

I'm happy to tell you that I'm building a website that will soon replace the blog for A Cup Of English. I'm very excited about the change, and I hope that soon I will have it finished. One thing that I did a few days ago for the website, was to have a personal photo shoot. I have had the podcast for over five years, and have only shown my voice. However, the website will be a little bit more personal, so there will be a page about me, Anna, with a few photos. So you will be able to connect a real human being to the voice that you hear in the podcasts. I normally take photos; I don't usually have them taken of me. So, I'm more comfortable behind a camera, instead of in front of one. I had an idea of what I wanted: relaxed, casual photos of me looking fabulous but professional at the same time. Well, was that too much to ask? The cameraman seemed really nice, but was young and very quiet. He sat me at a desk that was very low, on a chair that was too high, told me to sit up straight, but lean forward. Then I had to lower my chin, but look up. Finally I had to turn my head to the left, but tilt (1) it to the right. Oh my gosh, I was so uncomfortable! I was as stiff as a board, which means as hard as a piece of wood. I tried to give a relaxed smile, but that just wasn't going to happen. We checked the photos and my smile looked like the corners of my mouth had been pulled back by big, metal hooks(2). What made it worse, was that the photographer was really quiet, as quiet and still as the camera. "Why don't I make myself laugh?" I said pathetically. I tried doing some fake laughs, hoping that that(3) would make me laugh. It did, once, but the camera didn't go 'click', and so the moment was lost. I was feeling ridiculous. An hour and a half had gone by and I was exhausted. But I think, that's when it happened. I was tired and wanted to go home, so I stopped caring about the photos. When I stopped caring, I relaxed. And when I relaxed, suddenly 'click, click, click', the photographer got to work(4). The poor man was probably desperate to get rid of this stiff English woman. Anyway, three decent photos were the result of the photo shoot. I never realized that posing for photos could be so painful.

1. 'To tilt' is to put something on its side.

a. Can you tilt the lampshade, the light is right in my face.

b. He tilted his hat to cover his eyes; he looked very cool.

2. 'Hook' is a noun and a verb. In this podcast it is used as a noun. It can be made out of metal or wood, is formed like a sharp 'U', and is

used to grab items.

a. We need some hooks if we're going fishing.

b. The butcher hung the meat up on the hooks.

3. 'That, that' here the word 'that' is used as both a conjunction and a pronoun.

a. I read him a story, hoping that that would send him to sleep.

b. She cooked a chicken stew, knowing that that would satisfy her family.

c. We sent the rent check early because we know that that will keep the landlord happy.

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