

---

# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The English We Speak

### A face for radio



BBC  
LEARNING  
ENGLISH

*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

---

**Yang Li**

Hello and welcome to the English We Speak from BBC Learning English. I'm Li. Neil... Hey, where is Neil? Although he's great presenter he's often late. Oh, here he comes!

**Neil**

Sorry, sorry Li, I'm here now. Sorry, I'm a bit late.

**Yang Li**

Wow Neil, you look so different today: a suit and tie – what's happening?

**Neil**

Well, I have to present our video: 'The Perfect English Gentleman' it's called.

**Yang Li**

That sounds fun. Don't you want to do it?

**Neil**

Not really.

**Yang Li**

Why not? You are a great presenter. Everyone loves your voice.

**Neil**

Well, it's not my voice that's the problem. Look at this massive, broken nose and spotty skin, my missing teeth, and long greasy hair... Li, I'm pretty ugly. I kept saying to my boss that I have a face for radio, but he insisted I present the video. What can I do?

**Yang Li**

Did you say you have a face for radio? But you don't need to show your face as a radio presenter, do you?

**Neil**

That's exactly the point, Li. If you say someone's got a good face for radio, it's an indirect way of saying they are not very good looking!

**Yang Li**

I see. I like this phrase 'a face for radio' – an indirect way of saying someone is not very attractive. Here are some examples:

**Examples**

Man: Jane looked beautiful at her wedding.

Woman: Really? She must have had a good make-up artist because, to be honest, she's got a face for radio.

Man: No one's going to choose me at this speed-dating event.

Woman: Why on earth not? You're such a warm-hearted guy.

Man: Thanks. But you have to admit, I've got a face for radio.

**Yang Li**

So that's 'a face for radio' – our expression today. Hey Neil, I think I have got a solution for your video presenting problem... How about this for a good opening line? Do you want to hear it?

**Neil**

Go on then.

**Yang Li**

(clearing her throat): 'This modern English gentleman has got a face for radio. Just shut your eyes, relax and listen...'

**Neil**

Now you're making fun of me, Li!

**Yang Li**

OK, seriously, I think you will be just as good on video as you are in front of a microphone. You have a unique way of saying things which is clear, funny and engaging. What face could beat that!

**Neil**

Thanks Li. I feel a lot more confident now! Just pass me that mirror... Actually I'm not that bad looking, am I?

**Yang Li**

No, you're not. You've got a face for TV and a voice for radio!

**Neil**

Hey, thanks Li, you've made my day!

**Both**

Bye!