

I can't say my own name

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By Jade Joddle

Hey guys! Saying your own name. How many times in your life have you heard your own name said? Thousands—at least thousands. And how many times have you had to say your own name? At least thousands, too. So many times.

But sometimes, we can be anxious about saying our own names. It can happen for different reasons: sometimes because, when we say our own name, people never hear it in the way we said it, and they say something else. So then it's like, "What? Did you...? Am I not saying my own name properly?" And sometimes it can happen because there's an actual sound in your name, which you find hard to say. So, for whatever reason, it sometimes happens that this anxiety, this fear about saying your own name can happen. So I want to give some advice about that.

So the first thing is: If there's ever a word, any word, or a connection of words together, that you find hard to say, the solution is: Never to avoid those words.

Because you'll start off just avoiding this word: "Oh, I find it hard to say

‘comfortable.’” Whatever. So you start avoiding saying ‘comfortable.’ But, a few months later, then you’ve got a collection of words that you’re avoiding. You’ve got ten words that you’re avoiding saying, because you can’t pronounce them. So the solution is: Never to avoid words that you find difficult to say. The solution is to get prepared about saying... Get prepared and get informed and get educated about saying those actual sounds.

So, if it came...if it comes to saying your own name, this is what I would do, OK? First, I want to really listen to how my name is said. I want to really just concentrate on the sounds in my name. So you can do that when somebody else is saying it, but usually, when other people are talking and you’re in a social situation, or any situation where you’re name might be being said, there’s so much going on: it’s difficult to concentrate on the name. So how I would prefer to do it is to search online how to pronounce: Put my name in, and then see what comes up. Because somebody out there has probably recorded your name being pronounced. So how do you say... How do you say ‘Matilda,’ for example? You search, you listen to somebody say it. There might be more than one pronunciation, slightly different: that’s good. Compare how different people are saying it.

And if you know about IPA, which is how the actual sounds of a word are written down (the language of the actual sounds in words), that can be really, really useful, when it comes to learning how to say words that you have a bit of anxiety about. Because the English alphabet, and the way we spell things in English, is not...it doesn't match what we write down [the sounds we make]. Sometimes it does, but often it doesn't.

So you can have a name, for example, like my name, 'Jade.' 'Jade'—it's a really long-sounding name, and it's spelt J-A-D-E. But if I were to create the spelling for that name, 'Jade,' I don't think I would write it J-A-D-E. Because J-A-D-E is like "Jah-deh," or something like that. If I were going to write it how it sounds, probably I'd spell it, J-E-I-D...? Maybe? I don't know. Let me know in a comment how you would spell it.

But once you know IPA, you can have a look at a word, and you can say, " Oh, these sounds go into my name; now I understand it more clearly." So you take your name, and then you break down the different actual sounds in your name. Forget about how it's written down. But what are the actual sounds in your

name? And then you have to be informed that you know how to make all the sounds that are in your name.

So, do you know how to make the SH sound? Do you know how to make CH?

Going back to my name, my name is a long-sounding name for just four letters:

‘Jade.’ Why is that? Why does it take so long to say just four letters? It’s because the A is a diphthong vowel: it’s a blend of two vowels together. It has no letter in the alphabet to represent it. It’s a long-sounding vowel. OK, but when you know a little bit about the actual sounds in your name, or any other problem word, that way you can gain confidence that you’re saying your name in the right way.

Now, if it does come down to a point where, physiologically, something going on in your pronunciation: you can’t make one of those particular sounds that are in your name—then what you do is you find out: “How do I make that sound? How do I make the FF sound? How do I make the...” whatever sound is hard for people. WHA...sometimes W is hard for people. “How do I actually make that sound in my mouth? Where is my tongue?” And then you practise on that. And in that way you get informed; you’re prepared; you practise. And when you are next

in the situation to say your name, you definitely don't avoid it—or any other word that you find hard to pronounce for that matter.

So I hope this is useful for you. If you're someone who sometimes is a bit embarrassed or a little bit anxious about saying your name, or mispronouncing it, I hope this was helpful.

So thank you for watching, and join me again soon. Bye-bye!

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