone else - and they should accept it. But Feifei, you're claiming you can't accept what Neil said about your fashion sense. So you're saying, the cap doesn't fit?

Feifei

Exactly. But Neil is rude, unkind and tactless.

Rob

Absolutely!

Feifei

And you are the same for agreeing with him. So Rob, 'if the cap fits'...

Rob

I know... I should wear it! Actually, Feifei, your clothes aren't that bad. You look very fashionable in fact.

Feifei

You're a hypocrite too. Rob, keep wearing that cap!

Rob

Fair enough. See ya.

Feifei

Bye.

PART THREE PRACTICE READING NEWS REPORTS. MIND PRONUNCIATION MODELS WHILE READING. PROVIDE TRANSCRIPTION FOR THE WORDS IN BOLD.

Text 1. US nuclear force still uses floppy disks

The US government Accountability Office says it's concerned that many federal activities, including the country's nuclear **arsenal**, urgently need to **upgrade** outdated technologies.

It said Pentagon systems helping to coordinate the strategic **deterrent**, such as intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear bombers rely on 40-year-old computers and floppy disks.

Text 2. Remembering Orlando victims

Vigils have been held in Orlando **to honour** the 49 victims of the attack. A senior imam told people at the gathering that Muslims stood united against what he called "the ideology of hatred, doom and destruction."

There have also been **tributes** in countries including Britain, France and Canada. President Obama will travel to Florida on Thursday.

Text 3. Muhammad Ali's funeral

It's been announced that the Hollywood star Will Smith and the former world **heavyweight** boxing champion Lennox Lewis will be **pallbearers** at Muhammad Ali's **funeral**.

Smith played Ali in the 2001 movie of the same name, earning an Oscar **nomination** and becoming a family friend.

Text 4. Superbug threat

Health officials in the United States say a superbug **resistant** to all known **antibiotics** has been found in the country for the first time. The case involves a woman infected with a **strain** of the E.coli bacteria resistant to Colistin, an antibiotic of last resort.

Text 5. Australian bat invasion

The authorities in the Australian state of New South Wales have **declared an emergency** to help a town – Bateman's Bay – that's been **besieged** by tens of thousands of bats.

The state authorities plan to spend about \$1.8m to **relocate** the mammals.

Text 6. Demand for biofuel in US hits bee numbers

A new study suggests the number of wild bees in the United States has declined in many farming areas because of a **boom** in **biofuels**.

The report says that over five years up to 2013, the **abundance** of wild bees fell across almost a quarter of the US as land was converted to grow corn for ethanol.

Text 7. A fifth of world's plants in danger

A new report on the state of the world's plants says that more than 2,000 new **species** were discovered last year alone including a three-metre-tall orchid and a **sprawling** insect-eating sundew plant from Brazil.

But the researchers from the Royal Botanic Gardens in London warned that a fifth of all plants were at risk of extinction – vulnerable to climate change, **habitat** loss or disease.

Text 8. Leicester City win the Premier League

Leicester City Football Club, whose entire **squad** cost less than a single player at some of its better-known rivals, have won the English Premier League.

Leicester were 5000-1 **outsiders** to win at the start of the season, meaning **bookmakers** considered it more likely that Elvis Presley would be found alive.

Text 9. Chernobyl remembered

Ukraine has been holding ceremonies to mark the 30th anniversary of Chernobyl, the world's worst nuclear accident. A **meltdown** in the plant's **reactor** in April 1986 blew off the roof and sent a cloud of **radioactive** material across Ukraine's borders into neighbouring Belarus and across a **swathe** of northern Europe. Relatives of those who died held candlelight **vigils** at several churches.

Text 10. Sharapova's failed drug test

The sportswear company Nike says it's suspending its relationship with the Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova after she announced that she'd failed a drugs test at this year's Australian Open.

Nike said it would await the **outcome** of an investigation.

Sharapova earlier said she had **tested positive** for meldonium, a drug used to treat blood flow restriction, and had failed to notice that the tennis authorities had moved it to the list of banned substances last December. She said that she had **let her fans down**.

Text 11. Calais 'Jungle' clearance

Demolition teams are due to return to the French port of Calais shortly to **dismantle** more **makeshift** shelters in the migrant camp known as the 'Jungle'.

During the night there were clashes between police and migrants trying to reach Britain.

Text 12. Delhi water crisis

Water supplies are beginning to be **restored** in the Indian capital, Delhi, following protests which had left 10 million people **cut off**.

Engineers are working to repair a **canal** which was damaged during violent protests by members of the Jat community.

Text 13. Taylor Swift breaks Grammy record

The singer Taylor Swift has won this year's **album** of the year Grammy for 1989 during the **lavish** awards ceremony in Los Angeles.

She's the first female **artist** to win that award twice.

Text 14. Violence on streets of Hong Kong

Police in Hong Kong have used **batons** and pepper spray in **clashes** with protestors after officers tried to clear **street vendors** from a road in the Mong Kok area.

The protestors threw bricks and other objects at the police who made 24 arrests.

Police said 48 officers were hurt.

Text 15. Zika – 'no risk' to Rio Olympics

Brazil says there's no risk that the Olympic Games in Rio will be cancelled despite the World Health Organisation's assessment that the spread of the Zika virus constitutes an international public health emergency.

A spokesman for President Dilma Rousseff said the lives of athletes and spectators would not be endangered, though pregnant women should not attend.

Text 16. Beatrix Potter story discovered

A lost story by one of Britain's best loved children's authors, Beatrix Potter, is to be **published** for the first time – more than a hundred years after it was written.

The Tale of Kitty-in-Boots, a black cat that leads a **double life**, was discovered in an exercise book in the writer's **archive** at the Victoria and Albert museum in London.

Written in 1914, it includes some of her best-loved animal characters – Peter Rabbit and the hedgehog, Mrs. Tiggy-winkle.

Text 17. China growth slows

The Chinese economy grew by 6.9% last year.

It's the slowest **rate of growth** for the world's second largest economy in 25 years.

Concerns about the health of the Chinese economy, including **shrinking** foreign and domestic demand and the **depreciation** of its currency, has contributed to sharp falls on

global markets.

Text 18. Recycling light

Researchers in the United States say they've developed a technique that can **significantly** improve the efficiency of the traditional **incandescent** lightbulb.

They say they've built **prototypes** that are already three times more efficient than standard incandescent bulbs.

Text 19. Japan whaling

Japan's whaling **fleet** has **set sail** this morning for the Antarctic with a plan to kill hundreds of whales.

A year ago, the International Court of Justice in The Hague ruled that Japan's **so-called** scientific whaling programme is neither scientific nor legal.

Text 20. Star Wars premiere

With a march past of stormtroopers and the robots C3PO and R2D2 rolling down the **red carpet**, the seventh Star Wars film has had its world **premiere** in Hollywood.

The movie, The Force Awakens, stars many of the actors who appeared in the original science fiction **trilogy**, more than 30 years ago.

Text 21. Beijing smog

Severe restrictions are in force in Beijing to limit air pollution after the city **declared** a **red alert** for the first time.

Half the city's vehicles have been banned from the roads.

Text 22. Licence to kiss

India's film **censors** have **ruled** that long kissing scenes in the new James Bond film Spectre are not suitable for the country's audiences.

The Mumbai-based Central **Board** of Film Certification has made cuts to two scenes from the movie.

Text 23. Brussels lockdown

The Belgian capital Brussels remains **on high alert** for possible attacks with most facilities shut for a third day running and soldiers **patrolling** the streets.

Police are still hunting several **suspects**, including Salah Abdeslam, who's thought to have been involved in the Paris attacks.

Sixteen people were arrested on Sunday night.

Text 24. Paris terror

Anti-terrorist police have carried out **raids** across France as the investigation into the Paris Islamist attacks continues.

One of the men being **hunted** is Salah Abdeslam, a brother of one of the **suicide attackers**.

The Prime Minister, Manuel Valls, has warned that there is a danger of more attacks in the coming days.

Text 25. Red meat and cancer

The World Health Organisation is due to publish a report today on whether some kinds of meat can increase **the risk of** cancer.

The WHO's **agency** for research on cancer has been reviewing evidence on red and **processed meats**.

Text 26. Myanmar election

The **main opposition party** in Myanmar, the National League for Democracy, says in some areas in Sunday's election, it won 80% of the vote.

Although only a few results have been **officially announced**, the party's leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, **hinted** at victory.

Text 27. Russian plane crash

The Russian airline whose plane crashed in the Sinai with the loss of 224 lives has said that **external forces** were the only possible reason for the disaster.

At a news conference in Moscow, a senior official of the airline Metro-

jet **ruled out** a technical fault and pilot error.

He **acknowledged** that there had been damage to the plane's tail before it took off from Egypt but said the damage had been repaired.

Text 28. Migrants blocked in Balkans

Tension is building among thousands of migrants heading north through the Balkan states as their route to Western Europe becomes **stalled** by new controls.

Croatia had asked its northern neighbour Slovenia to accept 5,000 migrants daily, but Slovenia said it would take only half that number.

The move has led to a **build-up** of people on Croatia's border with Slovenia. Buses **crammed** with people are also **backed up** further south in Serbia.

Text 29. Pioneering 'in womb' clinical trial

In the first clinical trial of its kind, doctors are to inject **stem cells** into **foetuses** in the womb in an attempt to combat a rare and **incurable** condition that causes bones to fracture easily.

Researchers hope the cells will reduce the **symptoms** of brittle bone disease.

Text 30. Missing mammal link found

Scientists say they've found a new species that **sheds light on** the rapid evolution of **mammals** after the **extinction** of the dinosaurs.

The creature, named Kimbetopsalis after an area of New Mexico, lived about 65 million years ago, and looked similar to a beaver.

Text 31. Nationalists win Catalonia vote

Catalan **separatist parties** say their victory in regional elections gives them a **mandate** to seek independence from Spain, even though they won less than 50 percent of the overall vote.

The leader of the main separatist alliance, Artur Mas, says he would now push for the creation of an independent state.

But Madrid has ruled out a **referendum** on independence.

Text 32. Greece re-elects Tsipras

The Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras is beginning work in forming a new government after his Syriza party was returned to office in a **snap** general election.

His immediate challenge is to implement economic reforms which were a condition for Greece receiving a \$100bn **bailout** from international **creditors** in July.

Text 33. Tourists killed by Egyptian forces

Egyptian security forces have attacked a tourist **convoy** in a desert region after mistaking the visitors for **militants**.

Egypt says 12 people were killed, including Mexican tourists.

The Egyptian government says the convoy had entered a **restricted** area near the Libyan border.

Text 34. Germany's plan for migrants

Still not sure? This time you can read the transcript. The answer's underneath.

The German government has announced a \$6bn action plan **to cope** with a record influx of migrants.

The measures include speeding up **asylum procedures** and building homes for new arrivals. The government says that by temporarily relaxing EU migration laws over the weekend it's **averted** a **humanitarian crisis**.

The flow of people heading for Europe shows no sign of **easing**. A Greek ferry carrying about 2,000 migrants from the island of Lesbos has arrived at the port of Piraeus near Athens.

Text 35. Historic temple destroyed

Still not sure? This time you can read the transcript. The answer's underneath.

Islamic State militants have destroyed one of Syria's major **cultural**

treasures – the Baalshamin temple in the ancient city of Palmyra.

Syrian officials say the jihadists **detonated** explosives around the structure which **dates back** 2,000 years. The blast also damaged some of the city's **famed** Roman columns.

Text 36. Water filter book

Still not sure? This time you can read the transcript. The answer's underneath.

Researchers in the United States have designed an instruction book on how to **purify** water, with the pages themselves **doubling as** water filters.

Tests show that when ripped out, the pages, which are **impregnated** with copper or silver nanoparticles, killed almost all of the bacteria counts in **contaminated** water.

Text 37. Man shot at Ferguson protest

Still not sure? This time you can read the transcript. The answer's underneath.

There's been an **outbreak** of gunfire in the city of Ferguson in the US state of Missouri towards the end of a **rally** to remember an unarmed black teenager, shot dead by a white policeman a year ago.

Two people were shot in an **exchange of fire**. One person was seriously wounded.

ЛИТЕРАТУРА

1. Аведова Р.П., Мельник А.Д., Топольская И.А., Котельникова И.В. English Phonetics (Part One – English Sounds). Фонетика английского языка. Часть 1. Проблемы классификации фонем (для обучающихся по специальности 45.05.01 «Перевод и переводоведение»): учеб. пособие / Р.П. Аведова, А.Д. Мельник, И.А. Топольская, И.В. Котельникова; Донской гос. техн. ун-т. – Ростов-наДону : ДГТУ, 2019. – 53 с.

2. Аведова Р.П., Подольская А.В. Особенности английского языка в Индии. ИНФОРМАЦИОННО-КОММУНИКАТИВНАЯ КУЛЬТУРА: НАУКА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ. Сборник статей Международной научно-практической конференции сту-

дентов, аспирантов и молодых ученых. Министерство образования и науки Российской Федерации, Донской государственный технический университет. 2018. С. 11-12.

3. Аведова Р.П., Шилова А.Д., Торосян С.Н. Проблема восприятия на слух Австралийского варианта английского языка. ИНФОРМАЦИОННО-КОММУНИКАТИВНАЯ КУЛЬТУРА: НАУКА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ. Сборник статей Международной научно-практической конференции студентов, аспирантов и молодых ученых. Министерство образования и науки Российской Федерации, Донской государственный технический университет. 2018. С. 15-17.

4. Аведова Р.П., Труфанова И.А., Овчинникова А.Э. Проблемы восприятия Канадского английского. ИНФОРМАЦИОННО-КОММУНИКАТИВНАЯ КУЛЬТУРА: НАУКА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ. Сборник статей Международной научно-практической конференции студентов, аспирантов и молодых ученых. Министерство образования и науки Российской Федерации, Донской государственный технический университет. 2018. С. 17-20.

5. Аведова Р.П., Шиповская А.В. Роль произношения в английском языке. ИНФОРМАЦИОННО-КОММУНИКАТИВНАЯ КУЛЬТУРА: НАУКА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ. Сборник статей Международной научно-практической конференции студентов, аспирантов и молодых ученых. Министерство образования и науки Российской Федерации, Донской государственный технический университет. 2018. С. 22-24.

6. Avedova R.P., Solovieva S.S., Pahotina V.A. Phonetic difficulties of reproduction of audio sounds by Japan residents: ИНФОРМАЦИОННО-КОММУНИКАТИВНАЯ КУЛЬТУРА: НАУКА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ. Сборник статей Международной научно-практической конференции студентов, аспирантов и молодых ученых. Министерство образования и науки Российской Федерации, Донской государственный технический университет. 2018. С. 111-112.

7. English phonetics and phonology. A practical course. Cambridge University Press. – 2012. – 307 p.

8. Kelly, G. How to Teach Pronunciation. Pearson Longman. – 2001. – 160 p.