BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak
Same person, different font

This is not a word-for-word transcript.

Feifei
Hello and welcome to The English We Speak, where we explain phrases and expressions used by fluent English speakers so that you can use them too. I'm Feifei.

Becca
And I'm Becca.

Feifei
Becca, I met our new colleague today. She reminds me of you!

Becca
Really? That's interesting. We have quite different personalities and upbringings.

Feifei
Well, you both have curly hair, dress in soft colours and talk incredibly fast.

Becca
OK, maybe we're same person, different font!

Feifei
'Same person, different font'? That's a strange expression.

Becca
It is! It's a humorous way of saying that two people are very similar in some ways, but are still clearly different people.

Feifei
So, it's like they have the same style or appearance, but there are differences in the details?

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Becca
Exactly. Think about two versions of the same piece of writing in different fonts. The words are the same, but they look different. When we describe people as 'the same person, different font', or 'the same person in a different font', we're joking that they have a very similar vibe.

Feifei
I see. Let's hear some more examples.

Examples

When my brother calls me on the phone, he sounds exactly like my dad. They're really the same person, just different font.

You remind me so much of someone I went to school with. It's like you're same person, different font.

My friend and I are really similar. It's like you're same person, just a different font.

Feifei
Becca, does it always mean that the people look alike?

Becca
No, not always. They might look completely different – in that case, it's more about their personality, behaviour, interests or general style.

Feifei
I see. Is this a very common expression?

Becca
It's fairly common in spoken English and online or on social media. It's informal. I could say that, if I ever met someone who is very organised, stylish and has a bob haircut…

Feifei
Oh, you might have found me in a different font! That's it for this programme, but join us next time to learn more English phrases and expressions. But for now, it's goodbye!

Becca
Bye!

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