

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

Week 10

#150 English and Chinese – a comparison

Skills/ Objectives: Reading, Listening and Writing Skills

PART 1: Before you read...

Preparatory questions

- What's the main difference between English and Chinese in terms of their languages?
- Did you find it difficult to learn the intonation of English language if you are a non-English speaker? What is the obstacle?

Vocabulary

- Suprasegmental (adj) - relating to a speech feature, such as stress or pitch, that affects more than one speech sound:
- Rhythmic (adj): musical with repeated beats
- Manifested (adj): shown clearly
- homograph (noun) - a word that is spelled the same as another word but has a different meaning:
- dip – (noun) a lowering/reduction in something.
- Prosodic – (adj) the rhythm and intonation (= the way a speaker's voice rises and falls) of language
- Liaison – (noun) the act of joining sounds together in speech
- Staccato – (adj) consisting of short individual sounds

PART 2: Article for Reading

Let us read the article posted at the following website of Hong Kong Education University:

http://corpus.eduhk.hk/English_Pronunciation/?page_id=443

Try to find answers to the following questions in the article:

Qt1: How does the main difference in the stress patterns of Chinese and English make it hard for English people to learn the Chinese language?

Qt2: What are two common ways in which many Chinese speakers of English handle stress in the English language if they are not aware of the differences in the rhythmic patterns between English and Chinese.

Qt3: Why do native English speakers find Chinese speakers unnatural in their pronunciation of English?

The answers to Qt1 - 3 will be provided in the next set of exercises.

PART 3: Listening Comprehension

Watch the following video to learn more about the differences between Chinese and English while practising your listening skills:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mgiEWWGLfU>

PART 4: Writing Practice

It says in the article “It’s not easy for Chinese speakers to acquire the English intonation.” Should this be “It’s” or “Its”? Of course, the answer is “It’s” which is the short form for “It is”. “Its” is the possessive pronoun telling that something belongs to another thing. Simple as they look, these two words are often mixed up by students in usage. Please make a note.