

UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University  
Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)  
Daily English Practice

Week 3

## #61 One Man and His Dictionary

**Skills/ Objectives: Listening and speaking**

### PART 1: Before you watch...

#### Preparatory questions

1. Did you know the Chinglish expression “add oil” has just been added to the Oxford English Dictionary?
2. Is the expression “long time no see” standard English?
3. How are new words created, and how do they make it to our everyday lives?
4. From the vocabulary list below, can you find one appropriate word to complete the following sentence?

*Telegrams became \_\_\_\_\_ when the telephone was invented.*

#### Vocabulary

1. Borrowing(s) (noun): something that is borrowed (like a word from a foreign language)
2. Obsolete (adjective): not in use any longer
3. Irony (noun): the use of a word that is opposite to what one means
4. Catchy (adjective): easy to remember
5. Literally (adverb): exactly what a word means

*Answer(s) to the relevant questions above will be provided in the next exercise.*

**Answers to relevant questions in the preceding set of exercises:**

#### **Question 4:**

*The word is “physician,” not to be confused with “physicist”!*

### PART 2: Video

This video explains how new words enter a language.

***Where Do New Words Come From?*** (click the link below to watch the video)

<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/where-do-new-words-come-from-marcel-danesi>

(Source: TED Ed)

### **PART 3: Speaking**

From the video we know that there are over “170,000 words currently in use in the English language.” How do we pronounce a string of numbers like 170,000?

Re-play the video at 0:22' and listen carefully. If you cannot catch it, go to “speed” in settings and slow down the speech from “normal” to “0.75” or even “0.5.” You will hear it say “one hundred and seventy thousand.”

“One hundred and seventy” = 170

“Thousand” = ,000

Never say “comma”!

### **PART 4: Learn further**

1. Read about how a man compiled a 40,000-word dictionary of the English language, almost single-handedly:

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/dic/johnson/1755johnsonsdictionary.html>

The man was Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1784).

2. While you cannot find an expression like “add oil” in an 18th century dictionary, here is a small selection of words from it: “10 Words from Samuel Johnson's Dictionary”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRcg0PO5eTw>