

BBC Learning English – Q & A of the Week 你问我答

About this script

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Imply and Infer 暗示和推断

Helen: 大家好，欢迎收听《你问我答》节目。我是 **Helen**，我的搭档是 **Callum**。但是他还没到。非常抱歉，他老是迟到，真让人受不了。

Callum: Hello Helen. Sorry, sorry, sorry.

Helen: (Annoyed) Oh hello Callum, how good of you to join us.

Callum: What do you mean by that – what are you suggesting?

Helen: 我没什么意思！不过，可能有一点点。

Callum: Well, I take that to mean you are a bit angry or upset with me.

Helen: 你觉得我生气了？我没这么说吧？

Callum: No, you didn't say it – but the tone of your voice and the expression you used made me think that you were being a bit sarcastic in your comment.

Helen: 那么从我的语气和所用的词汇里你觉得我是生你的气了。

Callum: Yes!

Helen: 啊，平时如果大家能直接了当的说话，那就好了。

Callum: Aah but then we wouldn't have questions like today's. Today's question comes from Jing who wrote to us and said:

*Hello, I am confused by the two words imply and infer. Could you tell me how to use them appropriately?
Thanks a lot.*

Helen: Jing 同学想了解 **imply** 和 **infer** 这两个单词的区别。我也经常听到其他人用错这两个动词。**Callum**，这得听你了。

Callum: Let's take 'imply' first.

To imply something is to suggest something without saying it directly. It's something the person who is speaking does. So when you said to me "good of you to join us" you were suggesting, you were implying, that I was late. You were sending me a message.

Helen: 这么说刚才我给你打招呼的时候，发出的信息是说你迟到了，尽管我嘴上没这么说。

Callum: That's right! And that's what 'to imply something' means – to suggest something but not actually say it.

Helen: 现在让我们来听听一段有关一架飞机坠机事件的调查，当时有人猜测可能有人故意造成事故，不过根据机舱驾驶员的录音，调查人员的结论是什么呢？

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The cockpit voice recorder is the biggest information that we have and a quick listen to that last evening in Washington showed nothing that would imply any sort of unusual activity in the cockpit other than the accident sequence.

Callum: Of course, in this situation the investigators couldn't know for sure what had happened – but what they heard let them believe that it was an accident. The evidence they had implied that it was an accident but nothing more suspicious.

Helen: 调查人员不能确定究竟发生了什么事情，但是他们根据证据推断 **the evidence implied** 证据暗示，这仅仅是一个不幸的事故，而不是恐怖事件。

Callum: So when something is implied, it is suggested but not directly stated.

Helen: 那么 **infer** 这个词又是什么意思呢？

Callum: If you infer something, it's not something that the speaker does, but something that the listener does.

Helen: **Infer** 的意思虽然和 **imply** 是一样的，但是是指听话方的感觉，比如刚才你从我的语气中感觉到我对你的不满，**you inferred I was angry**. 我透露出 不满，而你感觉或猜想到了我的不满。

Callum: And like **imply**, the verb **infer** is not always used when people are speaking to each other.

Helen: 下面是一段有关尼斯湖怪兽的录音。一个地理学家谈了为什么有些人没有看到湖中有任何奇怪的动静，但却相信里面有一个怪兽。

Insert

A violent commotion of the water, mostly, and they say that they couldn't really see a beast in the water but they infer that the beast was there because there was a large commotion.

Helen: 虽然没有人看到怪兽，但是水中有很多浪花，所以大家觉得里面肯定是有 一只怪兽。

Callum: Yes, that's right. There's one more thing to add about 'infer'.

Helen: 你还想说什么呢？

Callum: Well, just because you infer something, it doesn't mean you are right! You might have got the wrong idea.

Helen: 这点倒是说得很对的，当我们在做推断的时候，在一定程度上就是在猜想！可能会猜错呢。

Callum: Well, I can see you're looking at your watch Helen, so I infer that it is time to end the programme!

Helen: 不过在我们结束前，那让我们再复习一下。

Callum: To imply something is to give a message without saying it directly – it's something that comes from the speaker. To infer something is to receive a message which hasn't been said directly – it's something that the listener does.

Helen: 这两个词都有暗示，推断的意思，区别是说话的人 **implies** 暗示，听话的人则 **infers** 推断。谢谢你的解释，Callum.

Callum: You're welcome!

Helen: 谢谢收听，下次再会！Bye bye.

Callum: Bye.