

# ompersonal newsletter

EL BOLETIN DE INGLES PREFERIDO POR EL HISPANOABLANTE

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## 1. EDITORIAL

Hola amig@:

Hay tres pequeñas palabras que causan problemas a los estudiantes de inglés. Son los artículos definidos e indefinidos: **a**, **an** y **the**. El audio de hoy te ofrece:

- (1) **pautas que te ayudarán a colocar los artículos en el lugar correcto.**
- (2) **una actividad con respuestas para que puedas practicarlos.**

Bienvenidos los nuevos suscriptores que –desde 24 países de Europa y América Latina– se están acercando día a día a nuestro portal **en busca de su beca gratuita para capacitarse (y certificarse) en inglés.**

**Hasta nuestro próximo boletín (miércoles 27 de abril).**

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## 2. ¿TE FALTA ALGÚN BOLETÍN?

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## 3. COMPRENSION AUDITIVA

**ARTÍCULOS.** Interesante audiotexto sobre el uso de tres pequeñas palabras que causan problemas a los estudiantes de inglés. **Descarga el audio y practica inglés mientras viajas. Lee [AQUÍ cómo guardar los audios de nuestros boletines.](#)**

Pulsa la palabra "**AUDIO**" de color rojo para escuchar. Para descargar el audio, acerca la flecha del ratón a esa palabra y **con botón derecho** selecciona la opción "**Guardar Archivo (o Destino) Como**" y guarda el archivo en tu móvil o computadora.

### ARTICLES

**AUDIO**

**What word appears most often in English? It's "the", also known as the definite article. Its partner, the indefinite article "a", is also among the top 10 most frequent words in English.**

**appears most often:** aparece con mayor frecuencia; **the:** el, la, los, las; **its partner:** su socio; **a:** un, una; **among:** entre; **most frequent:** más frecuentes;

**According to Professor Elka Todeva of the SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, "a" and "the" are also some of the most difficult words for learners to figure out how to use without some assistance.**

**according to:** de acuerdo con (el); **learners:** estudiantes; **to figure out how:** para comprender cómo; **without:** sin;

**"A," "an" and "the" are called articles. Why are these small words so hard to learn? More than 200 languages do not have articles. Other languages have articles but use them differently than English does. As a result, figuring out the logic of English articles can be challenging.**

**are called:** se llaman, reciben el nombre de; **why?:** ¿por qué?; **so hard to:** tan difíciles de; **than English does:** de la forma en que lo hace el inglés; **as a result:** como consecuencia; **figuring out the logic:** comprender la lógica; **challenging:** complejo, desafiante;

**Professor Todeva says English article usage falls into certain patterns. A basic understanding of common patterns can make learning articles easier.**  
**usage:** el uso; **falls into certain patterns:** cae dentro de ciertas normas;

Fairy tales capture one such powerful pattern, which Elka Todeva calls the *a/the switch*. The *a/the switch* occurs between the first and second mention. It is a shift from new to already familiar information.

**fairy tales capture:** los cuentos de hadas contienen; **one such powerful pattern:** un muy poderoso patrón o modelo; **which:** al cual; **the a/the switch:** el intercambio de (los artículos) *a/the*; **between the first and second mention:** entre la primera y segunda mención (de algo) en un texto; **a shift:** un cambio;

Listen for the articles as she reads an example. Pay attention to the way "a" turns into "the" with the second mention of the old man and the old woman.

**as:** mientras; **turns into:** se convierte en;

*"Once upon a time, there was an old man and an old woman who lived in a little cottage in a vast open field. The old woman and the old man were very hungry, so the old woman decided to bake a gingerbread man".*

**once upon a time there was:** había una vez; **little cottage:** casita de campo; **in a vast open field:** a campo abierto; **to bake:** hornear; **gingerbread man:** galleta de jengibre (con forma de monigote);

Before we explore this pattern and fairy tales further, let us look at some basic rules for article usage.

**we explore:** exploremos; **further:** más aún;

### ***The indefinite articles.***

"A" and "an" are indefinite articles used before non-specific members of a group or category of nouns. The article "a" appears before singular nouns starting with a consonant sound. For example, "I ate a banana." The article "an" comes before singular nouns beginning with a vowel sound. For example, "Give me an apple."

**non-specific:** indeterminados; **nouns:** sustantivos; **starting with:** que empiezan con; **consonant sound:** consonántico; **ate:** comí; **vowel sound:** sonido vocálico;

### ***The definite article.***

"The" is called a definite article. "The" appears before nouns which are specific members of a category as in, "I want to see *the* movie George Clooney just made." Also use "the" with previously mentioned nouns. For example, "We went to a movie last night. *The* movie was called *Spy*." Use "the" with unique things like *the sun, the moon, the front door, and the tallest man in the world*.

**just made:** acaba de hacer; **spy:** agente secreto, espía;

### ***The zero article.***

In some situations, there is no article before a noun. Grammarians call this the "zero article." The zero article appears before proper nouns, names like *Picasso* and *John Lennon*. It also goes with names of places and institutions which consist of a proper name and another noun, as in *Michigan State University*.

**zero article:** proceso de un idioma cuando un artículo (*the, a, an*) no se utiliza; **grammarians:** los gramáticos o lingüistas; **proper nouns:** sustantivos propios; **consist of:** consisten en;

There is also no article before the names of days, months, seasons and holidays. There is no article before geographical names like *Europe, Italy, Tokyo, and Lake Superior*.

**there is also no article:** tampoco se usan artículos; **seasons:** estaciones (épocas);

The "zero article" applies to names of languages and nationalities, as with *Chinese* or *English*. For example, "Spanish is spoken in Spain." But if you are describing the people of that country, use the definite article. "The Spanish are known for being friendly."

**applies to:** se aplica a; **as with:** como en el caso de; **is spoken:** se habla; **known:** famosos; **for being friendly:** por ser amistosos;

The zero article also goes with names of sports and academic subjects.

**goes with:** va con; **subjects:** asignaturas, materias;

### ***The "a/the switch".***

Professor Todeva is both a learner and teacher of English. She says the human brain loves patterns and finding logic behind things. She encourages teachers and learners to explore grammatical patterns in fun, engaging ways. She calls this "grammaring." Let's look at some common patterns in article usage.

**both:** ambas (cosas); **brain:** cerebro; **behind things:** detrás de las cosas;  
**encourages:** alienta a; **in fun engaging ways:** de forma divertida y atractiva;

**Professor Todeva takes us back to fairy tales, or traditional stories, to demonstrate how the switch from "a" to "the" works.**

**takes us back to:** nos retrotrae (a los); **works:** funciona;

"This particular pattern is very beautifully illustrated in most English fairy tales and in many jokes as well. Most fairy tales in English start with 'Once upon a time' ... there is suspense, there is sweet anticipation, we are not sure what the story is about yet; we expect something exciting and something new, thus the use of the indefinite article at the beginning of most fairy tales as in the following piece from *The Gingerbread Man*:

**jokes:** chistes; **as well:** asimismo; **most:** la mayoría de (los); **thus:** por lo tanto;

"Once upon a time, there was an old man and an old woman who lived in a little cottage – **first mention** – in a vast open field."

**first mention:** primera mención (de los personajes del cuento);

Here, the story teller uses the indefinite articles because the characters are new to the listener or reader. When the information becomes familiar, the story teller uses the definite article, "the".

**story teller:** cuentista; **listener or reader:** oyente o lector;

"The old woman and the old man were very hungry, so the old woman decided to bake a gingerbread man."

**so:** entonces;

You might notice the "a/the switch" in most jokes. Here is an example.

**you might notice:** podrías también observar;

"A man walks into a doctor's office. He has a cucumber up his nose, a carrot in his left ear and a banana in his right ear.

**walks into:** entra a; **doctor's office:** consultorio médico; **a cucumber up his nose:** un pepino sobre su nariz; **a carrot in his left ear:** una zanahoria en su oído izquierdo; **a banana in his right ear:** una banana en su oído derecho;

"What's wrong with me?" he asks the doctor (because it's already implied).

**what's wrong with me?:** ¿qué me pasa?; **already implied:** sobreentendido;

And the doctor says, "You're not eating properly."

**properly:** adecuadamente, como es debido;

Notice how the joke sets the stage with new information first. It starts with "a" before switching to "the".

**sets the stage:** prepara el terreno;

## General statements.

Another important pattern involves general statements. General statements refer to all, or many members of a group. For example, "Politicians only care about money." You will often see general statements on bumper stickers. These are small labels on the back of cars that express the owner's feelings or opinions.

**involves:** comprende a las; **general statements:** oraciones generales; **politicians only care about:** a los políticos sólo les interesa; **bumper stickers:** pegatinas con publicidad (de los parachoques traseros de un automóvil); **labels:** etiquetas;

You might see bumper stickers that say, "Well-behaved women rarely make history" or "Teachers touch the future." Notice that general statements use the zero article.

**well-behaved women:** las mujeres bien educadas; **rarely:** rara vez;

Here's another general statement that you will probably agree with: "Articles are challenging for English learners". Take Professor Todeva's advice and let your brain pay attention to some of the patterns that we just explored. Happy learning and "grammaring" with the English language!

**that you will ... agree with:** con el cual ... estarás de acuerdo; **take ... advice:** sigue el consejo de ...

And now check this table of reference:

Basic Uses of Articles in English	
<b>INDEFINITE ARTICLE</b> (a / an)	▶ singular, non-specific nouns; <i>I am a teacher; She has a dog;</i> ▶ use a with singular nouns beginning with a

	<p>consonant sound: <i>a</i> user (sounds like 'yoo-zer,' i.e. begins with a consonant 'y' sound, so 'a' is used); <i>a</i> university; <i>a</i> unicycle;</p> <p>► use <i>an</i> with nouns starting with silent "h": <i>an</i> hour;</p> <p>► use <i>a</i> with nouns starting with a pronounced "h": <i>a</i> horse.</p>
<b>DEFINITE ARTICLE (the)</b>	<p>► specific plural or singular nouns; non-count nouns: <i>I spilled the milk</i>; names of rivers, oceans and seas: <i>the Nile, the Pacific</i>;</p> <p>► points on the globe: <i>the Equator, the North Pole</i>;</p> <p>► geographical areas: <i>the Middle East, the West</i>;</p> <p>► deserts, forests, gulfs, rivers, and peninsulas: <i>the Sahara, the Persian Gulf, the Black Forest, the Mississippi River, the Iberian Peninsula</i>.</p>
<b>ZERO ARTICLE (nothing)</b>	<p>► proper nouns such as <i>Picasso, Paul, Ringo, John, George</i>;</p> <p>► names of places and institutions which consist of a proper name and another noun, e.g. <i>Michigan State University, Trafalgar Square, Penn Station</i>;</p> <p>► names of days, months, seasons and holidays, e.g. <i>on Sunday, in March, at Christmas</i>;</p> <p>► many geographical names, e.g. <i>Europe, Italy, Tokyo, Lake Superior</i>;</p> <p>► certain prepositional phrases, e.g. <i>at peace, by heart, by train/car</i>.</p>

Finally, test your knowledge by choosing the correct article (A, AN, THE) or (-) for no article at all. Correct answers are located at the bottom.

Have you seen  newspaper? I can't find it anywhere.

In my opinion,  education should be free to all.

Is this the first time you have stayed at  Hilton?

She started her career as  teacher, but now she's  artist.

Japanese belong to  richest people on  earth.

I'd like my children to have  best education at  university.

Is  Nile or  Amazon  longest river in  world?

Harrods is  department store in London.

I'll be at home in  quarter of  hour.

In some cities  cars have been banned from  city center.

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MUCHAS GRACIAS POR LEERNOS.

## ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY.

Have you seen **THE** newspaper? I can't find it anywhere.  
In my opinion, — education should be free to all.  
Is this the first time you have stayed at **THE** Hilton?  
She started her career as **A** teacher, but now she's **AN** artist.  
**THE** Japanese belong to **THE** richest people on **THE** earth.  
I'd like my children to have **THE** best education at **A** university.  
Is **THE** Nile or **THE** Amazon **THE** longest river in **THE** world?  
— Harrods is **A** department store in London.  
I'll be at home in **A** quarter of **AN** hour.  
In some cities — cars have been banned from **THE** city center.

## próximo boletín: abril 27, 2016

Agradecemos que reenvíes este boletín a quienes puedan estar interesados en aprender y practicar gratuitamente inglés en nuestro megaportal.

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