

Transcript

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Section 1 – "Your mum and dad live in Brighton now, don't they?" – Talking about family

Ravi: Hello hello and welcome to the LearnEnglish Elementary podcast number seven. I'm Ravi, from Manchester ...

Tess: And I'm Tess, from London. As usual we've got lots of interesting stuff for you to listen to – we've got the quiz, we've got Carolina ... and .. we've got our producer Gordon, as usual. Hello Gordon.

Gordon: Hi Tess. Hi Ravi.

Tess: Hiya. Have you had your hair cut Ravi?

Ravi: I have, yeah, do you like it?

Tess: Yeah, I do, it's nice. It's quite short for you. Shorter than usual. Are you changing your image?

Ravi: No, not really. I just fancied a change, you know. And I've got a big family party this weekend so I thought I'd get my hair cut for that.

Tess: You want to look smart. Fair enough. What's the party?

Ravi: It's my dad's fiftieth birthday. My mum's organised a surprise party for him.

Tess: Oh, brilliant. What a nice idea. Your mum and dad live in Brighton now, don't they?

Ravi: Yes. They moved down there a couple of years ago. My big sister's still in Manchester though.

Tess: How many brothers and sisters have you got again? I can never remember.

Ravi: I've got one older sister and two younger brothers. Hang on a sec. That's them there.

Tess: You keep a picture of your family in your wallet? How sweet.

Ravi: Yeah. Course I do. That's Asha, my big sister, there. She's 3 years older than me.

Tess: She's really pretty. It's a shame our listeners can't see this. You do realise that Ravi, don't you.

Ravi: I know I know – but it'll only take a minute. That one's Deepak – he's at university in Bristol and that's Vikram. He's still at school.

Tess: Hey, your brothers are both really good-looking. What happened to you?

Ravi: I knew you were going to say that.

Tess: Only joking Ravi. Anyway, we'd better move on – we've got a lot to get through.

Section 2 – I'd like to meet

Ravi: Right. So let's start with I'd Like to Meet.

Tess: OK. In this part of the podcast we ask people a simple question – which famous person, dead or alive would you like to meet? And we ask them to explain why. So let's say hello to this week's guest, Muhammed from Manchester. Hi Muhammed. Welcome to 'I'd like to meet'.

Muhammed: Hi Tess and Ravi

Ravi: Hi Muhammed. So you're a Manchester boy like me. Good football team eh.

Muhammed: Which one?

Ravi: Which one!? No – don't tell me you're a Manchester City supporter! Noooo!

Muhammed: I'm afraid so. Sorry Ravi.

Tess: Ravi can't speak – so I'll continue. What do you do Muhammed?

Muhammed: I'm at college at the moment - but when I finish I want to join the police.

Tess: You want to be a policeman. What made you decide to do that?

Muhammed: My uncle's a policeman. I don't know really – it's just something I've always wanted to do.

Tess: OK. Now, who are you going to talk about today Muhammed – who's the person that you'd like to meet – if you had the chance?

Muhammed: I want to talk about Muhammed Yunus.

Tess: OK. Off you go.

Muhammed: Well, he's from Bangladesh – from Chittagong actually – that's where my dad's family came from – we've still got relations living there. And I think everyone knows his name now – since he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 – well he won it with his bank.

Ravi: A bank won the Nobel peace prize?

Muhammed: Yes. The Grameen Bank? Microcredit?

Ravi: Well, yeah, it sounds familiar.

Muhammed: It's a bank for poor people.

Tess: Perhaps you'd better explain how it works Muhammed.

Muhammed: Well, it all started when he - Dr Yunus – he's a professor of economics - he visited a village outside Chittagong, and he talked to a very poor woman – and he realised that she only needed a small amount of money – just a couple of dollars – and then she could buy materials to make things and sell them and earn money. She couldn't borrow money from the bank because they didn't believe that she would pay it

back. He found more people in the same situation - think it was forty-two people in the village – and all of them together only needed twenty-seven dollars -- that's all they needed to be able to start making money for themselves. So he lent them the money - and they all paid it back to him later. Then he went to other villages and did the same thing. So he started his own bank – the Grameen Bank – to lend small amounts of money to poor people, mostly women actually. That's what microcredit means.

Tess: What kinds of things do they use the money for?

Muhammed: Well, a woman can buy a cow, and then she can sell the milk and pay to send her children to school. Or she could buy a mobile phone – the villages don't have telephones – and then people can pay to use her phone. They aren't expensive things – it just means that poor people can start to earn money. And now the Grameen Bank lends millions and millions of dollars to people.

Ravi: And they all pay it back?

Muhammed: Most of them yes – something like 99 per cent. And now countries like the United States and Britain are using the idea too, it's all over the world - so – well, I think he's brilliant – a real hero. That's what I'd like to say to him.

Tess: Well thank you Muhammed. That was really interesting.

Muhammed: Thanks.

Ravi: There's an old joke isn't there – something about 'a bank will only lend you money if you can prove that you don't need it'.

Tess: Well yes – it's true isn't it! I'd never really thought about it before.

Ravi: No, nor me.

Section 3 – Quiz

Ravi: OK. Let's move on now to quiz time. A little game to make you think. Let's see who we've got on the phone today. Hello?

Niall: *(on phone)* Hi Ravi.

Ravi: Niall? Hello Niall, where are you calling from?

Niall: From Belfast.

Ravi: Ah, Northern Ireland. Lovely. And what do you do Niall?

Niall: Well, I work in a shop but I'm going to university soon.

Ravi: OK. What are you going to study?

Niall: Spanish

Ravi: Ah. Buenos días!

Niall: Buenos días, Ravi

Ravi: Actually, that's all the Spanish I know. OK, so we've got Niall from Belfast and Nikki. Hi Nikki.

Nikki: *(on phone)* Hi Ravi

Ravi: And where are you from Nikki?

Nikki: From Luton. North of London.

Ravi: I know it well. My uncle lives there. And what do you do Nikki?

Nikki: I work in a garden centre.

Ravi: Very nice. Right. We're going to play 'Something Beginning with' again. I'm sure you both know how to play but I'll explain the rules. I'm going to ask the questions and when you know the answer you press any button on your phone.

Let's hear your buzzer, Niall. *(Niall's buzzer)*. And yours Nikki *(Nikki's buzzer)*. Right. I ask the questions and give you a letter. So, I might say for example "A sport beginning with 'F'" and when you think of a sport beginning with 'F' you press your buzzer. Can either of you think of a sport beginning with 'F'?

(Niall's buzzer)

Niall: Football

Ravi: Exactly. The winner is the first person to get three answers right. Are you both ready?

Niall/Nikki: Ready/OK

Ravi: Then let's go. Can you tell me a fruit beginning with 'C'?

(Nikki's buzzer)

Ravi: Nikki

Nikki: Cherry

Ravi: Yes. One nil to Nikki. Can you tell me a means of transport beginning with 'T'?

(Niall's buzzer)

Ravi: Niall.

Niall: Train.

Ravi: Yes. One one. Next one. Can you tell me an animal beginning with 'F'?

(Niall's buzzer)

Ravi: Niall.

Niall: Fox.

Ravi: Yes. Two one to Niall. Can you tell me an item of clothing beginning with 'S'?

(Nikki's buzzer)

Ravi: Nikki.

Nikki: Socks

Ravi: Yes. Two two. So this one is the decider. Ready? Can you tell me ... a vegetable beginning with 'C'?

(Niall's buzzer)

Ravi: Niall!

Niall: Cauliflower.

Ravi: Cauliflower. Yes. So Niall is today's winner. Well done Niall. Bad luck Nikki. The podcast book token will be on its way to you soon to buy any book you want. You can get a Spanish book.

Niall: I might do that Ravi.

Ravi: OK. Thanks to both of you for playing and the rest of you, remember you can send your ideas for games to us at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.

Section 4 – Our person in

Tess: Right. Let's move on now to Our Person In. This is the part of the podcast when we hear from different people all over the world. This time, Susan Harold is Our Woman in Egypt.

Susan: When I first arrived in Cairo, the capital of Egypt, 10 years ago, I was working as a teacher. I had lessons in different parts of the city and I had to take a lot of taxis – the underground in Cairo doesn't cover many areas of this huge city. Black and white taxis are a familiar sight here and it's a cheap way to travel but I found it very difficult.

The big question was – how much do I have to pay? I watched my Egyptian friends in taxis. They didn't ask the driver "how much?" at the start of the journey, there was no meter in the car to say how much and they didn't ask "how much?" at the end of the journey – they just handed over the correct amount of money and walked away. "But how do you know how much to pay?" I would ask. A shrug of the shoulders, "We just know."

Gradually, over the years, I have started to understand the payment system in Cairo taxis. There are several things to think about. How far are you going? How long will you spend in the car? What time of day is it? How many people are in the car? My Egyptian friends can make all the calculations and *know* exactly how much to pay without a word being spoken.

Unfortunately, the rules can be different for tourists. You might have to pay more if you travel to or from one of the big international hotels in the city. In fact, you might have to pay a little bit just because you're a tourist. But don't let that stop you taking taxis in Cairo. In my opinion, there's no better way to really see the life of this amazing city.

Ravi: I went to Cairo on holiday a couple of years ago and it was unbelievable. I mean, it's a fantastic city, the pyramids are just incredible and everything but it's just so big and the traffic ...oof!
Tess: Did you take a taxi?

Ravi: I didn't. I was too scared to cross the road most of the time. I'd love to go back though.

Tess: Well, listeners, remember that you have the chance to join in too. This time we'd like to hear about taking a taxi in your country. You can send it to us at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. Actually, taxi might be one of the answers in the next part of the podcast.

Section 5 – Your turn

Tess: It's time for Your Turn when we go out into the street to find out what people think. And the question this time was 'What's the best way to travel?'

Ravi: Actually, that's quite a difficult question. Erm .. I think I'd say flying. Except it's really bad for the planet.

Tess: Well, let's hear what our people said.

Voice 1: Oh, by train. Definitely. You know, you can get up and walk around and you can't really do that in a plane or a car. And you can just sit and watch the world go by. Not too fast, not too slow. Just right.

Voice 2: Well, I shouldn't really say this but I love driving. It gives you that feeling of independence that you don't get with any other transport. You can just go wherever you want. The world's your oyster. I'd *love* to drive all the way across America one day.

Voice 3: I know lots of people don't like it but I really like flying. I still think it's amazing that we can do it. When you stop to think about it, it's incredible. And I love the view from up there. Mind you, it's really bad for the planet, I suppose.

Voice 4: Well I've travelled on the underground today but if I had to say what the best way to travel is I'd say bicycle. I think it's the satisfaction of getting around by your own effort. And it's good for you.

Voice 5: I'd probably say 'on foot', really. I mean, it depends. I *love* walking in the countryside – it's not so much fun in the city, I guess. I'll tell you what *isn't* the best way to travel. Flying. I *hate* it. I'm *terrified*.

Ravi: Nah, I disagree, I really like flying. What about you Tess?

Tess: I'm surprised that nobody said 'boat'. I love travelling by boat. We went on a boat holiday when I was a kid – I loved it.

Ravi: And we'd love to hear what all of you out there think. What do *you* think is the best way to

travel? Write and let us know.
learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.

Section 6 – Carolina

Tess: OK. Time now to find out how Carolina's getting on in Newcastle. Carolina, you might remember, is a student from Venezuela who's come to Britain to live, study and have fun. Last time we listened, Carolina joined some societies at the university but this time she's not feeling too well.

In the shared residence kitchen

Carolina: Hi Emily.

Emily: Hi. What are you doing here? I thought you had a seminar at 10 o'clock.

Carolina: I did, but I'm not feeling very well. (*she sneezes*)

Emily: Bless you! You sound terrible. You'd better go to bed. Did you tell your tutor that you were ill?

Carolina: No, I was early, he wasn't there, but I left a note on the door. I said I was sorry, but I was very constipated.

Emily: Constipated? Why did you tell him you were constipated?

Carolina: Well, because I am. (*she sneezes*) See, I can't stop sneezing.

Emily: You don't sneeze when you're constipated. Constipated means that you can't go to the toilet, you know, you're blocked , you know, you try and try but you can't well you know.

Carolina: Oh no! I was thinking in Spanish! In Spanish we say I'm constipada! (*she sneezes*)

Emily: Well in English it's a cold. You say I've got a cold – a bad cold.

Carolina: I knew that! I've got a cold! What a stupid mistake! It's because I'm ill – my head feels like it's full of, I don't know, cake.

Emily: Cake?!

Carolina: And I left a note on the door. Everyone's going to laugh at me.

Emily: No they won't. Don't be silly. Everyone knows English isn't your first language – you made a mistake that's all.

Carolina: But they won't know it's a mistake. (*she sneezes*) They'll think I wanted to tell everyone that I was constipated, that I couldn't go to the toilet. Oh, I want to go home to Venezuela.

Emily: Look, it's not ten o'clock yet. I'll go the room and take the note off the door and explain to.... who?

Carolina: Professor Grogan. Room 102. It'll be too late.

Emily: And you can go to the chemist's and get yourself something to take. Then come back here and go to bed. You look awful. Have some hot lemon and honey – that's what my mother always gives me.

Carolina: (*she sneezes*) OK, thanks a lot Emily.

At the chemist's

Chemist: Good morning. Can I help you?

Carolina: (*she sneezes*) Yes please. I can't stop sneezing. (*she sneezes*) Have you got anything I can take?

Chemist: Is it a cold or an allergy?

Carolina: It's a cold. I don't have any allergies, at least I don't think so.

Chemist: Have you got any other symptoms?

(*Carolina sneezes*) A sore throat? A headache? A cough?

Carolina: Yes, my throat hurts – it hurts when I eat or drink, and my head hurts too.

Chemist: Have you got a temperature?

Carolina: A temperature? (*she sneezes*) What's that? I'm sorry, my English is terrible today.

Chemist: You know, have you got a high temperature, do you feel hot? Is your face hot?

Carolina: You mean a fever? Yes, yes, I think so, my face is hot but my body feels cold.

Chemist: OK. It sounds like a bad cold. Let's see this should help. Are you allergic to any medicines?

Carolina: No, no I'm not. How often do I have to take it?

Chemist: Two spoonfuls, four times a day. The instructions are on the bottle. Don't take it if you're driving, it might make you sleepy.

Carolina: That's OK. I just want to go to bed. Should I take anything else?

Chemist: Vitamin C will help. Here you are. Take one of these three times a day. And drink plenty of water. Where are you from, if you don't mind me asking?

Carolina: Venezuela. I've only been here a few weeks.

Chemist: Ah. Venezuela. I expect our English weather is a bit too cold for you then. Spend the rest of the day in bed and keep warm. You'll feel a lot better tomorrow.

Carolina: I hope so.

Chemist: If you still feel terrible in two or three days then you should go and see a doctor.

Carolina: Thank you very much. And how much is that for the medicines?

Tess: Poor Carolina. It's terrible when you feel ill in a foreign country.

Ravi: "I am constipated."
Tess: Oh, stop it Ravi.
Ravi: Yeah, you're right. It is quite funny though.
And she got some medicine so I'm sure she's OK.

Section 7 – The Joke

Ravi: Anyway, that's almost the end of another podcast but, as usual, before we go, we're going to hear from Gordon with another one of his amazing jokes. Gordon?
Gordon: Yep.
Ravi: What have you got for us?
Gordon: Another dog, Ravi.
Ravi: Come on then, let's hear it.
Gordon:
Right. A dog goes to put an advert in a newspaper. In the lonely hearts column, you know.
Ravi: To find a girlfriend?
Gordon: Right. Anyway, the assistant at the newspaper says "That's fine, just fill in your name and address on this form and then write your advert in the box underneath." "OK", says the dog.

He fills in the form and then he stops to think for a bit and then he writes in the box – "woof, woof, woof. Woof, woof. Woof, woof, woof, woof." He gives the paper to the assistant and she has a look at it and says to the dog, "You know you've got nine woofs here – you can have an extra one for no extra charge – it's ten words for £5. Why don't you add another 'woof'?"

The dog looks really confused. "Another 'woof'? That wouldn't make any sense at all".

Ravi: I quite like that one. Your dog jokes are the best ones Gordon. You should concentrate on them. What do you think Tess?
Tess: *Quite* funny – but don't look for work as a comedian just yet Gordon. Anyway. That's everything from us for this time. After this little break you'll hear from Tom, our English teacher who'll talk about the language you heard and give you ideas to help you learn. So we'll say goodbye but don't go away.
Ravi: And remember to keep your emails coming to us at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org.
Tess & Ravi: Bye!.

Tom the teacher

Tom: Hi, my name's Tom. At the end of every podcast, I talk about some of the language that you heard, and some ways to help you learn English. Today I want to look at some verbs that we use to describe things – or to describe the *idea* that we have about them. Listen to Emily and Carolina talking. Remember, Carolina is ill. What phrase does Emily use to describe her?

Emily: Hi. What are you doing here? I thought you had a seminar at 10 o'clock.
Carolina: I did, but I'm not feeling very well. (she sneezes)
Emily: Bless you! You sound terrible.

Tom: Emily says "You sound terrible!" We use the verb 'sound' when we are talking about something we can hear. Emily can hear that Carolina is ill from her voice, and also from her sneezes. So she uses 'sound'. If your friend tells you all about her new boyfriend, but you haven't met him yet, you can say "He sounds nice." You have the idea that he is nice from what she has said about him, from what you've *heard*. So you can use 'sound'. Now listen to Emily again. How does she describe Carolina this time?

Emily: And you can go to the chemist's and get yourself something to take. Then come back here and go to bed. You look awful. Have some hot lemon and honey – that's what my mother always gives me.

Tom: This time Emily says "You look awful". This time, she can see that Carolina is ill - it isn't just her voice now. Her eyes are probably red, and she might be very pale. So this time Emily says "You *look* awful". If your friend shows you a photograph of her new boyfriend, and you haven't met him yet, you can say "He looks nice". You have the idea that he is nice from the photo – from what you can see. So you can use 'look'. A lot of languages use words that translate as 'seem' or 'appear' in all of these situations, so using 'look' and 'sound' might be a bit strange for you. Try to notice people using 'look' and 'sound' in the English that you read and hear, and try to use those phrases yourself.

Now I want to talk about something that's very important when you learn a new language. Do you remember Carolina's problem with the word 'constipated'?

Emily: Constipated? Why did you tell him you were constipated?

Carolina: Well, because I am. (she sneezes) See, I can't stop sneezing.

Emily: You don't sneeze when you're constipated. Constipated means that you can't go to the toilet, you know, you're blocked , you know, you try and try but you can't well you know.

Carolina: Oh no! I was thinking in Spanish! In Spanish we say I'm constipada! (she sneezes)

This is a very common problem. It depends what language you speak, but sometimes there are words in your language that are very similar to a word in English. And very often they have the same meaning too. For example, 'arriver' in French is similar to 'arrive' in English, and the meaning is the same. These words can help you a lot.

But be careful! As we just heard with Carolina, sometimes the words don't have the same meaning at all! The word 'constipada' in Spanish looks and sounds the same as the English word 'constipated'. But the meaning is completely different. We call these words 'false friends'. They look or sound the same as a word in another language – so you think they are 'friends' - but they don't have the same meaning. The German word for 'poison' sounds the same as the English word 'gift' – which means 'a present'. In Finnish, the word for 'cat' can sound like the English word 'kiss'. False friends can be very dangerous!

When you hear a word in English that sounds or looks the same as a word in your language, the first thing to do is notice the *context* – the situation where you heard or saw the word, what the people were talking about. This will help you to understand the meaning of the word. Then, if you're still not sure, check the word in your English learners' dictionary. And finally, if it is a false friend, then make a note of it on a special page in your vocabulary notebook and make a really special effort to learn it – and remember it. It isn't easy - even people who speak English very well still make mistakes with false friends – just like Carolina did – when they're tired or not concentrating.

Now let's look at a useful phrase that we use in English when we want to ask a personal question. Listen to Carolina and the chemist. What phrase does he use when he asks her a personal question?

Chemist: Vitamin C will help. Here you are. Take one of these three times a day. And drink plenty of water. Where are you from, if you don't mind me asking?

Carolina: Venezuela. I've only been here a few weeks.

Tom: He says "Where are you from, if you don't mind me asking?" Of course, in a different situation, with your new classmates for example, "Where are you from?" isn't a very personal question, but the chemist doesn't know Carolina, and in *this* situation – Carolina is buying some medicine for her cold – Carolina might be offended – she might think the question isn't appropriate. So he adds "if you don't mind me asking". This makes the question more polite. If you want to ask someone a question but you aren't sure if it's polite to ask, then use "if you don't mind me asking".

Just before I go, let me give you a phrase from the podcast that you can use. Listen to what we say in English when someone sneezes – *atchoo!*

Emily: Hi. What are you doing here? I thought you had a seminar at 10 o'clock.

Carolina: I did, but I'm not feeling very well. (she sneezes)

Emily: Bless you! You sound terrible. You'd better go to bed. Did you tell your professor that you were ill?

Tom: Yes, we say "Bless you!". Some learners think that we say "God bless you" – well maybe that was the original phrase that people used a long time ago, but nowadays it's just "Bless you!". Use it the next time someone sneezes near you!

OK. That's all from me today. I'll talk to you all again on the next podcast. Remember you can send your questions to me at learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. I'll be happy to answer your questions! Or write to me about any interesting language that *you* noticed. In a moment you'll hear the address for the website where you can read everything you've heard in this podcast. So bye for now! See you next time.