Video 1 – Introduction with Ed Pegg

Hello, I'm Ed Pegg. I teach international business communication at the London School of English.

Welcome to a new video series from Macmillan Dictionary called Real World English. This series is for anyone around the world who uses English in their working lives.

We'll be focusing on how the words we use – and the way we use them – can differ from place to place. These differences can affect your ability to understand and be understood in the global marketplace.

Nowadays we interact regularly with people from around the world, and we generally use Standard English to do so.

This is because Standard English is mostly the same everywhere, with the same grammar and the same essential vocabulary. *Mostly* the same … but even Standard English varies a little from place to place because of differences in dialect.

Many of these differences are small, like spelling *travelled* with one 'l' or two. But other differences can affect communication, so it's important to be aware of them.

These differences often occur in the areas of *vocabulary*: what words we use; and *pragmatics*: how we use those words to convey meaning or feeling. So we'll focus on those areas in these videos.

English around the world has a shared vocabulary, which is vital for business communication. But different varieties of English have their own phrases and usages. For example, if I said to you: "Go down this road and turn left at the robots," you might be confused unless you knew that in South African English, *robot*s is the word for 'traffic lights'.

Things can get confusing! And differences like this matter, especially in formal contexts like business. Our videos on vocabulary will highlight these tricky words, so that you won't have any trouble understanding them in context.

The other topic we focus on is pragmatics - a broad field that studies language use in a cultural, social, and interpersonal context. Pragmatics looks at how language is used to express a meaning, or an attitude, that may not be obvious from the words themselves. This includes things like politeness and irony.

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This aspect of English can also differ from one place to another. For example, we'll look at how British people tend to use understatement more than American people do.

Remember, Macmillan Dictionary takes a descriptive, rather than a prescriptive approach to English.

This means we study how people use English in speech and writing around the world. Everything in our dictionary is backed up by the evidence of language in use. So you can be confident about putting these lessons to practical use in the real world.

We hope you enjoy our video series on Real World English!

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