

BBC Learning English

Talk about English

Live webcast
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About this script

Please note that this is not a word for word transcript of the programme as broadcast. In the recording process changes may have been made which will not be reflected here.

Anna: Hello I'm Anna Jones

Jackie: And I'm Jackie Dalton

Anna: And this is Talk about English coming to you live from our offices at BBC Learning English in London.

Jackie: And coming up today – phobias

Anna: What makes you scared? Spiders? Open spaces? Heights?

Jackie: We'll be hearing about poisonous snakes at a research institute in Brazil

Anna: We'll take a look at the language behind the headlines

Jackie: there's an opportunity to enter our competition and win a BBC Learning English prize

Anna: and, as usual, the latest from our online soap, The Flatmates

Anna: And today we're talking about phobias – a phobia is a specific kind of fear of some particular type of object or situation. – Jackie can you explain the origin of the word 'phobia' for us please?

Jackie: Well the term "phobia" comes from the Greek word "phobos" meaning 'flight' 'panic' 'fear' and terror

Anna: And those are the feelings – feelings of panic, fear and terror - that some people have when they are in a particular situation where they have to face up to their phobia. Well to tell us more about specific kinds of phobias today we're joined by David Thomas who is the media liaison director at the National Phobics Society which offers support and advice for people affected by anxiety disorders. Hello David .and welcome to the programme.

David: Hello.

Anna: Well I gave a definition of phobia there – was I right? What is a phobia exactly – how do you define it?

Anna: Can you tell us what different kinds of phobias there are? Are some more serious than others?

Anna:: How do we become phobic?

Anna: And that was David Bowie with the track 'Scary Monsters. Well talking of scary monsters we asked some people in London what scared them and this is what they said:

I'm afraid of large underwater fish that are not visible.if I'm swimming and weeds. Weeds and water. I'm afraid of spiders – one night a spider came in through my window and it could

actually roll itself up into a little ball which **scared me to death** and I went to sleep in the living room instead. Heights - because once – when I was in KL I went to the Petronus Towers and climbed to the top of it and looked out of the window and then had to sit on the floor in the middle of the building because I didn't know what happened to me - it was too high, too scary.

Anna: Well an interesting collection of phobias there. The first woman said she was scared of large fish, weeds and water, the second said she was “scared to death” by a spider and the last person we heard climbed to the top of a very tall office block in Kuala Lumpur and had to sit down in the middle of the building because it was too high. Are those phobias we just heard common David? Are there a lot of people scared of water, fish, spiders and heights?

Anna: What kind of advice would you give them to face up to their fears?

Anna: (recap briefly) Well if you have a phobia and would like to tell us about it then please contact us at: talkaboutenglish@bbc.co.uk

Anna: Yes, it's time for this week's competition. If you would like to win a BBC Learning English prize then e-mail us the answer to this question. What is my phobia? You'll hear the answer in today's webcast or you can find it by clicking on the 'Meet the team' section of the website._

Jackie: And that's our competition question this week – what is Anna's phobia? Email us the answer now to talkaboutenglish@bbc.co.uk That's talkaboutenglish@bbc.co.uk

Anna: We're also running a vote on phobias. Do you have a phobia? Let us know by voting on our website now. We'll give you the results at the end of the programme.

Anna: Now if you've read about the BBC Learning English team on our website then you'll know that I am absolutely terrified of a particular kind of animal. But on a recent trip to Brazil I forced myself to go and see some. Now before you hear someone describing these animals and I ask you to try to guess what they are, I'll give you a clue – they're reptiles – animals with scales that lay eggs. Now, listen to Luis who works with these animals and try to guess what he is describing.

These species are poisonous and very dangerous here in Sao Paulo, many accidents. Their colour is brown. They live in open areas and feed on only mice – so is very dangerous here in Sao Paulo.. .

Anna: That was Luis who works at the Butantan Institute in Sao Paulo describing one of the reptiles he looks after. – it's a rattlesnake. He describes it as a very dangerous species – a very dangerous type of animal – he tells us that there are many accidents associated with rattlesnakes.in SaoPaulo. Luis tells us that these snakes are brown in colour, they live in open areas and feed on mice.

Anna: Now back to our special guest this week, David Thomas who works for the National Phobics Society here in the UK. Was it a good idea for me to force myself to go to the snake farm even though I am phobic about snakes?

Anna:: Is gender a factor? Do more women than men have phobias? What about children?

Anna:: You spoke to us earlier about the types of phobia that exist such as agoraphobia - a fear of open spaces - and social phobia – feeling anxious about facing social situations. Now what kind of support and help does the National Phobic Society offer to people who suffer from these types of disorders?

Anna:: Do you have a phobia David? What about you Jackie?

Anna: What's the strangest phobia you've ever come across David?

Anna: Thanks very much for joining us on today's webcast David.

Anna: You're listening to Talk about English with me Anna Jones

Jackie: And me Jackie Dalton.

Anna: Today we're talking about phobias which is also the topic of this week's competition. And today's question is: What is my phobia? You'll hear the answer in today's webcast or you can find it by clicking on the 'Meet the team' section of the website. _

Jackie: And that's our competition question this week – what is Anna's phobia?
Email us the answer now to:

Jackie: So send your answer to talkaboutenglish@bbc.co.uk. We're also running a vote on the topic of phobias. Do you have a phobia? Let us know by voting on our website now. We'll give you the results at the end of the programme.

Anna: But before that here's Yvonne Archer with Songlines and the title of the song is "gotta get through this" – just how I felt when I visited the snake farm in Brazil.

Anna: And that was Daniel Bedingfield getting through something difficult there. Well on our website we asked you to let us know about your phobias and we now have Raber on the telephone from Morocco.

Anna: Well now its time to go back to the snake farm in Brazil. Even though I am terrified of snakes I forced myself to go I spoke to the general director of the

institute, Octavio Mercadente. and he spoke about the work of the Institute - as you listen, try to answer this question. What work does the Institute do?

The Institute is an institute of research and production of serum and vaccines. The principle subject is the venom of snakes because from the venom of snakes we produce the serum against accidents. And we produce vaccines for the whole of Brazil

Anna: Well the director Octavio says that the institute does research and also produces serum and vaccines for the whole of Brazil. A vaccine is a substance that contains a harmless form of the germs that cause a disease which is given to people to prevent them from getting the disease. A serum is a liquid that is taken from an animal which has become immune to a disease or poison and is injected into someone's blood to protect them against that disease or as an antidote against poison – a way of stopping or controlling the effects of a poison. Here's Octavio again.

The Institute is an institute of research and production of serum and vaccines. The principle subject is the venom of snakes because from the venom of snakes we produce the serum against accidents. And we produce vaccines for the whole of Brazil

Anna: So the institute produces serums and vaccines. What kind of animal does the institute get its serum from?

We inject the horse and we take the blood of the horse and we produce from the blood of the horse the serum against the snake venom.

Anna: To produce serum against poisonous snake bites the institute collects blood from a horse. The horse's blood contains anti-toxins – a toxin is a poisonous substance that is very harmful to plants and animals – so an anti-toxin is something which stops the poison from working.. The serum against the snake

venom or poison is then produced from the horse's blood. Now let's have a recap on some of the language we've heard today:

Venom: poison

Serum: a liquid that is injected into someone's blood to stop or control the effects of poison

Vaccine: a substance that contains a harmless form of the germs that cause a disease which is given to people to prevent them from getting the disease.

Anna: Well that report was all about snakes – a phobia of mine – and the work of the Butantan Institute in Sao Paulo. Well on our website we asked you to let us know about your phobias and we now have Leonid on the telephone from Ukraine.

Anna: Well earlier on we listened to some people in London telling us about their phobias. Here they are again - listen out for the expression that means to be extremely frightened.

I'm afraid of large underwater fish that are not visible. if I'm swimming and weeds. Weeds and water. I'm afraid of spiders – one night a spider came in through my window and it could actually roll itself up into a little ball which **scared me to death** and I went to sleep in the living room instead. Heights - because once – when I was in KL I went to the Petronus Towers and climbed to the top of it and looked out of the window and then had to sit on the floor in the middle of the building because I didn't know what happened to me - it was too high, too scary.

Anna: Jackie – what was the expression used there that means to be extremely frightened?

Jackie: “scared to death”

Anna: And have you ever been scared to death in any situation?

Anna: We also asked you to write and tell us about your phobias. What comments have you got there Jackie?

Anna: This is Talk about English, live from BBClearningenglish.com. I'm Anna Jones

Jackie: And I'm Jackie Dalton

Anna: And today we're talking about phobias. And one of the pieces of advice sometimes given to people who have phobias is you must try to face up to the situation or thing that you are frightened of and then your level of anxiety will probably drop. For example, if you don't want to go in an aeroplane on holiday someone may say to you after you get back

Jackie: You **should have** gone on holiday by plane – it would have helped you deal with your phobia

Anna: But when do you use the construction “should have” in a sentence and when do you use the construction “must have?” That's what Seka, a learner in India wants to know and here's language expert George Pickering with the answer.

Well Seika, thanks for your question about the difference between “**should have**” and “**must have**”.

“**Should have**” is used to talk about past events which did not happen or may not have happened.

For example:

I should have finished this work by now

OR...

I should have studied harder for my exams.

In both the sentences above, the speaker might be expressing regret and/or criticism for not having done something.

We also use **should have** to express unfulfilled obligations, for example:

He **should have helped** his mother carry the shopping.

Now **must have** is used to express something that the speaker has deduced or is certain about in relation to the past.

For example, if you wake up in the morning and you see the ground is wet outside, you might say:

"It **must have rained** overnight".

So let's look at a sentence with both **should have** and **must have** in it...

Jane **should have arrived** by now; she **must have missed** the bus".

In this situation, we would expect Jane to have arrived by now, but as she hasn't, we come to the conclusion that her lateness is due her having missed the bus.

Anna: And that was language expert George Pickering.

Anna: Now its time to join the Flatmates. They're all back from the World Cup and feeling a little bit bored and miserable.

Alice: It's nice to be back but I do miss the excitement of the World Cup. I'm bored!

Helen: Oh thanks very much!

Alice: I didn't mean you! I just mean it's a bit hard to come back to reality that's all.

Tim: Who says we have to? Why don't we do something to cheer ourselves up?

Alice: Like what?

Michal: Go to the pub.

Alice: No, it's too smoky.

Tim: Go to a nightclub.

Helen: It's too noisy.

Michal: How about going to the cinema?

Alice: There's nothing on I really want to see.

Michal: We could have a party.

Alice: What are we celebrating?

Michal: You know it's almost a year since I came to live here.

Helen: Perfect! We'll have our first anniversary party!

Anna: What kind of party do you think they will have? A bar-b-q , a fancy dress or a picnic.You can decide by voting on the Flatmates website, that's bbclearningenglish.com/flatmates. You can also find out more about the language and vocabulary of the Flatmates and do exercises and quizzes. Now we're joined by our colleague Callum Robertson – hello Callum.

Callum: Hello

Anna: Well Callum, today we've been talking about phobias – what kind of phobias do you think the characters in the Flatmates might have? Not cats I hope!

Anna: And what about you? Do you have a phobia?

Anna: Now its time to look at language in this week's press. And our first headline is:from the Daily Mirror:

I GOT THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

Anna: Callum, what do you make of that?

SUMMARY: Angler catches the same fish twice in a week.....in the sea off the south coast of England

VOCAB stunned - amazed

Turned the tables on – to change/reverse a situation

Snagged - torn

Reeled in – to pull in an object on the end of a rope using a wheel – in this case a reel on a fishing rod

Distinctive hook – curved device used for catching or holding things – (recognisable)

What are the odds of this? – the probability that something will or will not happen?

Hefty – large in size or amount

Put up a bit of a fight – to defend against an attack

Lightning striking twice in the same place – (Lightning – bright light in the sky produced by electricity) - unlikely that something bad or unusual will happen in the same place twice

Anna: Now our next story is also from the Daily Mirror:

HEADLINE: ICE OF THE TIGER

Anna: Callum, what do you make of that?

SUMMARY: Ways for animals to keep cool in hot weather in UK

Jackie: Now it's time to find out the results of our live webcast vote. And our vote this week was: Do you have a phobia?

Anna: And I believe we also have a winner of today's competition. Congratulations to our winner who is Antony Vieira from Brazil. And the answer to our competition – what is my phobia ' is of course - snakes

Anna: And do we have any more emails that have just come in Jackie about phobias?

Anna: Well a big thank you to our guests this week David, Callum and of course to Jackie. That's all from today's live Talk about English. Don't forget to join us next week at the same time 12.15 GMT. Don't worry if you missed some of the live broadcast, you can listen again on the website, bbclearningenglish.com.....Bye for now.