

Handling misunderstandings in cultural contexts

Have you ever misunderstood someone because of language differences?

Vocabulary Match

1. tricky 2. clarify 3. context 4. elaborate 5. refined 6. realised

___ situation ___ hard ___ better ___ knew ___ fancy ___ explain

Conversation

Aiko and David discuss a misunderstanding from a meeting.

Aiko: Hi, David. I wanted to talk to you about something from yesterday. I think there was a bit of a misunderstanding at the meeting.

David: Oh, really? What happened? I didn't notice anything was wrong. Could you explain?

Aiko: Sure. When you said the project needed more "polish," I thought you meant it should be more _____. But later, I _____ you actually meant it should be more _____.

David: Ah, I see what you mean. In British English, "polish" often means to refine or improve the quality. Sorry if that wasn't clear.

Aiko: No worries. It's interesting how words can have different shades of meaning depending on the _____. Thanks for explaining.

David: Of course. Language can be _____ like that. If you're ever unsure about something, just ask. I'm happy to _____.

Aiko: Thanks, David. I'll definitely do that. It's all part of learning and working together, isn't it?

David: Exactly. Misunderstandings happen, but they're great chances to learn. Let's keep the communication open.

Quiz

1. What was the misunderstanding about in the meeting?
2. What did Aiko initially think "polish" meant?
3. What does "polish" mean in British English according to David?
4. What does David suggest Aiko do if she is unsure about something?

True or False

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Aiko thought "polish" meant to make something simpler. | True False |
| 2. David says language can be tricky. | True False |
| 3. Aiko plans to avoid asking questions in the future. | True False |

Discussion

1. What is a funny misunderstanding you've experienced?
2. How do you usually clarify misunderstandings?
3. Have you ever learned something new from a misunderstanding?
4. Do you think misunderstandings can be beneficial? Why or why not?
5. What are some words in English that you find confusing?