

Silly Linguistics

**BAD
SPANISH
SPELLING**



**The Japanese
Word for Sushi**

FEATURE

Putting Learning
to the Test

**Making
Sex
in Italy**

**Not Speaking
French in France**

**The World is Your
Classroom Now**

:OCTOBER 2019:

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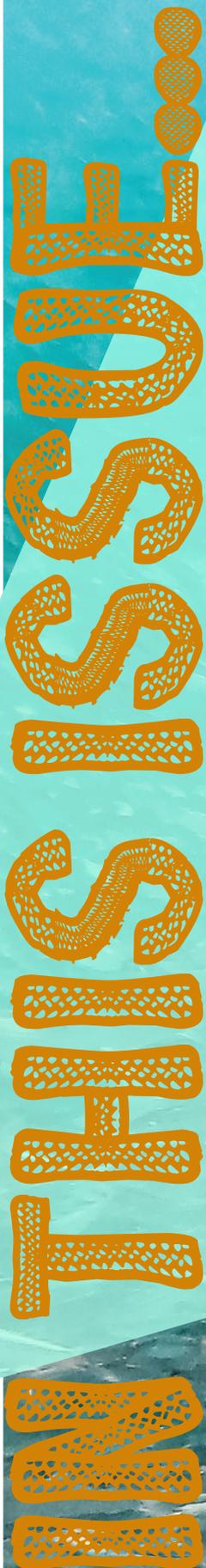
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S is for...

Say what you see

 **Chris Davy**

Ok, back to some learning techniques.

“Say what you see!”, a phrase immortalised in my mind by the great Roy Walker, from the equally fantastic TV Show ‘CATCHPHRASE’! No, watching TV is not the learning technique. Yeah, I recommend it a little, but ultimately please, please, please, please, please for the love of language, speak to people. Don’t just become a couch potato and watch TV.

If you’ve never seen ‘Catchphrase’, quite simply you haven’t lived. It’s basically a quiz show based around idioms and other famous phrases. Seriously, if you haven’t seen ‘Catchphrase’ then you and I are clearly very different people.

What’s more, I’ve just gone downstairs to feed Ozzy the cat, and guess what was on TV! Yeaahhh boooiii! ‘Catchphrase’, now presented by Stephen Mulhern; who I think is a funny and talented bloke if I do say so myself. What can I say, the man can do magic; I’m all eyes and ears. To those of you that are paying particularly close attention, yeah yeah, I left the TV on. The England v Bulgaria game was on and I came upstairs. Believe me I do care about the planet, and saving electricity and all that, but these articles are sometimes spontaneous, and you’ve got to strike while the iron is hot. *wink* It’s actually to do with blacksmithing, and not ironing shirts.

But, there’s a few things to take from this. First, idioms are totally mental and crazy sayings that occur in language. Some of the ones that I’ve seen shared through Silly Linguistics absolutely blow my mind. But, they are AMAZING! Without question the one I have fell in love with the most so far is the Finnish phrase, “*Sopii kuin nyrkki silmään.*” Meaning, “It fit’s like a fist in the eye!”

Haaaaaaaaaaaa haaaaaaaaaaaa haaaaaa!!!!

All I’m saying is, ‘Catchphrase’ totally needs to up it’s game and go full polyglot.

So yeah, idioms, an incredible, incredible element of language. As a kid, on occasions I was often not understood very well by people. I’m still not now, but as a kid it was partly because I often spoke using

idioms or just common phrases, just because I found it easier to do. I think it's because it's quite an escapist style of conversation, so it can take the edge off a harsh situation. It basically isn't hard hitting and to the point. It isn't blunt. It's kind of like speaking a secret language or code. But only if you are up to speed on it, can you actually understand what is being said. Unfortunately, more so for those around me, these days I'm now pretty comfortable chatting nonsense and sense at will; a scary combination.

And part two, "Say what you see". When contestants are on 'Catchphrase' they often don't have a scooby doo what the phrase is, so they guess. They try. They have a go. Now, a good chunk of learning language and being able to communicate with people is down to, just having a go. So, if you are trying to learn a foreign language, just have a go and play 'Catchphrase' wherever you are.

Take a look around. Say what you see.

For example, I'm sat in my office at the moment. There is a bunch of things around me. There are a bunch of textures, a bunch of colours, a bunch of objects, and so on. So, I can easily take a look around and see what words I can remember based on any foreign languages I know.

Oh yeah, and in my office, I actually have the Spanish alphabet stuck on the wall with a basic phonetic pronunciation written underneath. Listen, I need all the help I can get.

Ohhhh, it's good. But it's not right!

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