

The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 28/10/17

Catalonia declares independence from Spain

Yesterday, in Barcelona, the Catalanian parliament declared independence from Spain. They did so, just before the Spanish government enacted article 155 against them.

The Spanish government immediately dissolved the Catalan parliament and called a snap election. Madrid then imposed direct rule on the newly self-declared 'independent' country.

Last night, following the declaration of independence in the Catalanian parliament, the people of Barcelona and Catalonia celebrated, though not all of its citizens agree with the new situation.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy announced new elections would take place in Catalonia on December 21, with Catalonia's police chief sacked and central government ministries assuming the powers of the Catalan administration until then. Spain is now in a major crisis.

Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage said, "It is Jean-Claude Juncker's worst nightmare." He added, "It makes Brexit look like a Sunday afternoon picnic."

Mr Juncker yesterday said there were now "more cracks" appearing in the union after Catalonia declared itself independent. He added, "I do not want a situation where, tomorrow, the European Union is made up of 95 different states."

Donald Tusk from the EU, said on Twitter, "For EU nothing changes. Spain remains our only interlocutor. I hope the Spanish government favours force of argument, not argument of force." It is an important and fair point.

EU governments have been quick to support Spain, saying they do not and will not recognise Catalonia's declaration of independence.

SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three things you know about Catalonia declaring independence from Spain. Go round the room swapping details with others.

LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

1) The article – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

2) The article - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.
- 6) What is the latest on this story?**

3) Article quiz - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A questions

- 1) Where is Catalonia?
- 2) Who is Jean-Claude Juncker?
- 3) Who is Donald Tusk?
- 4) What did the Catalanian government do?
- 5) What have EU governments said?

Student B questions

- 1) What did Jean-Claude Juncker say?
- 2) What did Donald Trump say?
- 3) What did Nigel Farage say?
- 4) Who is the Spanish Prime Minister?
- 5) What did the Spanish government do?

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SPEAKING - DISCUSSION 1

Had the Spanish government allowed the people of Catalonia a proper legal vote, none of what is now happening might have happened. Spain is running scared of the situation, as is the EU, who are terrified the EU will now start to fall apart.

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION 2

Prior to Catalonia splitting from Spain, *my students* reminded me that when Kosovo broke away from Serbia (outside the EU), Belgrade was bombed by the EU and NATO. They suggested that the EU might now bomb Madrid, as they don't see any difference in the situation, other than the Americans now have a secret huge airbase in Kosovo, which they didn't have before, and Kosovo's economy is now a basket case. Compare the Kosovo and Catalonia situation.

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION 3

What other regions in Europe might now possibly want to break away from the countries they are now a part of? (There are many such regions - Google it!)

SPEAKING - DISCUSSION 4

Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage said, "It is Jean-Claude Juncker's worst nightmare." He added, "It makes Brexit look like a Sunday afternoon picnic." Does it?

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Will economic pressure defeat the separatists in Catalonia?
- 2) Will the civil service and police in Barcelona take orders from Madrid?
- 3) Could we see troops on the streets of Barcelona?
- 4) How united are Catalans in the push for independence?
- 5) How can Madrid impose authority on Catalonia?
- 6) What happens to FC Barcelona now?
- 7) How likely is it that Catalonia's leaders, like Carles Puigdemont, will be jailed?
- 8) Who makes the next move in the Catalonian situation?
- 9) Do you support Spain or Catalonia?
- 10) Is there still room for compromise between Spain and Catalonia?

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can about '**Catalonia Independence**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in a *Discussion FM* radio studio in London. Today's interview is about: *Catalonia declares independence from Spain.*

- 1) A Catalanian.
- 2) A Spanish person from Madrid.
- 3) A tourist just back from Barcelona.
- 4) Someone who is about to visit Barcelona.

The teacher will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In pairs - Student A is a Spanish person from Madrid. *Student B* is a Catalanian person from Barcelona. Start a conversation with *Student A* about Catalonia declaring independence from Spain. *3 mins.*

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) Were the police photographs and videos taken during the election in Barcelona, that we all saw, fake?
- 2) Will the Catalanian parliament bow down to Madrid?
- 3) What do you think of the situation in Catalonia and Spain?
- 4) What do you think of the police violence in Barcelona and Catalonia during the illegal election that took place?
- 5) What now in Catalonia?
- 6) Will Madrid charge the Catalanian leaders with rebellion?
- 7) What next for Spain?
- 8) So how could events unfold in Catalonia now?
- 9) Will Catalonia be a viable country?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

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GAP FILL: READING

Catalonia declares independence from Spain

Yesterday, in Barcelona, the Catalanian parliament declared independence from (1)__. They did so, just before the Spanish government enacted article 155 against them.

The Spanish government immediately dissolved the Catalan (2)__ and called a (3)__ election. Madrid then imposed direct rule on the newly self-declared 'independent' country.

Last night, following the (4)__ of independence in the Catalanian parliament, the people of Barcelona and Catalonia celebrated, though not all of its citizens agree with the new situation.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy announced new elections would take place in (5)__ on December 21, with Catalonia's police chief sacked and central government ministries assuming the powers of the Catalan (6)__ until then. Spain is now in a (7)__ (8)__.

crisis / parliament / major / declaration / Catalonia / snap / administration / Spain

(1)__ UKIP leader Nigel Farage said, "It is Jean-Claude Juncker's worst (2)__. He added, "It makes Brexit look like a Sunday afternoon picnic."

Mr Juncker yesterday said there were now "more (3)_" appearing in the union after Catalonia declared itself independent. He added, "I do not want a situation where, tomorrow, the European Union is made up of 95 different states."

Donald Tusk from the EU, said on (4)__, "For EU nothing changes. Spain remains our only (5)__. I hope the Spanish government favours force of (6)__, not argument of (7)__. It is an important and fair point.

EU governments have been quick to support Spain, saying they do not and will not recognise Catalonia's declaration of (8)__.

independence / interlocutor / former / force / nightmare / argument / Twitter / cracks

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

Catalonia declares independence from Spain

Yesterday, in Barcelona, the Catalanian parliament declared independence from Spain. They did so, (1)__ before the Spanish government enacted article 155 against (2)__.

The Spanish government immediately dissolved the Catalan parliament and called a snap election. Madrid (3)__ imposed direct rule on the newly self-declared 'independent' country.

Last night, following the declaration of independence in the Catalanian parliament, the people of Barcelona and Catalonia celebrated, (4)__ not all of its citizens agree (5)__ the new situation.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy announced new elections (6)__ take place in Catalonia on December 21, (7)__ Catalonia's police chief sacked and central government ministries assuming the powers of the Catalan administration until (8)__. Spain is now in a major crisis.

though / with / just / would / then / them / then / with

Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage said, "(1)__ is Jean-Claude Juncker's worst nightmare." He added, "It makes Brexit look like a Sunday afternoon picnic."

Mr Juncker yesterday said there were now "more cracks" appearing in the union after Catalonia declared itself independent. (2)__ added, "I do not want a situation where, tomorrow, (3)__ European Union is made up of 95 different states."

Donald Tusk from the EU, said (4)__ Twitter, "(5)__ EU nothing changes. Spain remains (6)__ only interlocutor. (7)__ hope the Spanish government favours force of argument, not argument of force." It is an important and fair point.

EU governments have been quick to support Spain, saying they do not and will not recognise Catalonia's declaration (8)__ independence.

of / on / for / he / our / I / it / the

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GAP FILL: LISTENING

Catalonia declares independence from Spain

Yesterday, in Barcelona, the Catalanian parliament _____ from Spain. They did so, just before the Spanish government enacted article 155 against them. The _____ immediately dissolved the Catalan parliament and called a snap election. Madrid then imposed direct rule on the newly self-declared 'independent' country.

Last night, following the declaration of independence in the Catalanian parliament, the people of Barcelona and Catalonia celebrated, though not all of its citizens agree _____.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy announced new elections would take place in Catalonia on December 21, with Catalonia's police chief sacked and _____ ministries assuming the powers of the Catalan administration until then. _____.

Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage said, "It is Jean-Claude Juncker's _____." He added, "It makes Brexit look like a Sunday afternoon picnic."

Mr Juncker yesterday said there were now "more cracks" appearing in the union after Catalonia declared itself independent. He added, "I do not want a situation where, tomorrow, _____ is made up of 95 different states."

Donald Tusk from the EU, said on Twitter, "For EU nothing changes. Spain remains _____." I hope the Spanish government favours force of argument, not argument of force." It is an _____.

EU governments have been quick to support Spain, saying they do not and will not recognise Catalonia's _____.

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WRITING/SPELLING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - *In pairs/As a class*, list **10-20 things about Catalonia**. Barcelona is a nice city to visit, right? Briefly, talk about each of them. *Five minutes*.

2) Sentence starters - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) Catalonia _____
- 2) Spain _____
- 3) I think _____

3) Write down 50 words about: *Catalonia declares independence from Spain*. Your words can be read out in class.

4) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: ***Catalonia declares independence from Spain***.

SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) parliament
- 2) Catalonia
- 3) Spain
- 4) independent
- 5) election
- 6) government
- 7) major
- 8) Barcelona
- 9) citizens
- 10) former

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

Pass = 12
Good = 15
Very good = 18
Excellent = 20

- 11) nightmare
- 12) different
- 13) cracks
- 14) situation
- 15) interlocutor
- 16) important
- 17) argument
- 18) quick
- 19) recognise
- 20) declaration

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