

Open C1 English · Unit 12

Media, Communication & Influence

Grammar: Future forms (future perfect continuous, be about to)

Pronunciation: Intonation for attitude and emotion

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How to use this study pack

- Study the grammar and vocabulary before attempting the output tasks.
- Use the public site for audio playback; this PDF is the printable study companion.
- Mark answers directly on paper, then return to the online lesson for media-rich practice.
- Keep a separate C1 notebook for rewritten answers, useful collocations and pronunciation notes.

Unit workflow

Input: reading, listening and media exposure.

Language focus: grammar, vocabulary, idioms and Use of English.

Output: writing, speaking, mediation and realistic everyday communication.

¿De qué va esta unidad?

En esta unidad, nos adentraremos en el complejo ecosistema de los medios de comunicación, la comunicación digital y el poder de la influencia. En un mundo hiperconectado, no basta con entender lo que se dice; para alcanzar un nivel C1, es crucial comprender las sutilezas detrás del mensaje: la intención, el tono y la capacidad de persuasión. Analizaremos cómo se construye la opinión pública y cómo las nuevas plataformas han transformado nuestra interacción social, un tema recurrente en los textos académicos y de actualidad que encontrarás en el examen de Cambridge.

El mayor reto de esta unidad radica en el dominio de la precisión. A nivel avanzado, ya no se trata solo de transmitir información, sino de matizarla. Para ello, trabajaremos con estructuras gramaticales que nos permitan hablar de proyecciones temporales complejas y utilizaremos la entonación para proyectar actitudes específicas (ironía, entusiasmo, escepticismo). Aprenderás a navegar entre el lenguaje formal de la crítica mediática y el lenguaje coloquial de las redes sociales, una dualidad esencial para cualquier profesional o estudiante de nivel avanzado.

Objetivos de aprendizaje

- Reading: Analizar textos periodísticos complejos para identificar la postura del autor y distinguir entre hechos y opiniones.
- Listening: Comprender discursos y debates sobre medios de comunicación, captando matices emocionales y actitudes sutiles mediante la entonación.
- Grammar: Dominar el uso de los future forms (especialmente el future perfect continuous y be about to) para expresar planes, proyecciones y eventos inminentes con precisión.
- Vocabulary & Idioms: Ampliar el léxico relacionado con la ética periodística, la comunicación digital y la retórica, integrando expresiones idiomáticas naturales.
- Writing: Redactar ensayos de opinión y artículos de análisis con una estructura cohesiva y un registro adecuado para el examen C1.
- Speaking & Mediation: Desarrollar la capacidad de argumentar de forma persuasiva y realizar tareas de mediación, resumiendo información de diferentes fuentes para un interlocutor.

Lo que vas a encontrar

- Introduction: Una visión general de los temas clave que conectan la comunicación con el mundo actual.
- Grammar: Explicaciones detalladas y ejercicios sobre future forms para proyectar acciones en el tiempo.
- Vocabulary: Un despliegue de términos avanzados sobre medios, ética y tecnología.
- Idioms: Expresiones idiomáticas esenciales para sonar como un hablante nativo en contextos de debate.
- Reading: Textos de nivel C1 diseñados para entrenar la comprensión lectora crítica.

- Listening: Audios con diferentes acentos y matices para trabajar la comprensión auditiva avanzada.
- Use of English: Prácticas intensivas de transformations, word formation y open cloze enfocadas en el examen.
- Writing: Guías paso a paso para producir textos de alta calidad académica y profesional.
- Speaking: Simulacros de la parte oral del examen para mejorar la fluidez y la capacidad argumentativa.
- Mediation: Ejercicios prácticos para sintetizar y transmitir información de un formato a otro.

Tiempo estimado

Total: 8 horas

- Introduction: 15 min
- Grammar: 1 hora
- Vocabulary: 45 min
- Idioms: 30 min
- Reading: 1 hora
- Listening: 45 min
- Use of English: 1 hora
- Writing: 1 hora
- Speaking: 1 hora
- Mediation: 45 min

Lesson 2: Grammar Focus

Explicación (en español)

En esta unidad, nos enfocaremos en dos formas avanzadas para hablar del futuro: el Future Perfect Continuous y la expresión *be about to*. Aunque ambas se refieren a eventos que ocurrirán, su uso depende de si nos centramos en la duración de una acción o en la inmediatez de un evento.

El Future Perfect Continuous (*will have been + -ing*) se utiliza para enfatizar la duración de una acción que continuará hasta un punto específico en el futuro. Es una forma de "mirar hacia atrás" desde un momento futuro para resaltar cuánto tiempo ha estado ocurriendo algo. En español, solemos usar el presente continuo o el futuro simple para expresar ideas similares, lo que puede causar confusión. Por ejemplo, para decir "En diciembre, habré estado trabajando aquí durante diez años", usamos esta estructura para enfatizar la trayectoria.

Por otro lado, *be about to* se utiliza para acciones que están a punto de suceder de forma inmi-

nente. Es una forma de expresar inmediatez. Un error común es confundirla con el futuro simple (will). Mientras que will es una predicción o decisión, be about to indica que la acción es casi instantánea.

Para los hispanohablantes, el mayor reto es el uso del Future Perfect Continuous. Es común intentar usar el Present Perfect Continuous cuando se habla de una acción que aún no ha terminado, pero si mencionas un punto de referencia futuro (como "next year" o "by 2025"), la estructura de "will have been" es obligatoria en niveles C1. Además, recuerda que los verbos de estado (stative verbs como know, believe, want) no se usan en formas continuas; en esos casos, usarás el Future Perfect Simple.

Form — estructura

Tense/Structure |

Formula |

Usage |

Future Perfect Continuous |

Subject + will have been + verb-ing |

To show how long an action has been in progress up to a certain point in the future. |

Be about to |

Subject + be + about to + infinitive |

To describe an action that is going to happen very soon (imminent). |

Examples

- By next month, the influencer will have been posting daily content for a whole year. (Para el mes que viene, la influencer habrá estado publicando contenido diario durante un año entero).
- Watch out! The news anchor is about to interrupt the live broadcast. (¡Cuidado! El presentador de noticias está a punto de interrumpir la emisión en directo).
- By the end of this campaign, the agency will have been working on this rebranding for six months. (Al final de esta campaña, la agencia habrá estado trabajando en este cambio de imagen durante seis meses).
- We are about to launch our new podcast series on Spotify. (Estamos a punto de lanzar nuestra nueva serie de podcasts en Spotify).
- By 2030, social media companies will have been collecting user data for decades. (Para 2030, las empresas de redes sociales habrán estado recopilando datos de usuarios durante décadas).
- Don't turn off the TV; the documentary is about to start. (No apagues la tele; el documental está a punto de empezar).
- By midnight, the journalists will have been investigating the scandal for twenty-four hours. (Para la medianoche, los periodistas habrán estado investigando el escándalo durante veinticuatro horas).
- I was about to send the email when I realised there was a typo. (Estaba a punto de enviar el correo cuando me di cuenta de que había una errata).

Contrast

-

- By tomorrow, I will be working here for five years.
- By tomorrow, I will have been working here for five years.

(Error: Se necesita el Future Perfect Continuous para enfatizar la duración acumulada hasta un punto futuro).

-

- The press conference is just to start.
- The press conference is about to start.

(Error: "To start" no indica inmediatez; se debe usar "be about to" para acciones inminentes).

-

- They will have been knowing the truth for a long time by then.
- They will have known the truth for a long time by then.

(Error: "Know" es un stative verb y no puede usarse en la forma continuous).

-

- We will have been going to launch the app soon.
- We are about to launch the app.

(Error: "Will have been going to" es incorrecto para inmediatez; se usa "be about to").

Mini-quiz – 10 preguntas

Part 1: Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets (Future Perfect Continuous or 'be about to').

- By the time the documentary ends, we _____ (watch) screens for three hours.
- Shhh! The president _____ (make) his official statement.
- By next year, the journalist _____ (investigate) this corruption case for a decade.
- I can't talk right now; I _____ (enter) a live interview.

Part 2: Multiple Choice

-

By the end of the week, they _____ the new marketing strategy for a month.

- a) will be about to develop
- b) will have been developing
- c) are about to develop

-

Look at the countdown! The countdown timer reaches zero and the rocket _____ launch.

- a) will have been
- b) is about to
- c) will have

-

In two hours, the bloggers _____ their travel vlog for ten hours straight.

- a) will have been filming
- b) are about to film
- c) will be filming

Part 3: Sentence Transformation (Rewrite the sentence using the word in bold so that it has a similar meaning).

-

The film starts in one minute. ABOUT

The film _____ in one minute.

-

At 5 PM, she will have spent four hours editing the video. BEEN

By 5 PM, she _____ the video for four hours.

-

We are going to release the new album very soon. ABOUT

We _____ the new album.

Respuestas:

1. will have been watching
2. is about to make
3. will have been investigating
4. am about to enter
5. b
6. b
7. a
8. is about to start
9. will have been editing
10. are about to release

Lesson 3: Vocabulary Lab

Vocabulario C1 – Media, Communication & Influence

30 palabras con definición, traducción, ejemplo y audio.

disseminate //

/dɪ'sem.ɪ.neɪt/v

Definition: To spread information, knowledge, or news widely.

Traducción: difundir

Example: The research institute aims to disseminate its findings via interactive digital platforms in 2025.

Collocation: disseminate information

- ### empirical //

/ɪm'pɪr.ɪ.kəl/adj

Definition: Based on observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic.

Traducción: empírico

Example: Journalists must provide empirical evidence to support their investigative reports in the digital age.

Collocation: empirical evidence

- ### ubiquitous //

/ju:'bɪk.wɪ.təs/adj

Definition: Present, appearing, or found everywhere.

Traducción: ubicuo / omnipresente

Example: The ubiquitous presence of AI-generated news content has changed how we perceive truth.

Collocation:ubiquitous presence

- ### scrutinise //

/ˈskruː.tɪ.naɪz/v

Definition:To examine something very carefully in order to discover or examine mistakes or truths.

Traducción:escrutar / examinar minuciosamente

Example:Media watchdog groups continue to scrutinise the algorithms used by social networks.

Collocation:scrutinise details

- ### substantiate //

/səbˈstæɪn.ʃi.ət/v

Definition:To provide evidence to support or prove the truth of something.

Traducción:sustentar / corroborar

Example:It is becoming increasingly difficult to substantiate claims made by anonymous influencers.

Collocation:substantiate claims

- ### paradigm shift //

/ˈpær.ə.dɑɪm ʃɪft/n

Definition:A fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions.

Traducción:cambio de paradigma

Example:The rise of decentralised media represents a significant paradigm shift in global communication.

Collocation:represent a paradigm shift

- ### ambiguous //

/æmˈbɪɡ.ju.əs/adj

Definition:Open to more than one interpretation; not having one obvious meaning.

Traducción:ambiguo

Example:The politician's ambiguous response left the press corps questioning his true intentions.

Collocation:ambiguous wording

- ### cogent //

/ˈkɒʊ.dʒənt/adj

Definition:Clear, logical, and convincing.

Traducción:convinciente / coherente

Example:She presented a cogent argument regarding the ethics of deepfake technology.

Collocation:cogent argument

- ### manifest //

/ˈmæɪn.ɪ.fe.st/v

Definition:To show something clearly, through signs or actions.

Traducción:manifiestar

Example:Societal tensions often manifest through viral social media trends.

Collocation:manifest itself

- ### pervasive //

/pə'veɪ.sɪv/adj

Definition:Spreading widely throughout an area or a group of people.

Traducción:omnipresente / generalizado

Example:The pervasive influence of targeted advertising affects consumer behaviour globally.

Collocation:pervasive influence

- ### leverage //

/lev.ər.ɪdʒ/v

Definition:To use something to maximum advantage.

Traducción:aprovechar / potenciar

Example:Brands must learn how to leverage data analytics to maintain engagement in 2026.

Collocation:leverage resources

- ### consensus //

/kən'sen.səs/n

Definition:A general agreement.

Traducción:consenso

Example:There is no consensus among experts regarding the regulation of AI-generated media.

Collocation:reach a consensus

- ### disruptive //

/dɪs'rʌp.tɪv/adj

Definition:Causing radical change in an industry or strategy.

Traducción:disruptivo

Example:The company introduced a disruptive technology that changed how we consume podcasts.

Collocation:disruptive technology

- ### collaborate //

/kə'læb.ə.reɪt/v

Definition:To work jointly on an activity or project.

Traducción:colaborar

Example:Influencers often collaborate with brands to reach niche audiences.

Collocation:collaborate closely

- ### strategic //

/strə'ti:dʒɪk/adj

Definition:Relating to the identification of long-term or overall aims and interests.

Traducción:estratégico

Example:The media house developed a strategic plan to transition to fully virtual studios.

Collocation:strategic planning

- ### clickbait //

/kɪk.bet/n

Definition:Content whose main purpose is to attract attention and encourage visitors to click on a link.

Traducción:clickbait / contenido engañoso

Example:Readers are becoming increasingly wary of sensationalist clickbait on news feeds.

Collocation:sensationalist clickbait

- ### viral //

/vaɪ.rəl/adj

Definition:An image, video, or piece of information that is circulated rapidly and widely via the internet.

Traducción:viral

Example:The video went viral overnight, reaching millions of viewers across the globe.

Collocation:go viral

- ### echo chamber //

/ˈek.ʊ.tʃeɪm.bər/n

Definition:An environment where a person only encounters information or opinions that reflect and reinforce their own.

Traducción:cámara de eco

Example:Social media algorithms often trap users in an echo chamber, limiting diverse perspectives.

Collocation:trapped in an echo chamber

- ### cancel culture //

/ˈkæn.səl.kəl.tʃər/n

Definition:The practice of withdrawing support for public figures after they have done something considered objectionable.

Traducción:cultura de la cancelación

Example:Debates regarding cancel culture continue to polarise public opinion on social platforms.

Collocation:the rise of cancel culture

- ### algorithm //

/ˈæl.gə.rɪ.ðəm/n

Definition:A process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations, especially by a computer.

Traducción:algoritmo

Example:The algorithm determines which content appears at the top of your feed.

Collocation:complex algorithm

- ### hype //

/haɪp/n

Definition:Extravagant publicity or exaggerated claims.

Traducción:hype / bombo publicitario

Example:Despite all the hype, the new VR headset failed to meet consumer expectations.

Collocation:media hype

- ### nuance //

/nuː.ɑːns/n

Definition:A subtle difference in or shade of meaning, expression, or sound.

Traducción:matiz

Example:In short-form video content, it is often difficult to convey nuance.

Collocation:subtle nuance

- ### engagement //

/ɪnˈɡeɪdʒ.mənt/n

Definition: The level of interaction (likes, comments, shares) that content receives.

Traducción: interacción / compromiso

Example: The influencer's engagement rate dropped after they posted controversial content.

Collocation: high engagement

- ### misinformation //

/ˌmɪs.ɪn.fəˈmeɪ.ʃən/n

Definition: False or inaccurate information that is spread, regardless of intent to deceive.

Traducción: desinformación

Example: Combatting misinformation is one of the greatest challenges for digital media in 2025.

Collocation: spread misinformation

- ### authenticity //

/ˌɑː.θenˈtɪs.ə.ti/n

Definition: The quality of being real or genuine.

Traducción: autenticidad

Example: Audiences in 2026 value authenticity over highly polished, artificial content.

Collocation: maintain authenticity

- ### outrage //

/ˈaʊt.reɪdʒ/n

Definition: An extremely strong reaction of anger, shock, or indignation.

Traducción: indignación / indignación

Example: The celebrity's comments sparked widespread outrage on X (formerly Twitter).

Collocation: spark outrage

- ### streamline //

/ˈstriːm.laɪn/v

Definition: To make an organization or system more efficient and effective.

Traducción: optimizar / agilizar

Example: The news agency decided to streamline its production process using AI tools.

Collocation: streamline processes

- ### biased //

/ˈbaɪ.əst/adj

Definition: Unfairly prejudiced for or against someone or something.

Traducción: sesgado / parcial

Example: Critics argued that the news report was heavily biased towards the government.

Collocation: heavily biased

- ### reach //

/riːtʃ/n

Definition: The total number of different people who see your content.

Traducción: alcance

Example: The campaign achieved a massive reach through targeted social media ads.

Collocation: vast reach

- ### vlog //

/vlog/n

Definition:A personal website or social media account where a person regularly posts short videos.

Traducción:vlog

Example:Her daily vlog has become a staple of lifestyle content in 2026.

Collocation:post a vlog

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Lesson 4: Idioms & Natural Expressions

Idioms & expressions – Media, Communication & Influence

To cut through the noise · neutral

neutral

Meaning:To succeed in being heard or noticed amidst a large amount of competing information or distractions.

Significado:Destacar o hacerse oír entre un mar de información o distracciones.

Example:With so many influencers posting daily, it is becoming increasingly difficult for new brands to cut through the noise.

- ### To be caught in an echo chamber · neutral

neutral

Meaning:To be in a situation where you only encounter information or opinions that reflect and reinforce your own.

Significado:Estar atrapado en una cámara de eco (solo escuchar opiniones que refuerzan las propias).

Example:Social media algorithms often trap users in an echo chamber, making it hard to see the full picture.

- ### To go viral · informal

formal

Meaning:To become extremely popular very quickly via the internet.

Significado:Hacerse viral.

Example:The journalist's investigative report went viral overnight, sparking a global debate on privacy.

- ### To read between the lines · neutral

neutral

Meaning:To understand the hidden meaning in something that is said or written.

Significado:Leer entre líneas.

Example:The CEO didn't say there would be layoffs, but if you read between the lines, the message was clear.

- ### To spin a narrative · formal

formal

Meaning:To present information in a particular way to influence how people perceive it.

Significado: Manipular la narrativa / dar un enfoque específico a una historia.

Example: The PR team worked tirelessly to spin a narrative that would protect the company's reputation during the scandal.

- ### To be in the loop · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To be kept informed about a specific situation or project.

Significado: Estar al tanto / estar en el círculo de información.

Example: Please ensure all department heads are kept in the loop regarding the new communication protocols.

- ### To touch base · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To briefly contact someone to update them or check progress.

Significado: Ponerse en contacto brevemente / hacer un seguimiento.

Example: I'll touch base with the marketing team tomorrow to see how the campaign launch is progressing.

- ### To prompt-engineer a response · informal

formal

Meaning: To carefully craft a message or instruction to get a specific result from an AI or a person.

Significado: Diseñar una respuesta mediante ingeniería de prompts (ajustar el mensaje para obtener un resultado específico).

Example: In our new workflow, we spend more time learning how to prompt-engineer a response than actually writing the content.

- ### To be algorithmically driven · formal

formal

Meaning: To be controlled or heavily influenced by automated computer processes and data.

Significado: Estar dirigido/controlado por algoritmos.

Example: Many creators feel that their creative freedom is being limited because they are so algorithmically driven.

- ### To deepfake a reality · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To create a false sense of truth or a fabricated situation using advanced digital tools.

Significado: Fabricar una realidad (mediante manipulación digital/IA).

Example: The rise of generative AI makes it terrifyingly easy for bad actors to deepfake a reality that fools the public.

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Unit 12: Media, Communication & Influence

The Algorithmic Echo: Reclaiming Truth in the Age of Synthetic Media

In the mid-2020s, the concept of a "shared reality" has become increasingly fragile. As we navigate the complexities of a hyper-connected world, the line between authentic human expression and sophisticatedly engineered synthetic content has blurred to the point of invisibility. We no longer merely consume media; we inhabit digital ecosystems designed to reinforce our existing biases through seamless, algorithmic precision.

The rise of generative AI has fundamentally altered the landscape of influence. In previous decades, the gatekeepers of information were editors, journalists, and broadcasters. While these institutions were often criticised for their own biases, they provided a baseline of editorial accountability. Today, the gatekeepers are opaque algorithms, prioritising engagement over veracity. This shift has created a feedback loop where sensationalism is rewarded, and nuance is often lost in the pursuit of 'clicks'. Consequently, the public is frequently trapped in echo chambers, where every piece of information serves only to validate a pre-existing worldview.

Furthermore, the advent of deepfake technology has introduced a profound level of skepticism into our daily discourse. When video and audio can be convincingly fabricated, the very foundation of visual evidence begins to crumble. This 'liar's dividend'—a phenomenon where individuals can dismiss genuine evidence as fake—poses a significant threat to democratic processes. If nothing can be proven true, then nothing can be held to account. This erosion of trust extends beyond politics into the realms of social influence and personal relationships, making it increasingly difficult to establish common ground.

However, it is not merely the technology that is at fault; it is our psychological vulnerability to it. Humans are evolutionarily predisposed to seek out information that confirms our beliefs, a tendency that digital platforms exploit with surgical efficiency. The dopamine hit of being 'right' often outweighs the intellectual rigour required to be 'accurate'. As we move further into this era of synthetic influence, the challenge is no longer just about detecting falsehoods, but about cultivating a new kind of digital literacy.

To combat this, a multi-faceted approach is required. Regulators are grappling with how to oversee AI without stifling innovation, while tech giants face mounting pressure to implement transparency standards. Yet, the most critical shift must occur at the individual level. We must develop a healthy scepticism and a commitment to cross-referencing information. The goal is not to become cynics who believe nothing, but to become critical thinkers who demand more.

As we look toward the future, the battle for influence will be fought not just in the streets, but in the code. The ability to distinguish between a manufactured consensus and a genuine collective voice will be the defining skill of the 21st century.

Comprehension – Multiple Choice

1. What is the writer's main point in the first paragraph?
 - A. The digital world has become too complex to understand.
 - B. The distinction between reality and artificiality is fading.
 - C. Human expression is being replaced by machines.
 - D. We have lost the ability to communicate effectively.
2. How does the author view the role of traditional gatekeepers?
 - A. They were perfect arbiters of truth in the past.
 - B. They were flawed but provided a necessary level of responsibility.
 - C. They have been entirely replaced by more efficient systems.
 - D. They were the primary cause of the current misinformation crisis.

3. What does the term 'liar's dividend' imply in the third paragraph?
 - A. People can use the existence of fakes to escape accountability.
 - B. It is becoming easier to make money from fake news.
 - C. Deepfakes are more convincing than traditional media.
 - D. Democracy is being destroyed by the pursuit of profit.
4. According to the text, why are humans susceptible to algorithmic influence?
 - A. Because the technology is too advanced to resist.
 - B. Because we lack the necessary digital literacy.
 - C. Because of our natural psychological inclination toward confirmation.
 - D. Because we are addicted to the dopamine released by social media.
5. What does the author suggest regarding the responsibility for solving the crisis?
 - A. It lies solely with government regulators and tech companies.
 - B. It requires a combination of systemic changes and individual effort.
 - C. It is impossible to solve due to the nature of human evolution.
 - D. The focus should be entirely on technological innovation.
6. What is the overall tone of the passage?
 - A. Alarmist and pessimistic about the future of technology.
 - B. Dismissive of the impact of AI on modern communication.
 - C. Analytical and cautionary regarding the shift in media dynamics.
 - D. Optimistic that technology will eventually solve these issues.

Gapped Text – Missing Sentences

Instructions: Choose the correct sentence (A-E) to fill the gaps in the text. One sentence is a distractor.

- A. This shift has created a feedback loop where sensationalism is rewarded, and nuance is often lost in the pursuit of 'clicks'.
- B. This erosion of trust extends beyond politics into the realms of social influence and personal relationships, making it increasingly difficult to establish common ground.
- C. The goal is not to become cynics who believe nothing, but to become critical thinkers who demand more.
- D. This 'liar's dividend'—a phenomenon where individuals can dismiss genuine evidence as fake—poses a significant threat to democratic processes.
- E. The ability to distinguish between a manufactured consensus and a genuine collective voice will be the defining skill of the 21st century.

Glossary

- Fragile (adj) — Frágil
- Seamless (adj) — Fluido / sin interrupciones
- Veracity (n) — Veracidad
- Nuance (n) — Matiz
- Skepticism (n) — Escepticismo
- Vulnerability (n) — Vulnerabilidad
- Rigour (n) — Rigor
- Sovereignty (n) — Soberanía (Note: used contextually as authority/control)

Answers

Comprehension

1. B
2. B
3. A
4. C
5. B
6. C

Gapped Text (Mapping to original text structure)

Note to learner: In a real exam, you would match these to the gaps. Based on the text provided:

1. (Paragraph 2) -> A
2. (Paragraph 3) -> D
3. (Paragraph 3/4 transition) -> B
4. (Paragraph 4) -> C (Distractor is E)

(Self-Correction for teacher: In the provided text, the sentences were integrated. To use this for a student, you would remove them from the text and ask them to re-insert them.)

Lesson 6: Listening Lab

The Invisible Hand: Digital Influence and Ethics

Esta actividad de comprensión auditiva se divide en tres partes para poner a prueba tu capacidad de entender detalles, completar información y captar ideas abstractas. Escucha atentamente el audio para responder a las preguntas de opción múltiple, completar las frases y seleccionar la respuesta correcta según el nivel C1.

Part 1 – Conversation (questions 1–6)

|

Question |

Options |

1 |

What is the primary concern expressed by the first speaker regarding targeted advertising? |

The high cost of the products being advertised. / The feeling that their privacy is being invaded by mind-reading technology. / The technical difficulty of managing social media feeds. / The lack of variety in the products being shown. |

2 |

How does the second speaker describe 'choice architecture'? |

A malicious attempt to trick consumers into buying useless goods. / A way to make shopping more efficient and faster. / A method where the presentation of options subtly guides decisions. / A legal framework designed to protect consumer rights. |

3 |

What does the first speaker suggest is a major risk of algorithmic content delivery? |

The loss of human agency and independent decision-making. / The increased cost of digital advertising for small businesses. / The technical failure of social media platforms. / The difficulty of finding relevant content. |

4 |

According to the speakers, what is the 'echo chamber' effect? |

A situation where users are constantly bombarded with loud advertisements. / A feedback loop

where users only encounter content that reinforces their own views. / A technical glitch that repeats the same advertisements. / A way for users to communicate with people who have different opinions. |

5 |

What is the 'societal implication' mentioned by the first speaker? |

The potential for a complete economic collapse due to digital marketing. / The difficulty of maintaining meaningful public discourse in digital silos. / The rise in global internet usage among older generations. / The disappearance of traditional physical marketplaces. |

6 |

What solution do the speakers agree is necessary to combat these issues? |

To stop using social media entirely to avoid manipulation. / To develop a higher level of digital literacy. / To ban all forms of targeted advertising globally. / To increase the amount of data collected for better accuracy. |

Part 2 – Monologue: sentence completion (questions 7–12)

Complete each sentence with 1–3 words from the recording.

1. The speakers discuss the fine line between helpfulness and _____.
2. The way options are presented can _____ our decisions.
3. The speakers are concerned about the lack of _____ regarding data usage.
4. Algorithms create a feedback loop that results in _____.
5. The speakers suggest we need to be an _____ rather than a passive consumer.
6. The speakers believe it is a _____ task to navigate the digital world.

Part 3 – Panel discussion (questions 13–18)

13. How does the narrator distinguish between overt advertising and modern influence?

- Overt advertising is more expensive, while modern influence is free.
- Modern influence is more insidious because it is subtle and often invisible.
- Overt advertising is more effective at changing consumer behaviour.
- Modern influence is only found in social media, not in traditional media.

14. What is the definition of a 'nudge' in behavioural economics?

- A forced change in behaviour through economic penalties.
- A way to influence behaviour without removing options or incentives.
- A method of strictly regulating consumer choices.
- A technique used to increase the speed of digital transactions.

15. What are 'dark patterns' in user interface design?

- Designs that are visually appealing but hard to navigate.
- Tools used to protect user privacy and data.
- Designs crafted to trick users into unintended actions.
- Advanced algorithms that predict user needs accurately.

16. Why is the precision of modern hyper-personalised influence considered unprecedented?

- Because it uses data to create psychological profiles of individuals.
- Because it allows companies to target every person on earth at once.
- Because it is much faster than traditional marketing methods.
- Because it is based on real-time emotional tracking through hardware.

17. What ethical dilemma does the narrator raise regarding 'nudging'?

- Whether companies should be allowed to make any profit from data.
- Whether subtle influence undermines individual autonomy and free will.
- Whether the internet should be free for all citizens.
- Whether digital literacy should be taught in schools.

18. What is the narrator's final recommendation for navigating the digital landscape?

- To avoid using technology to preserve our personal agency.
- To advocate for greater transparency and ethical design standards.
- To demand that all algorithms be made public knowledge.
- To focus solely on using technology for economic growth.

Vocabulario clave

- Uncanny — extraño / misterioso - Agency — capacidad de actuar / autonomía - Crux — el quid de la cuestión / el punto crucial - Insidious — insidioso / engañoso - Pervasive — omnipresente / generalizado - Daunting — abrumador / desalentador - To sway — influir / inclinar - To foster — fomentar / promover ### Respuestas

Part 1: 1. A · 2. A · 3. A · 4. A · 5. D · 6. D

Part 2: 1. blatant manipulation · 2. subtly steer · 3. transparency · 4. digital silos · 5. active participant · 6. daunting

Part 3: 13. D · 14. A · 15. D · 16. B · 17. B · 18. A

Transcript

Ver transcript completo

SEGMENT 1 — CONVERSATION

Speaker 1: So, I was scrolling through my feed this morning, and I couldn't help but feel a bit overwhelmed by the sheer amount of targeted advertising. It's almost like they're reading my mind, isn't it?

Speaker 2: It's uncanny, isn't it? I mean, I was just talking about buying a new espresso machine, and lo and behold, my entire social media feed was suddenly saturated with high-end coffee makers. It feels a bit intrusive, if I'm honest.

Speaker 1: Exactly! It's that fine line between helpfulness and, well, blatant manipulation. I suppose it's all down to the algorithms, but sometimes it feels like we're losing our agency. Like, are we actually making choices, or are we just being nudged into them by a piece of code?

Speaker 2: That's a profound way of putting it. It's the concept of 'choice architecture,' isn't it? The way options are presented to us can subtly steer our decisions without us even realising it. It's not necessarily malicious, but it is certainly influential.

Speaker 1: But isn't that the whole point of marketing? To influence? I suppose my concern is more about the lack of transparency. We don't really know how these profiles are being built or how much data is being harvested to create these hyper-targeted campaigns.

Speaker 2: True. And there's the issue of the 'echo chamber' effect. Because the algorithms want to keep us engaged, they tend to feed us content that aligns with our existing beliefs. It creates this feedback loop where we're rarely challenged by opposing viewpoints.

Speaker 1: Right, so we end up in these digital silos. It's quite worrying when you think about the broader societal implications. If we're only ever hearing what we want to hear, how can we have meaningful public discourse?

Speaker 2: That's the crux of the matter. It's not just about consumerism; it's about how our perception of reality is being shaped. I mean, I'm not saying we should ditch social media entirely, but we definitely need to be more critical of the media we consume.

Speaker 1: I couldn't agree more. We need to develop a higher level of digital literacy. It's no longer enough to just consume content; we need to understand the mechanisms behind it.

Speaker 2: Precisely. It's about being an active participant rather than a passive consumer. It's a daunting task, but I suppose it's necessary in this day and age.

SEGMENT 2 – MONOLOGUE

Narrator: Welcome back to 'The Digital Pulse.' Today, we're delving into a topic that's increasingly relevant to our daily lives: the power of subtle influence in the digital age. We often talk about overt advertising—those loud, flashy commercials that demand our attention—but much of the influence we encounter today is far more insidious. It's subtle, it's pervasive, and often, it's entirely invisible to the naked eye.

Narrator: This brings us to the concept of 'nudging.' In behavioural economics, a nudge is a way of influencing people's behaviour in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives. In the digital realm, this manifests through user interface design, notification patterns, and the algorithmic curation of content. For instance, the way a 'subscribe' button is highlighted or how a 'recommended for you' section is structured can significantly sway our decisions. While these might seem like minor tweaks, when applied at scale to billions of users, the cumulative effect is immense.

Narrator: However, we must ask ourselves: at what point does a nudge cross the line into manipulation? There is a distinction between guiding a user towards a more efficient experience and exploiting psychological vulnerabilities to drive engagement or consumption. For example, using 'dark patterns'—user interface designs crafted to trick users into doing things they didn't intend to do, like signing up for a recurring subscription—is widely considered unethical. It's a predatory use of design that undermines user autonomy.

Narrator: Furthermore, the data-driven nature of modern communication means that these influences are no longer one-size-fits-all. They are hyper-personalised. Through the vast amounts of data collected on our browsing habits, preferences, and even our emotional states, companies can tailor their influence to the individual. This level of precision is unprecedented. It allows for a degree of psychological profiling that was previously the stuff of science fiction.

Narrator: This raises significant ethical questions regarding privacy, autonomy, and the very nature of free will. If our choices are being subtly steered by invisible forces, can we truly claim to be making independent decisions? As we navigate this increasingly complex digital landscape, it is imperative that we cultivate a critical awareness. We must understand the tools being used to influence us and advocate for greater transparency and ethical standards in digital design. The goal isn't to avoid technology, but to engage with it in a way that preserves our agency and fosters a healthy, informed society.

SEGMENT 3 – PANEL DISCUSSION

Speaker 1: Welcome to our final segment. We've been discussing the ethics of digital influence, and now we have our panel here to debate the potential for regulation. Joining us are Dr. Aris, a media psychologist, and Sarah, a digital rights activist. Dr. Aris, let's start with you. Is regulation even feasible given the sheer scale of the internet?

Speaker 2: Well, it's certainly a monumental task, I'll grant you that. But 'impossible' is a word we shouldn't use lightly. We regulate almost every other industry—finance, pharmaceuticals, aviation—and we do it to protect the public. Why should the digital sphere be any different? The key lies in creating frameworks that are flexible enough to adapt to rapid technological shifts, while still providing clear, enforceable rules.

Speaker 3: I have to jump in here. While I understand the argument for regulation, we must be incredibly careful about who gets to set the rules. There's a real risk that heavy-handed regulation could be used by governments to stifle dissent or control the flow of information. We've seen how 'fake news' laws can be weaponized in certain parts of the world.

Speaker 1: That's a valid concern, Sarah. But how do we strike a balance? How do we protect users from predatory practices without infringing on freedom of speech?

Speaker 2: That's the million-dollar question, isn't it? I would argue that regulation should focus on transparency and accountability rather than content control. For instance, we could mandate that companies clearly disclose when they are using certain types of algorithmic manipulation or when content is being sponsored. We could also demand greater transparency regarding data usage and how it informs these targeted interventions.

Speaker 3: Transparency is a good starting point, certainly. But transparency alone might not be enough. If a company is transparent about its manipulative tactics, but those tactics are still incredibly effective, people might still fall victim to them. We need more than just disclosure; we need actual guardrails. This could include banning certain 'dark patterns' entirely or setting limits on how much personal data can be used for psychological profiling.

Speaker 1: So, we're looking at a tension between individual liberty and collective protection. It seems there's no easy answer.

Speaker 2: No, there certainly isn't. But we can't afford to remain passive. The landscape is changing so rapidly that if we don't establish some ground rules now, we might find ourselves in a position where the damage is much harder to undo.

Speaker 3: I agree that we can't be passive. But I also believe that the solution lies in a combination of regulation and education. We need to empower individuals with the tools and knowledge to navigate the digital world critically. Regulation can provide the framework, but education provides the ultimate defense.

Speaker 1: A compelling point to end on. Thank you both for this enlightening discussion. It's clear that the conversation around media influence is far from over.

Lesson 7: Use of English

Unit 12: Media, Communication & Influence

Part 1 – Word formation

Instructions: Read the text below. Use the word in CAPITALS at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line.

The digital age has brought about a complete _ of how we consume news. In the past, journalists were seen as the sole providers of information, but now, the _ of social media has democratised the news cycle. However, this has also led to the _ of misinformation, making it difficult to distinguish

fact from fiction. Some argue that the _ of celebrity culture has skewed our perception of reality, prioritising entertainment over substance.

Furthermore, the _ of constant connectivity can lead to mental fatigue. Many users feel an _ to check their feeds every few minutes, often feeling overwhelmed by the _ of information available at any given moment. This constant stream of data can be _ for those unable to filter what is truly relevant.

- REVOLUTION
- RISE
- SPREAD
- DOMINANCE
- PRESSURE
- IRRESISTIBLE
- OVERWHELMING
- DISORIENTATING

Part 2 – Key word transformations

Instructions: Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between three and five words, including the word given.

1. I am almost certain that the press conference is going to start in a few seconds. BE
 The press conference ____ start.
2. By next year, she will have been working as a political commentator for a decade. WORK
 By next year, she ___ as a political commentator for ten years.
3. I can't believe that the documentary is finally coming out tomorrow. ABOUT
 The documentary __ tomorrow.
4. We will have reached the end of the broadcast by the time you arrive. FINISH
 By the time you arrive, the broadcast __.
5. The journalist was on the verge of resigning when she received the award. POINT
 The journalist was __ resigning when she received the award.
6. I'll have been living in London for five years by the end of this month. LIVE
 By the end of this month, I _____ in London for five years.

Answer key

- revolution
- rise
- spread
- dominance
- pressure

- irresistible
- overwhelming
- disorientating
- is about to
- will have been working
- is about to
- will have finished
- at the point of
- will have been living

Lesson 8: Writing Workshop

Unit 12: Media, Communication & Influence

Writing Task: The Review

Task (Cambridge C1 Advanced, Part 2)

Instructions:

You have seen the following task in a magazine for young professionals:

RE-THINKING THE MEDIA

In an age of constant digital noise, many people find it difficult to distinguish between genuine journalism and mere entertainment. We are looking for reviews of books, documentaries, or podcasts that explore the impact of modern communication on society. Your review should evaluate how effectively the media piece conveys its message and whether it is worth the audience's time.

Write your review.

Word count: 220–260 words.

Tips (en español)

Para este tipo of task, sigue estas estrategias para asegurar una calificación alta:

- **Structure:** Divide el texto en 4 párrafos: 1. Introducción (contexto y título), 2. Resumen del contenido (sin spoilers), 3. Evaluación crítica (lo bueno y lo malo), 4. Conclusión y recomendación final.
- **Register:** Mantén un tono semi-formal o formal. Aunque es una reseña, evita el lenguaje coloquial excesivo (slang), pero permite cierta personalidad para mantener el interés del lector.
- **Linking:** No uses solo "and" o "but". Utiliza conectores de contraste y de énfasis para que el flujo de ideas sea natural y sofisticado.

- Hedging (Cautela): En el nivel C1, evita afirmaciones absolutas como "It is bad". Usa lenguaje matizado como "It could be argued that..." o "The documentary occasionally falls into the trap of...".
- Evaluación de ideas: No te limites a decir si te gustó o no. Analiza el impacto, el estilo y la relevancia del contenido respecto al tema de la comunicación.
- Time management: Dedicar 5 minutos a planificar el esquema, 35 minutos a escribir y los últimos 10 minutos a revisar errores gramaticales y de ortografía.

Useful language

|

Expression |

Español |

Audio |

1 |

What immediately stands out is... |

Lo que destaca enseguida es... |

|

2 |

At first glance, the scene appears to... |

A primera vista, la escena parece... |

|

3 |

Whereas the first image suggests..., the second one points to... |

Mientras que la primera imagen sugiere..., la segunda apunta a... |

|

4 |

There is a striking contrast between... and... |

Hay un contraste marcado entre... y... |

|

5 |

The people seem to be dealing with... |

Las personas parecen estar lidiando con... |

|

6 |

It is highly likely that... |

Es muy probable que... |

|

7 |

One could infer that... |

Se podría inferir que... |

|

8 |

This might reflect a broader issue: ... |

Esto podría reflejar un problema más amplio: ... |

|

9 |

Although the setting is different, both images convey... |

Aunque el contexto es distinto, ambas imágenes transmiten... |

|

10 |

The overall impression is one of... |

La impresión general es de... |

|

11 |

This would be a useful example of... |

Esto sería un ejemplo útil de... |

|

12 |

I would argue that the second image feels more... |

Diría que la segunda imagen resulta más... |

|

Model answer

Review: The Filter Bubble – A Digital Wake-up Call

In an era dominated by algorithmic curation, the documentary *The Filter Bubble* offers a profound exploration of how digital communication shapes our perception of reality. Directed by Elena Rossi, the film examines the dangerous echo chambers created by social media platforms.

The documentary begins by tracing the evolution of news consumption, moving from traditional journalism to the fragmented landscape of the digital age. It effectively illustrates how algorithms prioritise engagement over accuracy, often trapping users in ideological silos. While the pacing is occasionally slow, the visual metaphors used to represent data flows are nothing short of brilliant.

However, the film is not without its flaws. At times, the narrative becomes somewhat repetitive, reiterating points that have already been established. Furthermore, it occasionally leans towards a pessimistic tone, failing to provide sufficient solutions to the problems it highlights. Nevertheless, these minor shortcomings do not detract from the overall impact of the message.

Ultimately, *The Filter Bubble* is a thought-provoking piece that challenges the viewer to question their own digital habits. It strikes a perfect balance between technical analysis and social commentary, making complex concepts accessible to a general audience. Despite its slightly heavy-handed approach at times, it is a compelling watch for anyone concerned with the future of truth in the digital age. I would highly recommend it to those seeking to understand the invisible forces shaping our modern discourse.

Marking checklist

- Content: ¿Has respondido a todas las partes de la tarea? (¿Has evaluado la efectividad y si vale la pena el tiempo del espectador?).
- Communicative Achievement: ¿El tono es apropiado para una revista de profesionales? ¿El lenguaje es persuasivo y mantiene el interés?
- Organisation: ¿El texto está organizado de forma lógica con párrafos claros y conectores que guían al lector?
- Language: ¿Has utilizado vocabulario avanzado (C1) y estructuras gramaticales complejas (pasivas, condicionales, inversiones) sin errores que impidan la comunicación?

Vocabulario para Writing & Speaking

Expression |

Español |

Useful C1 example |

media literacy |

alfabetización mediática |

Media literacy helps people evaluate sources. |

public opinion |

opinión pública |

Public opinion can shift rapidly. |

misleading information |

información engañosa |

Misleading information spreads quickly online. |

to shape perceptions |

moldear percepciones |

Headlines shape perceptions. |

a reliable source |

fuentes fiables |

A reliable source should be transparent. |

digital communication |

comunicación digital |

Digital communication can lack nuance. |

to verify information |

verificar información |

Readers should verify information before sharing it. |

social influence |

influencia social |

Social influence affects consumer choices. |

Lesson 9: Speaking Lab

Speaking – describe & compare

Compara estas dos imágenes. En tu respuesta, debes describir las diferencias en los métodos de comunicación y la naturaleza de la interacción social. Debes también responder a la pregunta: ¿Qué impacto crees que tiene el uso de la tecnología en la calidad de nuestras relaciones personales? Habla durante aproximadamente dos minutos.



speaking

Useful phrases

- In the first image, it appears as though... — En la primera imagen, parece como si... - The two scenes stand in stark contrast to one another. — Las dos escenas contrastan fuertemente entre sí. - While the first depicts isolation, the second suggests... — Mientras que la primera representa el aislamiento, la segunda sugiere... - One could argue that the digital medium leads to... — Se podría argumentar que el medio digital conduce a... - There is a palpable sense of... — Hay una sensación palpable de... - In much the same way, the second photo illustrates... — De la misma manera, la segunda foto ilustra... - It is highly likely that the subject is feeling... — Es muy probable que el sujeto se sienta... - Conversely, the second scene conveys a sense of... — Por el contrario, la segunda escena transmite una sensación de... - The visual cues suggest that... — Las pistas visuales sugieren que... - This stands in direct opposition to... — Esto se opone directamente a... - It is arguably the case that... — Podría decirse que... - The contrast between the two is quite striking. — El contraste entre las dos es bastante llamativo. ### Pronunciación

Para alcanzar un nivel C1, utiliza la entonación para transmitir matices. Cuando compares situaciones opuestas, usa una entonación descendente para enfatizar la finalidad de una idea y una entonación ascendente para crear suspense o mostrar duda al especular. Evita un tono monótono; la entonación debe reflejar tu actitud (por ejemplo, usa un tono más suave para hablar de aislamiento y uno más dinámico para la interacción social).

Model answer

The two images present a striking contrast regarding how we communicate and connect with others. In the first photograph, we see a young woman completely absorbed in her smartphone. The dim lighting and her singular focus suggest a sense of digital isolation, where the screen acts as a barrier to the outside world. It appears as though she is physically present but mentally elsewhere.

In stark contrast, the second image depicts a group of friends enjoying a vibrant, face-to-face interaction in a sunny outdoor setting. Unlike the first scene, there is a palpable sense of warmth and genuine connection. While the first woman is consumed by a digital interface, the group in the second photo is fully engaged in the present moment through verbal and non-verbal cues.

Regarding the impact of technology, I would argue that while digital tools allow us to stay connected globally, they can simultaneously erode the depth of our personal relationships. If we constantly prioritise screens over real-life engagement, as seen in the first image, we risk losing the emotional nuance that only physical presence provides. Ultimately, technology should supplement our social lives, not replace the meaningful connections shown in the second scene.

Lesson 10: Mediation Task

Mediation

Escribe un correo electrónico formal dirigido a tus compañeros de equipo resumiendo los puntos clave de la nueva política de redes sociales. Debes presentar las diferentes perspectivas de forma equilibrada y proponer una conclusión clara basada en el texto proporcionado. El texto debe tener un tono profesional y constructivo.

Texto original (español)

La nueva política de la empresa sobre el uso de redes sociales ha generado debate. La dirección sugiere que el uso de plataformas personales durante el horario laboral debe limitarse estrictamente para mejorar la productividad. Sin embargo, algunos empleados argumentan que las redes sociales son herramientas de comunicación esenciales para el networking y la gestión de la imagen de marca de la empresa. Se propone un modelo híbrido: permitir el uso de redes sociales únicamente para fines profesionales y durante descansos específicos, asegurando que las tareas principales no se vean afectadas. Debemos encontrar un equilibrio entre la libertad individual y la eficiencia operativa.

Imagen de apoyo



mediation

Estrategias clave

- Identify the main points: Identificar los puntos clave del texto original.
- Paraphrasing: Parafrasear las ideas para evitar el plagio y demostrar nivel C1.
- Summarising: Resumir la información esencial sin perder el contexto.
- Adapting tone: Adaptar el registro de la fuente al formato de correo electrónico profesional.
- Synthesising: Combinar la información de la fuente con el propósito de la tarea.
- Structuring: Organizar el texto con una introducción, desarrollo y conclusión clara.

Audiencia de destino

your team members

Respuesta modelo (English)

Subject: Update regarding the new social media policy

Dear Team,

I am writing to brief you on the recent discussions regarding our company's new social media policy. As we navigate these changes, it is essential that we all understand the proposed guidelines. The management has suggested limiting personal social media use during working hours to prioritise productivity. While this aims to minimise distractions, some colleagues have raised valid points regarding the importance of these platforms for professional networking and brand management. To address these conflicting views, a hybrid model has been proposed. This approach would allow social media usage strictly for professional purposes and during designated breaks, ensuring that our core responsibilities remain the priority.

In conclusion, the goal is to strike a balance between maintaining operational efficiency and allowing the flexibility needed for modern professional communication. I encourage you to review these points carefully as we prepare to implement these changes. Please feel free to share your thoughts during our next meeting.

Best regards,

[Your Name]

Lesson 11: Podcast Guide

Podcast Guide – Media, Communication & Influence

Escuchar podcasts auténticos es fundamental en el nivel C1 para acostumbrarse a la velocidad natural, los modismos y los diversos acentos que no aparecen en los libros de texto. En esta guía, encontrarás recursos seleccionados para desafiar tu comprensión auditiva y ampliar tu vocabulario sobre los medios y la comunicación.

Recommended podcasts (3 total)

1. BBC In Our Time

- Level & accent: British (Received Pronunciation/Academic), C1 appropriate: Yes.
- Recommended episode: "The history of the newspaper" or "The invention of the telegraph".
- Why it's useful for C1: Este podcast utiliza un lenguaje académico y sofisticado, ideal para alcanzar el registro formal requerido en el examen C1. Los debates entre expertos te permitirán aprender a seguir argumentos complejos y estructuras de pensamiento lógico.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To shed light on... (Arrojar luz sobre/aclarar algo)

- A watershed moment (Un momento decisivo/punto de inflexión)
- To be steeped in... (Estar impregnado de/empapado de algo)
- The prevailing sentiment (El sentimiento predominante)
- To underpin the notion that... (Sustentar la idea de que...)

2. TED Radio Hour (NPR)

- Level & accent: American (Mixed/Standard), C1 appropriate: Yes.

- Recommended episode: "The Power of Persuasion" or "Digital Distraction".
- Why it's useful para C1: Al tratar temas de psicología y comunicación, te ofrece vocabulario sobre influencia y comportamiento humano. El ritmo es dinámico, lo que ayuda a entrenar el oído para transiciones rápidas de ideas.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To exert influence over... (Ejercer influencia sobre...)

- A double-edged sword (Un arma de doble filo)
- To tap into... (Aprovechar/conectar con algo, como una emoción o tendencia)
- To challenge the status quo (Desafiar el estado de las cosas)
- Cognitive bias (Sesgo cognitivo)

3. The Inquiry (BBC World Service)

- Level & accent: British/International, C1 appropriate: Yes.
- Recommended episode: "How social media shapes our reality" or "The rise of fake news".
- Why it's useful para C1: Este formato de entrevista rápida y periodística es perfecto para entender cómo se estructura una noticia o un debate de actualidad. Te expones a una gran variedad de acentos globales, algo vital para el éxito en el C1.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To play devil's advocate (Hacer de abogado del diablo)

- To spark a debate (Despertar/provocar un debate)
- The fallout from... (Las consecuencias/repercusiones de...)
- To blur the lines between... (Desdibujar las líneas entre...)
- To be widely perceived as... (Ser ampliamente percibido como...)

Active listening strategies (C1)

- Listening for gist vs. detail: No intentes entender cada palabra. Primero, escucha para captar la idea general (the gist) y, en una segunda escucha, concéntrate en los detalles específicos.
- Predictive listening: Antes de que el interlocutor termine una frase, intenta predecir la estructura gramatical o el tipo de palabra que vendrá. Esto entrena tu cerebro para procesar el inglés a la velocidad de un nativo.
- Note-taking using abbreviations: No escribas frases completas. Usa símbolos y abreviaturas para anotar puntos clave; esto te obliga a procesar la información en tiempo real en lugar de solo transcribir.
- Shadowing technique: Si escuchas una frase que te resulte especialmente elegante o difícil, pausa el audio e intenta repetirla imitando exactamente la entonación, el ritmo y la acentuación del locutor.

- Identify discourse markers: Presta especial atención a las palabras de transición (however, nonetheless, conversely, furthermore). Estas son las "señales de tráfico" que te indican hacia dónde se dirige el argumento.
- Contextual guessing: Cuando encuentres una palabra desconocida, no detengas el audio. Intenta deducir su significado basándote en el contexto y la carga emocional de la voz antes de buscarla en el diccionario.

Follow-up task

Task: The Critical Review

- Vocabulary Extraction: While listening, write down 5 new words or expressions. After the episode, look them up and write one original sentence for each, related to the topic of the podcast.
- Summary Note-taking: Write a 150-word summary of the episode using at least three of the "key phrases" you listened for.
- Oral Argumentation: Record a 2-minute voice note on your phone. In this recording, you must express your opinion on the podcast's main argument. You must use at least one "concession" structure (e.g., "While I acknowledge that..., I still believe...") to demonstrate C1-level complexity.

Lesson 12: Media Guide

Cine & Series – Media, Communication & Influence

Utilizar contenido audiovisual de alta calidad te permite exponerte a matices de registro y estructuras gramaticales complejas que no suelen aparecer en los libros de texto. Al analizar críticamente el lenguaje de estas producciones, podrás transicionar de un inglés funcional a uno con la sofisticación necesaria para el nivel C1.

Recommended title

- Title: Black Mirror (Selected episodes), 2011–Present, Netflix
- Accent/dialect: Primarily British (RP, various regional UK accents), occasionally American.
- Why it's perfect for C1: The series explores the intersection of technology, media, and social influence, providing a rich context for high-level vocabulary regarding ethics, manipulation, and societal shifts. The dialogue ranges from highly formal/intellectual to raw, colloquial British English, making it ideal for mastering register.
- Episodes to start with: Season 1, Episode 1 ("The National Anthem") and Season 3, Episode 1 ("Nosedive").

Language focus

1. "It seems as though we are about to lose our grip on reality entirely."

- Vocabulary note: To lose one's grip /lu:z wʌnz grɪp/ (perder el control / perder el contacto con la realidad).
- Grammar spotlight: Be about to is used here to express an imminent change or an event that is on the verge of happening.

2. "By the end of this decade, social media companies will have been manipulating our perceptions for longer than we can fathom."

- Vocabulary note: Fathom /'fæðəm/ (comprender / alcanzar a entender).
- Grammar spotlight: Future Perfect Continuous (will have been manipulating) is used to emphasise the duration of an action that started in the past and continues up to a specific point in the future.

3. "The public is about to face a reckoning that no algorithm can prevent."

- Vocabulary note: A reckoning /'rekənɪŋ/ (ajuste de cuentas / juicio final).
- Grammar spotlight: Be about to highlights the immediate future, creating a sense of tension and inevitability in the narrative.

Viewing task (active watching)

- Vocabulary Log: Note down at least 10 words or idiomatic expressions per hour of viewing. Focus on words related to technology, ethics, and human behaviour.
- Register Analysis: Identify scenes where characters shift from formal professional language to informal slang. Note how the tone changes the power dynamic between speakers.
- Grammar Hunting: Listen specifically for predictions or descriptions of imminent events. Try to rewrite a sentence you heard using a different future form (e.g., change "is about to" to "is on the verge of").
- Oral Summary: After finishing an episode, record a voice note on your phone summarising the main conflict in 3 sentences. Aim for a C1 level of cohesion (using connectors like nevertheless, subsequently, or consequently).

Similar titles (2 alternatives)

- The Social Network (2010): Excellent for fast-paced, intellectual dialogue and American English nuances.
- Succession (2018–2023): Perfect for mastering sophisticated corporate vocabulary and complex power dynamics.

The Digital Distraction



everyday_scene

En esta imagen vemos la desconexión social causada por el uso constante de dispositivos móviles en entornos públicos. Es un ejemplo perfecto para discutir cómo la comunicación digital influye en nuestras interacciones cara a cara y en la atención que prestamos al entorno.

Preguntas para hablar (Speaking practice)

- Describe what is happening in this photograph and the atmosphere it conveys.
- How might the person's use of a smartphone affect their social life in the long term?
- In what ways has digital communication changed the way we interact in public spaces?
- Compare the scene in the photo with how people used to communicate in cafes in the past.
- Do you think it is possible to maintain meaningful relationships while being constantly distracted by technology?

Unit review – Media, Communication & Influence

Al finalizar esta unidad, deberías ser capaz de utilizar estructuras gramaticales avanzadas para hablar sobre planes futuros, intenciones inmediatas y la duración de acciones en el futuro. Esto te permitirá expresar matices de tiempo con precisión, algo esencial para alcanzar el nivel C1. Asimismo, habrás adquirido un léxico especializado sobre los medios de comunicación, la ética periodística y la influencia digital. Deberías sentirte cómodo utilizando colocaciones complejas y cambiando de registro (formal a informal) para discutir temas de actualidad de manera sofisticada.

Grammar consolidation

Part 1: Sentence Transformation

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between three and six words.

-

I started studying English three years ago and I'm still doing it.

BEEN

By next year, I _____ English for four years.

-

We are on the verge of signing the contract.

ABOUT

We _____ the contract.

-

It's certain that the government will announce the new law soon.

GOING

The government _____ the new law.

Part 2: Error Correction

Identify and correct the grammatical error in each sentence.

- By the time the journalist arrives, the press conference will be finished. (Wait, this is correct – find the error in the next one!)
- At midnight, they will have been working for twenty hours straight. (Correct. Let's try this: By next month, I will have been living here since five years.)
- I am about to leaving the house when the phone rang.

Part 3: Controlled Rewriting

Rewrite the sentences using the prompts provided to maintain the original meaning.

- The film starts in five minutes. (Use: ABOUT)
- I intend to have finished this article by 6 PM. (Use: HAVE)
- They started the investigation in January and it's still ongoing. (Use: BEEN)
- The news is expected to break momentarily. (Use: ABOUT)

Vocabulary activation

Part 1: C1 Collocations

Complete the sentences with the correct word to form a common collocation.

- The documentary provided a _____ account of the political scandal. (In-depth / Deep)
- Social media influencers often exert a _____ influence on young consumers. (Pervasive / Wide)
- The news report was criticized for being _____ and biased. (Sensationalist / Loud)
- We need to find a way to bridge the _____ gap between different political ideologies. (Communication / Talk)

Part 2: Word Formation

Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits in the gap.

- The _____ of the news story was questioned by many editors. (RELIANCE)
- There has been a significant _____ in how we consume digital media. (SHIFT)
- The politician's _____ speech went viral overnight. (ELOQUENT)
- Many people are concerned about the _____ of fake news. (SPREAD)

Part 3: Register Choice

Choose the most appropriate word for a formal academic essay.

- The media's role in _____ (shaping / making) public opinion is vital.
- The _____ (proliferation / growing) of digital platforms has changed journalism.
- It is essential to _____ (scrutinise / look at) the sources of information.
- The _____ (implications / results) of misinformation are profound.

Integrated skills task

Source Text: The Age of Echo Chambers

The digital revolution has fundamentally altered the landscape of communication. While the internet promised a global village of diverse perspectives, it has instead facilitated the rise of "echo chambers." Algorithms on social media platforms are designed to maximise engagement by showing users content that aligns with their existing beliefs. Consequently, individuals are rarely exposed to dissenting opinions, leading to increased social polarisation.

This phenomenon creates a feedback loop where biases are reinforced rather than challenged. As users interact more with like-minded individuals, their views become more extreme. This lack of intellectual diversity can undermine democratic processes, as nuanced debate is replaced by hostility and misinformation. While connectivity has increased, the quality of meaningful, cross-cultural dialogue seems to be declining. We must ask ourselves: are we communicating more, or are we simply talking to ourselves?

Writing Task

Instrucciones: Basándote en el texto anterior, escribe un ensayo de respuesta (180-220 palabras). Debes analizar si los algoritmos de las redes sociales son responsables de la polarización social y proponer una posible solución para fomentar un debate más equilibrado. Utiliza un registro formal y vocabulario de nivel C1.

Speaking checkpoint

- Compare: Compare the influence of traditional newspapers with that of social media influencers. Which is more impactful in the long term?
- Speculate: How might the way we consume news change in the next twenty years due to AI?
- Evaluate: "The media's primary goal is to inform, not to entertain." To what extent do you agree with this statement?
- Justify: If you had to choose between privacy and national security in the digital age, which would you prioritise and why?
- Speculate: Imagine a world where all news is verified by a single global entity. Would this be a utopia or a dystopia?
- Evaluate: Discuss the ethical implications of using "clickbait" to fund investigative journalism.

Self-assessment rubric

Criteria |

Needs work (B2) |

Solid (C1) |

Exam-ready (C1+/C2) |

Accuracy |

Frequent errors in complex structures. |

Good control; errors are rare and don't impede meaning. |

High level of precision; very few errors. |

Range |

Uses basic vocabulary and simple structures. |

Uses a wide range of C1 vocabulary and varied grammar. |

Sophisticated use of idiomatic language and complex structures. |

Fluency |

Hesitations when using complex language. |

Speaks at length with natural flow. |

Smooth, effortless communication. |

Task Achievement |

Answers are too short or off-topic. |

Fully addresses all parts of the prompt. |

Provides nuanced, deep, and well-developed responses. |

Answer key

Grammar consolidation

1. will have been studying
2. are about to sign
3. is going to announce
4. (Correct as written)
5. ...living here for five years.
6. I was about to leave the house when the phone rang.

7. The film is about to start.
8. I hope to have finished this article by 6 PM.
9. They have been conducting the investigation since January.
10. The news is about to break.

Vocabulary activation

1. in-depth
2. pervasive
3. sensationalist
4. communication
5. reliability
6. shift
7. eloquent
8. spread
9. shaping
10. proliferation
11. scrutinise
12. implications