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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## Authentic Real English 地道英语

### Knee-jerk reaction 本能反映

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#### Neil

Hello and welcome to Authentic Real English, I'm Neil and joining me is Feifei...

#### Feifei

大家好。

#### Neil

I've got a medical experiment to perform on you in this programme, Feifei.

#### Feifei

Righhhht...

#### Neil

Come on – it's for our listeners. We've got an expression which means to react to something without thinking about it carefully first. So, cross one leg over the other, like that.

#### Feifei

可是你拿个榔头，这是要干什么？

#### Neil

Keep calm – it's OK, I'm not going to hurt you. And I'll just tap your knee... And... it worked!

#### Feifei

Yes Neil, well done. You've just tested my reflexes. 你刚才检查的是我的膝跳反映，也可以被叫做膝跳反射。 When you hit my knee with the hammer, my leg kicked automatically. I didn't even think about it.

#### Neil

It was a knee-jerk reaction. And in English we can say that someone has a knee-jerk reaction when they act after an event without thinking carefully.

**Feifei**

Let's hear some examples of 'knee-jerk reaction'.

**Examples**

He left his wife after he saw her having a drink with another man but it was a knee-jerk reaction. He'll be back.

Putting up interest rates because of inflation is a knee-jerk reaction. They haven't thought of the other consequences.

**Feifei**

A knee-jerk reaction 本能反映。 Acting automatically, without thinking about the consequences.

**Neil**

Let's try that again with the other knee. Here we go... Argh – you kicked me in the face!

**Feifei**

Sorry Neil – it was just a knee-jerk reaction.

**Neil**

Ow...

**Both**

Bye!