

Bonus episode #086 - Worlds collide

Episode description

In this episode, Andrew shares a story about his podcasting and personal lives colliding. He describes a lunch meeting that highlights the smallness of our world. Listen, learn, and improve your English fluency with this real-life story.

Join the Culips Discord server: <https://discord.gg/Bpxa85CFuc>



Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello everyone, and welcome to bonus episode number 86 of the Culips English Podcast. How's it going? I hope you're doing well. My name's Andrew, and I will be your host and your English study buddy for today. If you're new to Culips, and new to our bonus episode series, let me just quickly introduce what it's all about. In the bonus episodes, I tell you some stories from my everyday life as a Canadian living abroad in South Korea. And I hope that by listening to these stories, you'll be able to build your English fluency, grow your vocabulary, increase your knowledge of the culture of English-speaking people, and ultimately, to become a better communicator. And for each bonus episode that we release, there is an absolutely 100% free interactive transcript and glossary that will explain some of the key expressions and vocabulary that I'll use here today. And it will just help you to understand those expressions a little bit more, what they mean and how you can use them in your own English speaking. So, to get the transcript and the glossary, just follow the link that I'll put in the description for this episode. And if you're a Culips member, then I'll make a comprehension quiz as well. And I'll post the link to that comprehension quiz in the member-only area of our Discord server.

Speaking of our Discord server, it's an awesome way to connect with the Culips community and to practice your English speaking, and writing, and communicating. So, if you haven't joined us on our Discord server yet, it's free to do so. And you can do it just by following the link that we'll put in the description for this episode.

So, in today's episode, I want to tell you a story about worlds colliding, worlds colliding. Have you heard this expression before, "For worlds to collide"? Well, you know, there's only one Earth, right? There's only one world so it's impossible for our Earth to collide and collide means to hit right like a collision. When two cars crash into each other, we call that a collision. And the verb is "To collide". Because there's only one world, because there's only one Earth, we can't really take this expression literally and think of two worlds colliding into each other, OK? It's not related to space at all. Here, "worlds" refers to

different social groups or different relationships or networks of people coming together. And I'll explain this expression a little bit more deeply while I'm telling you the story because I think the story really, really illustrates the meaning almost perfectly. So, without any further ado, let's get into the story now. I hope you guys enjoy this one. Here we go! So just the other day, I had something really interesting and unique happen to me out of the blue. It was an unexpected thing. But in the end, it turned out to be a pretty cool and unique experience. And really, my wife is the **focal point** for this story. The whole story revolves around her. She's at the center of the story. She's the person who made worlds collide. So, for the last little while my wife has been working on a big project at work. She works in tech. She's a designer. And often when she's working on a big project, she has to collaborate with many, many people and many different teams. And during her work on this specific project, one of the people that she had to work closely with was her boss's boss. Her boss's boss, OK? So you know, in the hierarchy of a company, there are many different levels, right? And on top, you have the CEO, and then under the CEO, you have maybe the top managers, and then assistant managers, and then team leaders, and so on and so on. And I don't really know exactly the details about how my wife's company is structured. But I do know that the person that she had to work very closely with was her boss's boss. So, as you can imagine, working with your boss's boss is **kind of a big deal**. Even just working with your boss closely can be a little bit more intimidating than just working with your coworkers. But if you have to work with your boss's boss, well, then it's a little bit different, right?

Well, anyways, my wife and her boss's boss, and just for fun, I'm going to give her boss's boss a nickname, because it's a little bit difficult for me to say, "boss's boss", and if I have to repeat that 100 times during this episode, it's going to drive me crazy, I think. So, let's give her boss's boss a nickname. And I, this nickname is a little bit funny, OK? I'm going to nickname him Big Boss Man. Big Boss Man. And that's **a throwback** to a wrestling character that I used to watch on TV. Professional wrestling when I was a little kid. When I was 8, 9, 10. You know that age? I really loved professional wrestling, and there was a character named The Big Boss Man. So, when I was writing some notes to tell you this

story, that thought just popped into my head and made me laugh. So, because of that funny thought that I had, while I was writing some notes for this episode, I'm going to refer to my wife's boss's boss as Big Boss Man, just for fun, it's nothing serious. It's just a funny nickname.

So of course, while my wife and Big Boss Man were working closely together, they, you know, shared in some conversations, right? They talked with each other. You're not always focused on work, sometimes you have to grab lunch together or grab a coffee together, and you chat, and you get to know each other, and you start to share information about your life, right? I'm sure most of us have had this experience of working closely with a colleague at some point in our lives. And while you're working with people, you get to know them, and you become closer, right. So as my wife and Big Boss Man were working together, my wife talked about things that are going on in our lives. And you, if you're a regular Culips listener, you know about all of these things already. About how my wife and I recently moved into an old house that we renovated, about our dog Pinky passing away last fall, and my wife also mentioned at some point that she was married to a Canadian, and things like that. So, these are the kinds of things that she shared with Big Boss Man as they were working on this project.

And then a little bit more time went by, and as the project was nearing to a close, Big Boss Man approached my wife, and he said, "Hey, I got a question for you. I know this might sound a little bit weird, but I'm really curious, is your husband's name Andrew? Is he the host of Culips?" And it turns out, that Big Boss Man is a Culips listener. And he was able to connect the dots and put two and two together based on what my wife had said when they were working on their project together. And based on what he's heard me talk about on Culips. And I think those are two really great expressions that I just used there, **if I don't say so myself**. "**To connect the dots**" means to put information together that you've gathered from different sources. So, Big Boss Man heard the same information on Culips, and heard the same information from my wife. And he was able to put that together to realize that my wife was married to me, the host of Culips. And "**To put two and two**

together", essentially means the same thing: to take different pieces of information, and put them together to be able to understand them as a whole.

So then, later that day, after my wife had finished work, and we were sitting around the dinner table eating dinner, she was like, "Andrew, you'll never guess what happened today! I've been working on this project with my boss's boss. And it turns out, he's a Culips listener!" So, both of us had a good laugh over this. And I think my wife especially was so surprised at how her worlds collided, right? Because her professional life and her personal life, were now brought together, essentially, because of Culips.

Anyways, I'm not sure exactly what happened next. But I do know that my wife and Big Boss Man continued to work on their project for the next few weeks. And at some point, as they were working together, the idea of us all meeting up together, so me, my wife, and Big Boss Man, to hang out and to chat, and to share a meal together, **that idea was tossed around**. And so, my wife asked me, "Andrew, how would you feel about meeting Big Boss Man? Would that be, OK? Is that something that you're into?" And I was definitely down. I mean, I always love meeting Culips listeners. Most of the time, these days, I meet Culips listeners through our live streams or through the voice-chat rooms on our Discord group. But in the past, I've met a lot of Culips listeners as well, when I've traveled to different countries. I've visited Taiwan and met Culips listeners. I've done the same thing in Hong Kong, same thing in Japan, and of course, in Korea here as well. And it's always a really amazing experience for me to meet Culips listeners in real life, because I think we have like the best listeners in the world. Of course, I'm biased. Of course, I think you guys are the best, but every time I meet a Culips listener, it's like really cool. And I'm not just saying that **to pander** to you, listeners, but **it's the honest truth**. Every time I've met Culips listeners in real life, they just are really interesting people with fascinating lives. So, whenever I do get the chance to meet a Culips, listener in person, **I am down**.

So, we decided, yeah, let's meet up and eat lunch together. So, we decided on a day when I had some free time. And that afternoon, I went to the neighborhood where my

wife's company is located. And we all met up for lunch. And Big Boss Man, I have to say **went all out** and he gave me several different options for what I would like to eat for lunch, which was really nice. And the day that we met up was like a beautiful day, blue sky, really sunny, really nice, but super, super cold. And so, because it was a cold day, I suggested that we eat gukbap, which is a really popular kind of soup here in Korea, which is essentially just some meat, some vegetables, and some rice put together. Delicious, very filling. And I love it. It's one of my favorite foods here in Korea. And it's like the perfect lunch. So, we met up to eat gukbap. And yeah, we just had a great meal, it was wonderful to meet Big Boss Man and learn about his life. And I have to say his English was amazing. I was very impressed. And I also have to say that I was very impressed with my wife, because it's not very often these days, where we have a conversation that's entirely in English. Usually at home, my wife and I are always **code switching**, we're always going back and forth with Korean and English, and we mix it up. And I speak some Korean, she speaks some English, and we just go back and forth, and everything's mixed up. But it's very rare that we're spending like an hour, or an hour and a half, just in one language. And of course, if we're meeting up with our friends too, well, then a lot of times, my Korean friends obviously are more comfortable with Korean. And my friends who are not Korean are also pretty comfortable with the Korean language. So, there's always code switching going on. But the focus for this meeting was really to practice English, I think. So, we stuck to 100% English. And I have to say I was impressed with my wife. You know, I think it must be a little awkward, I was thinking about it in my head, to suddenly in front of your coworkers have to speak a totally different language. I think that's funny. Like, I don't know, sometimes your identity is tied to the language you speak, right?

Like, I have one friend here in Korea, who's from Quebec. Quebec is the French-speaking province in Canada. And he's completely bilingual in both English and French, his mom's a French native speaker, and his dad's an English native speaker. And growing up in Montreal, which is a bilingual city for the most part, was like the perfect environment for him to be completely native in both languages. And he told me at some point, that, you know, he speaks French with his mom and English with his dad. But I asked him, What

about your brother? Do you ever speak in French with your brother, because he's got a brother that's like, a few years older than him. And he said, "You know what, it's so weird. I've never ever once had a conversation with my brother in French." And my friend's like 40 years old, and his brothers older than him. So, for their whole lives, they've never had a conversation in French, of course, you know, if they're in a restaurant together, they'll speak French to the server. So, they both are like, you know, perfect French speakers, and they speak in front of each other, when they have to do things around town. But when it comes to them just hanging out together, they always 100% speak English. And I think that just goes to show that sometimes our identity, and even our relationships, can have language as a focus at the center.

So anyways, that was a little bit of an aside, but I thought for my wife at that time, it must be a little bit strange to suddenly have to speak in English with your boss's boss, and with your husband, in this kind of worlds colliding lunch meeting. Anyways, she did a great job. And like I said, Big Boss Man also did a great job. They were very clear communicators. And I just enjoyed the situation. I was amused by it. I thought it was really fun. And so, we had a lovely lunch on that cold, wintry day. We had a good conversation and after we finished lunch, then we went to a nearby cafe and we had a coffee together before lunch break was over and Big Boss Man and my wife had to return to the office.

So that's my story for this week, everyone. I hope you enjoyed it. I thought it was amusing and it was a good example of worlds colliding for all involved, I think. And a special shout out to Big Boss Man, thank you for taking me out to lunch. I had a great time. I hope we can do it again soon. And thanks for listening to Culips. Big Boss Man told me that he usually listens to Culips while he's commuting to and from work. So, if you're stuck in traffic right now, Big Boss Man, I hope that you enjoyed listening to this episode and I hope it made your commute just a little bit better.

So, if you made it this far in the episode, I want to say thanks for spending some time studying English with me today. You did a great job at making it all the way to the end.

This is what you need to do to improve your English fluency. You need to spend a lot of time with the language listening, and you also need to spend some time with the language outputting: writing and speaking. **And boy** do we have the perfect place for you to do that.

You can practice your English output on our Discord server. The link to join is in the description for this episode, and I hope we can have a fun conversation related to this episode there. Have you ever had a situation like this where your worlds collided? If so, I'd love to hear about it and I'll be awaiting your story in our Discord. OK, everyone, so I actually have to run because I am scheduled to record some brand-new episodes with Suzanne right now. It's been a while since we've had Suzanne co-host with me on Culips. Usually our schedules just don't line up. But **the stars aligned** today and we have time to record, so I'm gonna go do that now. But take care and I'll be back soon with another brand-new Culips episode. I'll talk to you then. Bye bye!

Glossary

1. **Focal point:** The most important part of a story or situation. Andrew says his wife is the focal point of his story, meaning she is the main person it is about.
2. **Kind of a big deal:** A phrase used to describe something or someone very important. Andrew uses this to explain the importance of working with your boss's boss.
3. **A throwback:** Something that makes you remember a past time. Andrew mentions "Big Boss Man" as a throwback to a wrestler he liked as a kid.
4. **If I don't say so myself:** A way of giving yourself a compliment without sounding too proud. Andrew uses this phrase after explaining how he used certain expressions well.
5. **Connect the dots:** To understand how different pieces of information are related. Big Boss Man did this by linking what he heard from Andrew's wife and the Culips podcast.
6. **Put two and two together:** Similar to "connect the dots," it means to figure something out from the information you have. Big Boss Man used this to realize Andrew's wife was talking about him.
7. **That idea was tossed around:** Talking about an idea casually without making a final decision. This refers to the idea of meeting up with Big Boss Man.

8. **To pander:** To say or do things just to make someone happy, even if it's not genuine. Andrew says his compliments about Culips listeners are true, not just to make them happy.
9. **The honest truth:** Saying something that is completely true. Andrew uses this to emphasize that he really enjoys meeting Culips listeners.
10. **I am down:** A casual way of saying you are willing or happy to do something. Andrew says he was happy to meet Big Boss Man.
11. **Went all out:** To do something with a lot of effort or enthusiasm. Big Boss Man did this by giving many lunch options for their meeting.
12. **Code switching:** Changing between two or more languages when you speak. Andrew and his wife often switch between English and Korean.
13. **And boy:** A phrase used to add emphasis to what you're going to say next. Andrew uses it to encourage listeners to practice English on the Culips Discord server.
14. **The stars aligned:** A way of saying that everything worked out perfectly for something to happen. Andrew uses this to talk about finally being able to record with Suzanne because their schedules matched.

Episode credits

Host and preparation: Andrew Bates

Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima