

pronunciation is learned, the audio files can be very beneficial. They are available in different speeds and accents. So you can choose the one that best fits your needs and interests.

- **Every two days** it is **updated** and you can find the real news in the provided sources.

- The **context** is very rich here. The words, discussion, writing, etc. are all based on the established context and the learners are supposed to use them and communicate in a meaningful context.

- The **challenge** of reading and **understanding news** which is really difficult to meet, can be **facilitated** through this website.

Weaknesses

- **No feedback on learners' production.** This website provides the answers to most of the activities, but as far as the learners' production is concerned, it seems that some modifications are required. For better results, the presented news must be studied in a class under the supervision of a teacher so that the students can receive appropriate feedback based on their performance.

- **Little attention to grammar.** Even though language skills and components are dealt with, grammar is not attended to a large extent here. Perhaps, it is because the main purpose is to understand the news. However, if grammar seems to be important, further explanation and practice might be required which must be provided by the teacher (Scrivener, 2011). This decision is to be made based upon the major aims of the course and the learners' needs.

- **Hard to understand (at times).** Because the content of the lessons are provided through news texts, chances

are that the learners are not able to understand the news. This can happen due to the learners' inadequate cognitive knowledge or linguistic competence. To overcome this problem, teacher's explanation of key words, a discussion about the theme of that particular news may be helpful.

Conclusion

In sum, the present article made an attempt to introduce a useful website that presents one piece of news every other day. The news can be accessed in mini lessons and also comprehensive lessons. The mini lessons appear in two pages including a number of different activities. It can offer useful exercises regarding different aspects of language.

Besides, it can satisfy some learners' need for reading and understanding news and providing lots of opportunities to practice English in a meaningful context. Used individually or in a class, the two-page lessons have a lot to offer to the interested learners.

Acknowledgement

My heartfelt appreciation goes to the supportive reviewer(s) for their useful comments on the original version of this review article.

References

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Online Sources

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- www.englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/events/eltons/previous-eltons/2014

In order to get more involved with the text and do more exercises, another part of this website can be used which is shown in Figure 3. There are a variety of activities regarding different language skills and components which mostly deal with vocabulary (e.g. use, meaning and spelling), listening and speaking, and reading. It is noteworthy that the activities presented here are exactly the ones which will be accessible throughout the comprehensive lessons. Therefore, in mini lessons nothing is deleted. The point is that the items are presented in different sections and users can use any of them based on their needs and interests.

Evaluation

What follows takes the strong and weak points of this website into account very briefly.

Strengths

- Generally, it can be claimed that this website and particularly the PDF file and also its accompanying audio files can provide the learners (or the readers) with a variety of opportunities to practice language. **Different areas of language**, namely speaking, reading, listening, writing and vocabulary can be practiced.
- To make sure the correct

More Activities				
Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill in the blank • Matching • Flash Cards • Missing Words • No letters • Crossword • Hangman • Gap-Fill • Word Order • Word Pairs 	More Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar Gap-Fill • Articles Gap-Fill • Prepositions Gap-Fill • Consonants • Vowels • Missing Letters • Initials Only • Text Jumble - 15 • Text Jumble - 24 • No Spaces 	Listen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP3s • Discussion Questions Dictation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Sentences • Spelling (12 Words) 	Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed Reading Activities 	Sean's Other Sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 650+ Discussions (13,000+ Qs) • One-Minute Listening Lessons • Famous People Lessons • Holiday & Anniversary Lessons • Sean Banville on Twitter • My Blog • Free ESL Materials • Business English Materials • Lessons On All American Presidents

Figure 3. More Activities

To ensure the correct pronunciation, there are different audio files, both in American English and British English to feed different tastes for popular accents of English. Moreover, as Figure 4 illustrates, the files are accessible in various speeds to meet the needs of different learners. To access the audio files, one must click on the news title and go below the downloadable PDF version. In “More Activities” section, under the subtitle “Listen”, one needs to click on “MP3s” and here is what they will see.

The image shows a vertical stack of five audio player controls. Each control consists of a play button on the left, a progress bar in the middle, and a volume icon on the right. The speed settings are: Slower, Medium (British English), Medium (N. American English), Faster, and Fastest. The time displayed for each is 0:00:00.

Figure 4. The audio files

BreakingNewsEnglish - Many online quizzes at URL below

Tonga prime minister challenges leaders to lose weight

16th August, 2018



The prime minister of Tonga has challenged leaders of other Pacific nations to lose weight. He is asking them to join the fight against obesity by taking part in a one-year-long weight loss challenge. The prime minister, Akilisi Poha, told the Samoa Observer newspaper that he will set the challenge when leaders meet at the Pacific Island Forum in the tiny nation of Nauru in September. He said: "We should all get together for a weight-loss competition for an entire year, so when we meet the following year, we will weigh in again and see who has lost the most." He added: "We have been [talking about] the same issue, over the years but it doesn't seem to work."

Mr Poha also spoke about Tonga's life expectancy going down because of obesity and weight-related issues. He said: "It is now down to 68 years old, yet at one stage it was 71. It has reduced significantly." He hopes his weight-loss challenge will encourage Pacific islanders to lose weight. He said: "Once the leaders are adapting to that mindset they would be determined to get their people [doing] the same...and go from there." The Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum said Pacific Island nations were losing their fight against child obesity. The World Health Organization said 20 per cent of children between the ages of five and 19 were obese in 10 Pacific island countries.

Sources: theguardian.com / helenpugh.co.uk / bobberver.net

True / False

- Tonga's prime minister said most of the world's leaders are overweight. T / F
- Tonga's prime minister wants leaders to spend a year losing weight. T / F
- The weight-loss challenge will start next year. T / F
- Tonga's leader wants other leaders to meet next year to compare weight. T / F
- Life expectancy in Tonga has gone down because of obesity. T / F
- Tonga's leader wants other leaders to lead by example. T / F
- A forum said Pacific islands are winning the fight against obesity. T / F
- Around 45 per cent of Pacific island children are overweight. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

1. nations	a. question
2. fight	b. very small
3. tiny	c. overweight
4. entire	d. decreasing
5. issue	e. battle
6. going down	f. persuade
7. stage	g. countries
8. encourage	h. resolved to
9. determined	i. whole
10. obese	j. stop

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of Mr Poha's challenge?
- What do you think of your weight?
- Why are so many people getting overweight?
- Should leaders and celebrities worldwide join this challenge?
- Have you ever tried to lose weight?
- Why are Pacific islanders so overweight?
- Should schools and employers do things to encourage healthy weight?
- What do you know about Tonga and other Pacific island nations?

Writing

All world leaders should lose weight to encourage their people to stay slim. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

leaders / nations / lose weight / obesity / challenge / competitors / weigh / issue / life expectancy / significantly / encourage / modest / determined / island / fight

BreakingNewsEnglish - Many online quizzes at URL below

Phrase Match

- join the fight
- he will set
- see who has lost
- over the
- it doesn't seem
- life
- weight-
- it has reduced
- losing their fight
- between the
- the challenge
- related issues
- to work
- ages of five and 19
- against obesity
- the most
- against child obesity
- expectancy
- years
- significantly

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What's the best way to lose weight?
- Will countries lose the fight against obesity?
- Is dieting or exercising the best way to lose weight?
- How can we encourage children to control their weight?
- What are the biggest causes of obesity in children?
- People are either starving, on a diet or overweight. Why?
- What questions would you like to ask Mr Poha?

Spelling

- join the fight against obesity
- related part
- the tiny islands of Nauru
- for an entire year
- when we meet the annual year
- talking about the same issue
- Tonga's life expectancy
- It has reduced significantly
- against Pacific islanders
- encourage to that mindset
- they would be determined to get their people
- nations were losing their fight

Answers – Spelling Match

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
o	b	7	8	6	3	4	1	5	2	12	10

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.

Role Play

Role A - Eating Only Fruit

You think eating only fruit is the best way to lose weight. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the best effective way of losing weight (and why): eating only fruit, having no lunch or drinking water.

Role B - Jogging

You think jogging is the best way to lose weight. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the best effective way of losing weight (and why): jogging, having no lunch or drinking water.

Role C - Having No Lunch

You think having no lunch is the best way to lose weight. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the best effective way of losing weight (and why): jogging, eating only fruit or drinking water.

Role D - Drinking Water

You think drinking water is the best way to lose weight. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ways. Also, tell the others which is the best effective way of losing weight (and why): jogging, having no lunch or eating only fruit.

Speaking – Weight Loss

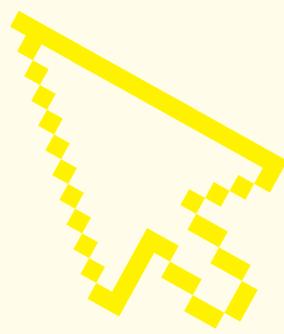
Rank these with your partner. Put the best ways to lose weight at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- drink lots of water
- eat only fruit
- weigh yourself daily
- jog
- eat carbohydrates
- no lunch
- cycle to work/school
- no sugary foods

Answers – True False

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
True	False	False	True								

Figure 2. Different Parts and PDF File



- **Title, Date, Picture:** The first thing that catches our eyes when the PDF file is open is the title of that piece of news, followed by a date and a related picture.
- **Text:** The main part of the news is the text which appears afterwards. The text is organized in two paragraphs containing about 250 words.
- **Sources:** At the end, you can see the sources to further study or verify the news.
- * All the following sections are activities dealing with different language skills and components which are introduced below:
 - **Writing:** A topic is provided and you are asked to develop the topic.
 - **Chat:** This part contains a number of key words from the text to be checked and talked about.
 - **True/False:** Around ten sentences are to be checked if they are true or false.
 - **Synonym Match:** Ten words are given from the passage and are to be matched with the provided words in the second list as synonyms.
 - **Discussion Student A and Student B:** There are two lists of about 10 questions

- that make students think and talk about different aspects of the news.
- **Phrase Match:** In order to practice collocation and get familiar with this concept, the readers can do this activity and match the halves and make complete meaningful phrases using their gained knowledge from the text.
- **Spelling:** To practice writing of the main words, this part can be very helpful. Each word appears in a sentence in the form of underlined scrambled letters and the readers are instructed to put them in order.
- **Role Play:** Four cards are given with a title and each card assigns a particular role to its reader and together the readers are going to discuss the topic based on their roles.
- **Speaking:** As the last activity based on what has been done so far, the readers are expected to speak together and do different tasks, e.g. ranking, selecting, and organizing (Harmer, 2007).
- **Answers:** Finally, there are answers to **synonym match** and **true/false** items.

Media details

Publisher: Sean Banville

Product type: website

Language(s): English

Level: different

Operating systems: Windows, Macintosh, Android, IOS, etc.

Hardware requirements: connection to the Net, headphones or speakers

Price: free

Introduction

Understanding news in English in a foreign language has always been a long-lasting dream for language learners (Dornyei, 2009). However, it does not seem to be manageable for many language learners. Different attempts have been made to bring the news to language classes through various media such as websites, textbooks, and applications. One of these news-oriented programs which is offered via a website can be accessible through the following link:

www.breakingnewsenglish.com.

In this website, the learners can enjoy reading and listening to the news and do lots of activities about the theme of that news. Here the learners can feel very confident because even the beginners can understand at least the main parts of it. Because it contains different language skills, it can offer a lot of learning opportunities to the learners. It was created by Sean Banville in 2004 and was one of the nominees for the ELTon prize in 2014 for “innovations in learner resources” in the great field of English language teaching (www.englishagenda.britishcouncil.org, n.d.).

Description

This helpful website can offer a variety of services. The one that is the main concern of this review, however, has to do with news. It is updated every two days. The main lesson appears in 6 levels and in 30 pages. If you select the comprehensive lesson, you will find a large number of activities which will be available on a very long page. But it is very convenient to go directly to “mini-lessons” which are published only in two pages. Clicking on the “mini-lessons” tab will navigate you to a long list, with a picture, title, date and level (i.e. easier or harder) for every single piece of news (Figure 1).

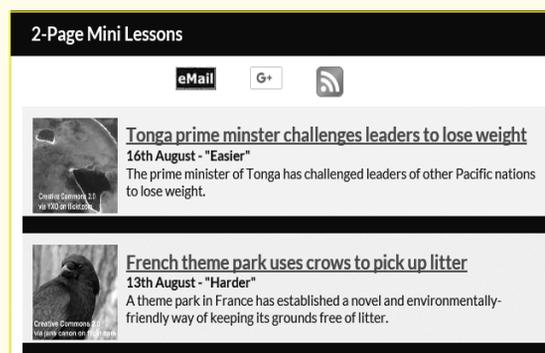


Figure 1. List of the pieces of news

The PDF version of the news can be downloaded and used on the phone, tablet, and computer. Besides, it can be easily printed and used everywhere. It must be noted that copying or downloading from the website causes no copyright violation as the website itself allows the users to freely use and reuse the materials online via the website or offline (Gavin & Hockly, 2007).

The parts of a two-page lesson are depicted in Figure 2:

A News-Oriented Website for Learning English

www.breakingnewsenglish.com

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چکیده

درک اخبار به زبان انگلیسی برای بسیاری از افراد آشنا به این زبان، علی‌رغم علاقه‌مندی آنان، سخت و دست‌نیافتنی است. در این شرایط، استفاده از ابزاری که این مسیر را تسهیل کند و در کنار آن، به تقویت و تمرین مهارت‌های زبانی نیز بپردازد می‌تواند خیلی جذاب باشد. در این نوشته، تلاش شده یک تارنمای جامع، مفید و روزآمد در این زمینه معرفی شود و بخش‌های مختلف آن، و نیز کاربردها و نقاط قوت و ضعف آن به بحث گذاشته شود. طراح این تارنما آقای سان بنویل است که با مدرک کارشناسی ارشد آموزش زبان انگلیسی، به‌عنوان یک زبان خارجی/ دوم، در زمینه تدریس و طراحی محتوای آموزشی دیجیتال فعالیت دارد. لازم به ذکر است که موضوعات اخبار برگزیده، عموماً بسیار متنوع و گسترده است به‌طوری که دانش‌آموزان براساس علاقه و معلمان براساس ملاحظات فرهنگی و سیاسی خاص خود، می‌توانند اخبار مناسب را انتخاب نمایند..

کلیدواژه‌ها: اخبار انگلیسی، تمرین، زبان خارجی

Abstract

Due to the fact that understanding the news, despite being desirable, seems to be very challenging, having a tool that can facilitate reaching this objective would be quite appealing. The present paper is intended to introduce a useful, comprehensive and up-to-date website with its different sections and their uses. The strengths and weaknesses are also pinpointed. Mr. Sean Banville who has a master's degree in TEFL/TESL is the creator of this website and has been involved in teaching and producing digital learning materials for a long time. It must be noted that the website covers a wide range of topics and learners can select the news based on their own interests and teachers can choose the appropriate pieces of news according to cultural and political considerations.

Key Words: breakingnewsenglish, news, foreign language, practice



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Media Review Template

Title plus author's full name and affiliation

Abstract (not more than 200)

The abstract is a crucial element of any academic article; it not only summarizes your paper but also helps it reach the right audience. Your abstract should be written in both English and Persian; it should appear in block format, single spaced and justified. The abstract should include: 1) a brief (one or two sentence) introduction; 2) the media selected for the review and the significance/ purpose of the review/ selection; 3) major findings and; 4) recommendations.

Media/Application details

The authors should list the product details including:

Publisher:

Product type:

Language(s):

Level:

Media format:

Operating systems:

Hardware requirements:

Supplementary software:

Price:

Introduction (approximately 450 words)

The introduction should give a broad view of the field of educational technology with a focus on the role of technology in second/ foreign language education. It then narrows the focus on the media selected for the review and how and why the review can contribute to second/ foreign language learning and teaching.

Description (approximately 550 words)

The authors need to describe the media tool as accurately as possible, preferably using photos and graphics that make the description engaging and interesting to read. The description should tell the readers about where they can find/download the media, what its different sections are and what the features and purposes/functions of each section are, etc.

Evaluation (approximately 350 words)

In this part the overall value of the media review and its contribution to second/ foreign language is given, followed by its strengths and/or possible weaknesses. The authors can offer their own and research-supported suggestions on how those shortcomings can be removed or taken care of.

Conclusion (Approximately 250 words)

The review ends with a conclusion that summarizes the main points and make specific recommendations on the use of the media for second/ foreign language learning and teaching.

References

References should be up to date and written in APA style. The number of references should not exceed 10.