

Lesson 02: One Language, Two Cultures

Module : CCCA3

Instructor(s) : Up Anglais

- Relate to English language origins & evolution
 - Tell Language differences between BrE & AmE
 - Identify Borrowed words in English language
- Use Past Perfect tenses correctly

Listening Comprehension:

Watch the TedTalk Video and take the True or False Quiz: (*stop at min 4.55*)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ytr28t5VzAs>

Video quiz questions

1) There are a thousand new English words coined in the world every year.

- a. True
- b. False

2) According to the narrator, the reasons underlying the creation of new words are new inventions, new scientific findings and new ideas, which cannot be expressed properly with existing words.

- a. True
- b. False

3) Almost half of the words in the English language were borrowed directly from other languages, including Latin, French, Greek and German; it's only their pronunciation that changed.

- a. True
- b. False

4) Sometimes when new things are imported from another culture for the first time, e.g. spaghetti from Italy or curry from India, their original name is also adopted.

- a. True
- b. False

5) Words from Latin and Greek are often borrowed by scientists to describe new scientific concepts in English, such as cloning, but English words are also often borrowed by other languages.

- a. True
- b. False

6) "Internet" is a compound word coined by combining the words "interesting" and "net".

- a. True
- b. False

7) Sometimes old words are endowed with (=receive) a new meaning, but they're not new in the same sense as newly coined word combos.

- a. True
- b. False

8) Today a "geek" refers to an awkward genius.

- a. True
- b. False

9) Some new words never spread widely in the language community, while others are used for a while but then abandoned (=not used any more).

- a. True
- b. False

10) New words have to be either useful or catchy to catch on.

- a. True
- b. False

Reading

Read what five people think about British and American English. For each question, choose the correct person/people. The people may be chosen more than once.

Which person or people...

- 1 mentions a misunderstanding? _____
- 2 talks about global English? _____
- 3 talks about a comprehension problem? _____
- 4 had visitors from the USA? _____
- 5 has a traditional outlook? _____
- 6 points out differences in vocabulary? _____
- 7 does not like distinguishing between American and British English? _____
- 8 mentions the influence of television on language? _____
- 9 received a complaint about his/her accent? _____
- 10 makes a criticism about the written language? _____

A We all know about the American going shopping in the UK and getting frustrated because the shop assistant just shows him underwear when he wants to buy a pair of trousers, but I never imagined I'd be in a similar situation in the States when I arranged to meet a business associate. He was waiting for me on the ground floor while I was on the first floor, as that's what he told me. Or at least that's what I'd understood because it actually means the ground floor! It took over half an hour of waiting and an embarrassing phone call to sort it out.

B I've been teaching English as a foreign language for about 7 years now and I'll always remember one of my first students, Mario. During our lessons he would always complain that he couldn't understand me or my accent. Then he went on a study trip to Brighton in England. When he came back he told me American accents were actually easier than British ones as everyone there speaks with their mouth closed!

C I recently met some distant relatives from the States. They're my dad's cousins or something. Anyway, they were visiting us in the UK for a few days and there were two teenage boys, roughly the same age as me, and what I found strange was how often they didn't understand some of the things I said while I understood them all the time. My dad said it's because I watch so much TV that I've picked up American words and slang without knowing it. He's probably right.

Some people might say that I'm too old-fashioned, but I really don't like how American spelling is becoming so commonplace here in England. Why should I see 'organise' with a z instead of an s in my English newspaper? If I'm reading an American novel, I expect to see American spelling and that's fine with me. We each have our own spelling rules and I think we should stick to them and keep the languages separate.

E

There are so many Americans and Britons today for whom English is a second language, and so many people in the world who are learning English as a foreign language, that I don't think it makes much sense talk about American and British English being different. There are hundreds of versions of English being spoken around the world and I think they are all equally valid as long as we can all understand each other.



Vocabulary

Match these common British English words with their American equivalent?

British English

- 1 estate car
- 2 aubergine
- 3 garden
- 4 chemist
- 5 postman
- 6 autumn
- 7 tap
- 8 pub

American English

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|
| a | <input type="checkbox"/> | drugstore |
| b | <input type="checkbox"/> | bar |
| c | <input type="checkbox"/> | fall |
| d | <input type="checkbox"/> | station wagon |
| e | <input type="checkbox"/> | yard |
| f | <input type="checkbox"/> | eggplant |
| g | <input type="checkbox"/> | mailman |
| h | <input type="checkbox"/> | faucet |

Speaking

Discuss these questions in pairs.

- 1 Do you find American or British accents easier to understand?
- 2 Would you like your accent to be American or British English? Or another English?
- 3 Do you use American or British spelling? What about vocabulary?
- 4 Are you more in contact with American or British English (e.g. through TV, websites, music)?

Grammar

Exercise 1. Complete the sentences with the words in brackets.

- 1) I had to have a break. I so long. (drive)
- 2) we parked our car we the ticket. (collect)
- 3) I arrived on Sunday. I at home for two days. (not be)
- 4) The roads were blocked in the morning. It all night. (snow)
- 5) They got to the beach after they for hours. (walk)

Exercise 2. Answer the questions. Use the words in brackets.

- 1) When did they finish the house? (after - build it for a year)
.....
- 2) Why didn't she eat anything? (because - have lunch)
.....
- 3) What did he tell her? (that - see her before)
.....
- 4) Why was he so exhausted? (because - cut the grass all day)
.....
- 5) When did they land? (when - the storm end)
.....

Exercise 3. Mark the correct sentences with a tick. If a tense is not correct, underline it and write the correct form.

1) We sold our new house after we had bought a new one.

.....

2) The road was blocked because a tree had been falling on it.

.....

3) The street was icy in the morning as it had frozen all night.

.....

4) I was full of energy because I had been having big lunch.

.....

5) Had you ever slept in a tent before your holiday in Italy?

.....

6) He'd been sleeping too long. That's why he was so morose!

.....

7) There was no egg left. How many eggs had you been cooking?

.....

8) I'd been calling Jane five times before she picked up the phone.

.....

9) We had repaired the car for an hour when John appeared.

.....