

About this script

Please note that this is not a word for word transcript of the programme as broadcast. In the recording and editing process, changes may have been made which may not be reflected here.

关于台词的备注:

请注意这不是广播节目的逐字稿件。本文稿可能没有体现录制、编辑过程中对节目做出的改变。

Foreigners' English 英国人如何看待外国人的英语?

Insert

Hello BBC Learning English listeners! I am Alba and I'm from Spain.

Hello BBC Learning English listeners! I'm Remi. I'm from France.

Hello! I'm Salimata. I'm from Senegal.

Hello! 大家好。I'm Tomasz - and I'm Bartosz. We're twins and we're from Poland.

Wang Fei: And I am Wang Fei and I'm from China.

Natalie: And I'm Natalie. I'm from Northern Ireland.

Wang Fei: 欢迎收听BBC Learning English 的英国问答节目。

Natalie: I'm glad to hear lots of people saying hello to our listeners at the start of the programme.

Wang Fei: Yes. They're from all over the world and today's question is about foreigners' spoken English.

Natalie: Yes today's question is from Audrey in Chongqing. She wants to know what British people think when foreigners' spoken English is not as good as theirs.

Wang Fei: 来自重庆的 Audrey 想知道英国人是如何看待外国人的英语口语? So Natalie, you are British. So what do you think?

Natalie: I think it depends on each person you meet. Some people are very good at speaking English and some other people can be harder to understand.

Wang Fei: Natalie 说这要因人而异。那我们一起来听一听别的英国人是怎么说的? 下面的录音来自 Matt 和 Liz, 他们都是伦敦的年轻英国职员。

Insert

Matt: I think in general it is very impressive and very good, because not many people in England speak a second language. So English people are always very happy when other people have learnt their language.

Liz: Generally it is very well spoken. You can normally tell when English is their second language because they speak in a very formal way.

Natalie: Matt said in general, people in Britain think it is very impressive when foreigners speak English.

Wang Fei: Impressive 印象好的。In general, it's impressive 总体上印象不错。He also said not many English people speak a second language. Natalie, is that true?

Natalie: Yes, this is probably true. According to one government statistic from 2008, about 60% of young British people can't speak a second language. So they're always happy when other people have learnt English.

Wang Fei: 一项调查显示60%的英国年轻人居然不会说外语，所以英国人很高兴看到别国家的人学习英语。

Natalie: Liz said she has found that most people who have English as their second language usually speak in a very formal way.

Wang Fei: In a very formal way 就是说话非常正式。

Natalie: I agree with Liz. I've also noticed that when some foreigners speak English they tend to use very formal words even in daily conversation. Why do you think that is, Wang Fei?

Wang Fei: I think it's because foreigners, like me, learnt very formal English at school. 因为我们在学校的书本上学的英语都比较正式，所以造成了我们说英语也都很正式了。

Natalie: I see. Well I would suggest our listeners to study more colloquial English while they're studying formal written English.

Wang Fei: 确实是这样。我从中国来伦敦后也是发现听不懂英国人说的英语。以前听了太多的新闻、读了太多的报纸、学了太多的语法可是就没有多听英国人说话。所以来伦敦后我还得重新学最简单的英语口语表达。

Natalie: Yes, this is probably a typical problem for people learning English. To help highlight some common problems in learning spoken English, we interviewed one experienced English teacher, Jim Ritch, who is a freelance teacher from Cactus Worldwide.

Wang Fei: 我们首先听一听对 Jim Ritch 的采访。他是英国 Cactus 国际语言培训学校的自由职业教师。他在教学中发现了外国人学英语口语中的一些问题。我们听一听。

Insert

The way we write and the way we speak is fundamentally different. And we write using words, but when we speak, we speak using syllables that are joined together in a row. For example, if I said "What do you think?" if you know the language, you hear: what/ do/ you/ think. You hear four words but actually if you listen to me as a sound, "What do you think" could just be one long word that's all rolled together and that's the way that we speak.

Natalie: Jim pointed out a very interesting difference between written English and spoken English. He says we write English in words, but quite often when we speak, all the words are joined together.

Wang Fei: Jim 说英语书面语和口语不同，因为我们写英语的时候是一个一个的词写出来，但是说英语的时候，实际上很多词的发音都是连接在一起的。而不是一个词一个词地说。

Natalie: The words are all rolled together.

Wang Fei: Roll together 连接起来。

Natalie: In Jim's example, he said British people will probably say "Wha-do-ya-think?" instead of "What/do/you/think?"

Wang Fei: So Natalie, actually the difference is very slight.

Natalie: Yes. But it's enough to make a foreigner's English and a native speaker's English sound different.

Wang Fei: 是的，我们继续听 Jim 的录音。看看他的发现如何帮助外国人说好英语口语。

Insert

The problem with that is that most of us learn languages through writing. You learn what the English words are and the letters from a book and then you learn to speak from the book. If you're speaking a second language, when you're speaking English as a learner, if you are speaking it you're probably seeing the word in your head when you speak it. Except if it is your first language, if you are Chinese, or Spanish or English, you don't see the word.

Natalie: Jim says that when people are learning English they quite often study written and spoken English from the same book. So when they're speaking English, they always see the words in their brain. Do you think this is true Wang Fei?

Wang Fei: Yes, this is absolutely true. When I speak English, I sometimes see the words in my mind. Then I read them.

Natalie: So your spoken English largely depends on your written English. But this is not the same for native speakers, which is the big difference between a native speaker and a second language speaker.

Wang Fei: 我明白了，我终于发现了我自己的问题，我说英语的时候还是基本上在读我脑子里的书面语。So today, Natalie, I finally find out the reason why my spoken English is not as fluent and natural as the native speakers.

Natalie: Wang Fei, don't be too critical of yourself. Actually, British people are quite tolerant of foreigners' English. Let's hear from Dr John O'Regan, who is a lecturer in the Institute of Education at University of London, He will explain what the most important thing is when speaking English as your second language.

Wang Fei: 好的。我们下面的采访来自伦敦大学教育学院的资深讲师 John O'Regan 博士。他将告诉大家外国人说英语时最重要的是什么？

Insert

I think the most important thing when you're speaking English, whether you are speaking with native speakers or whether you are speaking with other non-native speakers, is comprehensibility. Being understood, making your message clear. We're very experienced at listening to people with many different accents. So I think there is a lot of tolerance out there. If you are visiting Britain, if you are going to come to Britain or you are going to be speaking to native speakers somewhere, then I think, again, you just have to make sure what you're trying to say, you don't have to rush; you just try and say it in your own time.

Natalie: Dr John O'Regan believes comprehensibility is the most important thing when you're speaking English as your second language. You must try to make yourself understood.

Wang Fei: Comprehensibility 理解性。你说英语的时候，表达准确能被别人理解才是最重要的。

Natalie: Dr John O'Regan also says British people are very experienced at listening to people with a different accent. We're very tolerant. So there is no need to feel nervous when you're speaking English to native English speakers.

Wang Fei: 对，很多英国人对不同口音的英语都应付自如了，所以和外国人讲英语的时候不要着急，不要担心，把自己表达清楚最重要。

Natalie: I hope we've answered our listener's question, Wang Fei.

Wang Fei: I hope so. In fact, I've also learned a lot from today's programme. 听众朋友，如果你也有关于英国的问题，请写电子邮件给我们。我们下次节目再会。Bye for now.

Natalie: Bye bye.

Glossary

impressive 印象好的	formal 正式的
join together 连接起来	fundamentally 基本上地
tolerant 宽容的	accent 口音
comprehensibility 理解性	rush 仓促、着急