

## BBC Learning English – Q & A of the Week

### 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。

---

### **Heteronyms** 同形异音异义词

Jean: 大家好，我是董征。欢迎大家收听我们 [bbcukchina.com](http://bbcukchina.com) 为您特别制作的《你问我答》节目。在这一档节目中，我们为大家解答你们在学习英语过程中碰到的一些问题。本期节目的问题来自中国的黄俊昌听友，他给我们写道，"I have a question on the word the. In oral English, do different pronunciations of this word have different meanings?" 黄俊昌同学想知道在英语里 the 这个词在发音不同的时候有什么不同的意思。那么今天在录音棚和我在一起的是一位英语专家，那么我们请他来帮助我们解答这个问题 – hello William.

William: Hi Jean.

Jean: So William, I think we say the when the word afterwards begins with a consonant – 一个辅音, right? Like, I can say "the teacher" But if the word begins with a vowel, 一个元音发音的时候, then I say the, as in "the apple".

William: Yeah that's absolutely right. But to be slightly more precise, it's not the spelling of the word that matters, but the sound. So for example, the word one - o-n-e - begins with a vowel, the letter O, but we pronounce it "one", which is not really a vowel sound. So I would normally say, "The one and only Jean Dong" – I wouldn't say "The One and only Jean Dong". And likewise, the letter h is not a vowel, but I would normally say "the hour" not "the hour" – because "hour" is a vowel sound.

Jean: OK, 看来在这里起决定因素的是发音，而不是拼写。那么 William，在 the 和 the 在发音不同的时候它的意思也会是不同的吗？

William: No.

Jean: No?

William: No.

Jean: OK! 那么看来今天我们的这个解答也是非常的简单，看来可以提前收工了！这倒也好，反正我今天也想早点下班呢，正好早点回家。那么好，黄俊昌同学，希望我们今天的解答对你的英语学习有些帮助，也请收听我们今天节目的朋友们如果有问题就给我们发邮件过来，我们的邮箱地址是 [questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk](mailto:questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk). Bye!

William: Bye!

Jean: What? What's happened?



William: I've just, I've just thought of something actually Jean. Can you put the music back on?

Jean: What is it?

William: Well, sometimes we say the instead of the because we want to add emphasis. Listen to this:

### Example

*I've just found the best website for learning English: bbcukchina.com.*

*I've just found the best website for learning English: bbcukchina.com!*

Jean: 看来，一般来讲，我们都会说 the best, 不过 for emphasis, 就是我们向加重语气起强调作用的时候，我们会说 the best.

William: This is really informal, spoken English. And often what we want to emphasise is that the object in question is the best thing. So we actually don't need to say the word best. We can just say...

### Example

*I've just found the website for learning English: bbcukchina.com!*

William: And here are some more examples:

### Example

*Tianjin is the place to go for dumplings.*

*Jean Dong is the presenter of English language programmes.*

Jean: Oh William 谢谢你给我这么高的评价！不过我可不敢说我就是最好的主持人，我们英语部还有好几个非常优秀的主持人呢，像 Feifei, 还有 Yang Li, Helen, 还有 Finn... Anyway, the meaning of the and the is almost the same – it's just that sometimes we say the for emphasis.

William: That's right. But we also occasionally use the in a slightly strange way. Let's listen to this:

### Example

*A: Oh you'll never guess who I saw yesterday in London. Victoria Beckham!*

*B: What, the Victoria Beckham?*

*A: Yeah. She was just coming out of a posh hotel.*

Jean: The Victoria Beckham. 听起来好像有点奇怪啊，在一个人的名字前面放个 the.

William: It is strange, you're right. It's used to mean, the famous person who is called that, so: the Victoria Beckham, David Beckham's wife, not the Victoria Beckham who works in a shoe shop or the Victoria Beckham that's a hairdresser, but the Victoria Beckham that everyone knows.



Jean: So I can say, "Today I saw the William Kremer"?

William: Yeah, but I'm not really that famous, Jean. But it's important to note that used like this, we always say the, we don't say "the Jean Dong", "the Victoria Beckham" but "the Jean Dong", "the Victoria Beckham".

Jean: Ok, 看来在这种情况下用的 the 意思和一般我们用的 the 和 the 都不一样。

William: Yes. And this leads us onto a related topic. There are some words in English which have the same spelling, but a different pronunciation and a different meaning.

Jean: Ok, 英语里有些单词是拼写相同, 不过在不同的情况下有不同的发音和含义。

William: We call these words heteronyms. Let's hear some examples.

### Examples

*A: What mobile phone do you use?*

*B: Just an old one. What's the use of a fancy new one that costs a fortune?*

*A: Do you need some time to perfect your speech?*

*B: No it's already perfect.*

*A: My wife and I have decided to separate. But it's not such a big deal. We've led separate lives for a long time really.*

*A: I'm happy with the way the poster looks, but I'm not sure about the writing.*

*B: You mean, you're not content with the content?!*

*A: The wind is strong today!*

*B: Yeah it is. Maybe I should wind down the shutters.*

William: So let's go through those again. The first three examples of heteronyms have a similar meaning but the word function is different.

Jean: 就是说, 这几个同形异音异义词的含义在使用时是相类似的, 不过它们起到的作用就往往不尽相同了。

William: So while use is a verb, use is a noun.

### Examples

*A: What mobile phone do you use?*

*B: Just an old one. What's the use of a fancy new one that costs a fortune?*

William: While to perfect is a verb, perfect is an adjective.

### Examples

*A: Do you need some time to perfect your speech?*

*B: No it's already perfect.*



Jean: 在下面的例句中，separate 是一个动词，而 separate 就是一个形容词了。

### Examples

*A: My wife and I have decided to separate. But it's not such a big deal. We've led separate lives for a long time really.*

William: However, the last two examples have completely different meanings.

Jean: Hmm. Content 是内容、含量的意思，而 content 就是满意、满足的意思了。

### Examples

*A: I'm happy with the way the poster looks, but I'm not sure about the writing.*

*B: You mean, you're not content with the content?!*

Jean: 而在下面这两个例句中，wind 是名词“风”的意思，而 to wind 就是把一个东西摇起来的意思了。

### Examples

*A: The wind is strong today!*

*B: Yeah it is. Maybe I should wind down the shutters.*

William: There are lots more heteronyms, but those are five of the most useful.

Jean: Ok?

William: Yeah.

Jean: Finished? Nothing you wish to add?

William: No. I'm all done now.

Jean: 那好，那这次没有大喘气，算是说完了吧？那现在可以收工回家了！See you.

William: Er, Ok. Thanks again Junchang Huang for your question. And remember our email address is... Jean?... Oh well, it's [questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk](mailto:questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk). Bye.