

In a face-to-face class, an English word whose meaning can be confusing and elusive came up. It is a particular term in that it can be considered a **false cognate** or a word which does not share the exact meaning and connotation in English and Spanish. In order to throw light on its right meaning, it felt fit to provide a **paraphrase** for the sake of clarity.

The word was *idiosyncrasy*, and although the direct and obvious translation it suggests is *idiosincrasia*, in order to avoid confusion and to clarify the meaning, the teacher preferred to provide a paraphrase of the word in the sentence.

Below is the sentence quoted from the *Language and Communication* material, and a sentence with the teacher's paraphrase follows it:

Field linguists like David Harrison are more interested in the *idiosyncrasies* that make each language unique and the ways that culture can influence a language's form (Rymer, 2012).

Field linguists like David Harrison are more interested in the *peculiarities or individualising qualities* that make each language unique and the ways that culture can influence a language's form.

Another paraphrase is provided right below the following example sentence to clarify the meaning in a different context, which brings about a slight twist in the meaning of the word:

Paul is a nice bloke, and, like anyone else, he has his little *idiosyncracies*.

Paul is a nice bloke, and, like anyone else, he has his little *particular or unusual behaviours which may be considered eccentric*.

Rymer, R. (2012) *Vanishing Voices. AKA. The Respect of Mucrow*. National Geographic Magazine. Retrieved on 29/08/17. Available at: <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2012/07/vanishing-languages/rymer-text>