

CROSSROADS

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter September, 2021

"Huh....."

Mennyi az annyi?

....Huh?

Voulez-vous du café ou du thé ?

....Huh?

Która jest godzina?

....Huh?

It may feel like an instinctive reaction

similar to a grunt or an emotional cry, but it's a word. You say it when you're confused, when you don't hear clearly what is being said, when you vaguely start to realize something....

"Huh" doesn't exist in the animal kingdom where emotional cries do. It is a word and it follows all of the general rules that apply to languages. Just like the other words you use on a daily basis, at some point in your life you learnt its distinct meaning and how and when to use it.

What is most intriguing, however, is that "huh" can not only be found in use throughout the world, but it has virtually the same meaning in all languages - a word spoken universally with the same connotation in all.... Huh?!

That's right, "huh" is understood wherever you go in the world regardless of the native language or culture. Researchers have found it being used in the same way on five continents, in countries such as Spain, China, Iceland, as well as in indigenous languages from Ecuador, Ghana and many others. And in all of these languages, the meaning is the same. The researchers concluded that, "The similarities in form and function of this interjection ("huh") across languages are much greater than expected by chance."



Let's imagine you are in a foreign country, say, Greece, and you are doing some browsing in a boutique. The sales clerk walks over to you and says, "Μπορώ να σας βοηθήσω;". If you respond with "Huh", along with the appropriate facial expression, it's certain the clerk will understand you immediately and will cheerfully switch to "Can I help you?", in English. The "huh" made everything

perfectly comprehensible.

The next day, after your successful shopping spree, you get on your rented moped and venture into the beautiful Greek countryside for a change of scenery. As you are blissfully wandering in a green field, a farmer runs up to you and says, Έχετε δει πουθενά εδώ γύρω μια μικρή ασπρόμαυρη κατοίκα; Το έσκασε σήμερα το πρωί και δεν μπορώ να το βρω πουθενά....

...."Huh?"

With such a recognizable response from you, your new Greek friend will probably smile, nod his head knowingly and will politely say something like, "Ελπίζω να απολαύσετε τη διαμονή σας στη χώρα μας".....

...."Huh?!"....

Then run off looking for his lost goat....

Oh, how simple life is when there is a universal language to share with everyone!



Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

Get more on "huh" here:

<https://www.americanscientist.org/article/huh-is-that-a-universal-word>

Some Thoughts for the Month

Joshua Says: “Try to remember the kind of September, when life was slow and oh-so mellow...” Are you familiar with this old song? It’s interesting to contemplate the inspiration composers have for the songs they write. “Mellow?” Does September’s weather put you in a “mellow” mood? Does life slow down for you in September? With the recent spat of typhoons, I think of September as more a month of change....

Junko Says: We would like to do a self-evaluation survey on your English development (also French/Spanish/Korean, etc). And, at the same time, we'd like to hear any requests you may have for your lessons. For this, we are now handing out a questionnaire for you to fill in. Your answers will be used to further improve our teaching programs and your learning experience. Please support us with clear opinions and requests.

Marek Says: Boeing, the aviation industry giant, is estimating that the tourism industry will likely recover by 2024. It will take yet another two years for global economy to bounce back from the slump, but we are already seeing many countries slowly getting back on their feet as they adopt stricter preventive measures for coronavirus epidemic. The aviation is vital and closely linked to global economy and therefore is a good indicator for how the recovery progresses.

Mandey dit: Ce mois-ci, j'ai été très étonnée de voir M.Suga abandonner les élections présidentielles. C'est donc le moment parfait pour parler de courage et d'abandon. Voici quelques expressions.

(print version [here](#))

Here is an excerpt from a "Breaking News" article. See if you understand it well enough to place the missing words (scrambled up in the list below) in their correct places.

There are many _____ English around the world. Some well-known _____ in Asia include Chinglish in China, Singlish in Singapore and Japanese English. A group of language _____ in Japan is _____ by how the government uses English. In _____, it says the government uses computer or _____ translation too much. Researchers say many translations _____ strange and _____ words and expressions for native speakers of English. The researchers worry this could have a _____ impact on Japan's tourist industry. They even say the _____ amount of _____ words is _____ a "national embarrassment" in Japan.

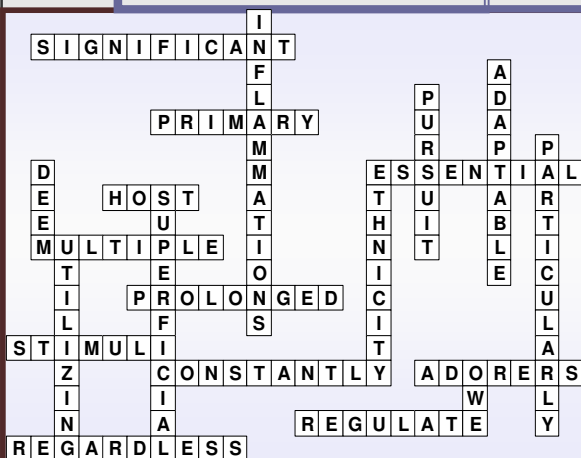
**COULD
YOU REPEAT
THAT,
PLEASE?**



A. unsuitable
B. confusing
C. troubled
D. negative

E. experts
F. varieties
G. create
H. online

I. particular
J. becoming
K. types of
L. increasing



Last Month's puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 2 important in effect, meaning or size
- 5 most important
- 8 absolutely necessary
- 9 a vast number of
- 11 having more than one part
- 13 lengthened in time
- 14 something that arouses action
- 15 without change
- 16 people who greatly admire someone/thing
- 18 adjust, make conform
- 19 in spite of

DOWN

- 1 body tissue's response to injury
- 3 capable of changing to a new situation
- 4 in search of
- 6 especially distinct from others
- 7 understood as a conviction or point of view
- 8 relating to a separate race or cultural group
- 10 not serious or significant
- 12 use for a particular purpose
- 17 obligation to pay or repay



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