

10.2 Sense of humour

Grammar *if* + other conjunction clauses

- Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets (present simple, present continuous, present perfect or *will*).
 - You can't understand why he's so popular if you have never seen (see) him perform live.
 - If you _____ (look) for Jon, I think he's in the garden.
 - I always take some extra money in case I _____ (run out).
 - If you tell me what you want to say, I _____ (pass) a message on.
 - I won't be happy unless he _____ (call) me tonight.
 - I _____ (tell) you as soon as I hear anything.
- Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first sentence, using the word in bold.
 - I won't go if you don't come with me. **unless**
I won't go unless you come with me.
 - When she heard the news, she rang him immediately. **soon**
She rang him _____.
 - We started eating only when all the guests arrived. **until**
We didn't start eating _____.
 - I'll have a cup of tea and then I'll do the washing-up. **when**
I'll do the washing-up _____.
 - Take an umbrella, it might rain. **case**
Take an umbrella _____.
 - Unless they pay me, I won't be able to afford my rent. **don't**
I won't be able to afford my rent _____.
 - He doesn't succeed because he doesn't work hard enough. **harder**
He would succeed _____.
 - When the TV programme finishes, I'll do my homework straightaway. **as**
I'll do my homework _____.

- Choose the correct options to complete the text.

Can computers have a sense of humour?

Scientists have created a computer which can identify and laugh at puns. The software, created by Julia Taylor and Dr Lawrence Mazlack, can check ¹*if* *unless* each word in a sentence fits with the context and meaning of the other words. ²*In case / As soon as* it finds a word which does not seem to fit, the computer quickly searches for similar sounding words.

For example, the software should understand a joke about a man asking his friend: 'How was your trip to Helsinki?', to which she replies: 'Terrible, all our luggage vanished into Finn Air', because 'Finn' does not fit within the context of luggage and air, but does sound like 'thin'.

However, the computer will not understand a joke ³*unless / if* the word does not fit in the context. For instance, the computer did not find this joke funny:

Patient: 'Doctor, doctor, I swallowed a bone.'

Doctor: 'Are you choking?'

Patient: 'No, I really did!'

Someone probably would see the doctor ⁴*if / until* he or she were choking, so the computer is unable to identify the exchange as a joke.

Ms Taylor is also working on adapting the program to take into account personal preferences. For example, if someone has been in a car accident, the computer will avoid joking about this ⁵*unless / in case* the person gets upset.

Why is this important? ⁶*When / Until* a computer can understand what a joke is, it can't think like a person, which is a limitation on artificial intelligence.





Vocabulary rating performances

- 4 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in brackets.
- I found some of the jokes rather offensive and distasteful (taste).
 - I can't believe that anyone could find this funny. It's a _____ (point) waste of time.
 - I don't find puns funny; it's a bit _____ (child) to play with words like that.
 - He had such a _____ (comic) look on his face, I had to laugh.
 - The film was a bit _____ (predict); you could tell what the ending would be from the start.
 - I hate recorded laughter on TV shows; it's so _____ (annoy).
- 5 Choose the best option to complete each definition.
- A witty / *thought-provoking* person is able to write or say clever and amusing things.
 - If something is *pointless* / *tedious* it lasts too long and is not interesting.
 - If something is *ridiculous* / *hilarious*, it is very silly or unreasonable.
 - If something is *predictable* / *thought-provoking*, it makes you think seriously about something.
 - A *hilarious* / *witty* joke is one that you find extremely funny.
 - If something is *distasteful* / *irritating*, you find it annoying.

- 6a Complete each sentence by replacing the underlined word or phrase with a suitable adjective from the box. There is one adjective you do not need.

childish distasteful ~~hilarious~~ irritating predictable
tedious witty

- I laughed until my sides hurt; it was incredibly funny.
hilarious
- I love reading his articles; he's so smart and funny.

- The film was so boring, I started checking my phone instead.

- It wasn't funny, just really unpleasant and offensive.

- It was completely obvious what was going to happen.

- Throwing cream pies at people isn't funny, it's just silly and immature.

- b 10.2))) Listen and check your answers to exercise 6a.

PRONUNCIATION sentence stress (2)

- c 10.2))) Listen again. Circle the words in the sentences which are given the most emphasis and which are most stressed, then repeat.

I can ...

use *if* + other conjunction clauses.
rate performances.

Very well Quite well More practice

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