

**Adam**

**Adam:** Hello and Happy New Year! I'm Adam. Rob is away this episode, but should be back next time. Welcome to Episode 13 of the Learn English Elementary podcast – the first episode of 2012. And, to start the new year, Tess and Ravi will be here in a moment to talk about something else that's very British.

But, before we get to that, let's take a look at some of your comments from the last podcast.

We heard Carolina and her friends go to the cinema and we asked you to tell us about what kind of cinema you like and we got some great responses. We found that all over the world, people like the same kind of films: action movies, thrillers, documentaries, animation, horror films – well, I don't like horror films – comedies... Perhaps TKazerooni, our friend in Iran, describes it best when he says "I'll be flown in my dreams" when he goes to the cinema. Sirjoe, in Italy, likes to sit at the front of the cinema, right in front of the screen, "so that my sight is totally occupied by the images". I do that too.

And we now have enough film recommendations to start a Podcast film festival! We don't have time to mention them all but ibtissemdz and gladiator, both from Algeria, mentioned The Battle of Algiers. TKazerooni recommends an Iranian film called Marmoolak – it means 'The Lizard'. Both sheileng and michelle in Brazil recommend Tropa de Elite (Elite Squad) and I'll be looking out for a Russian film called 'Vysotsky (Thank god I'm alive) recommended by Tanya Klimova. Oh, and Umi from Indonesia says we should see a film called Laskar Pelangi, which means 'The Rainbow Troops', and she also offers some good advice on learning English – thanks Umi!

We must give a special mention to Langtucoiam in Vietnam who remembers a very special cinema visit. He says: I will never forget the film "King Kong" because it was really fantastic and after this film one of my classmates became my

girl-friend and now she is my wife. How romantic!

Finally though, we mustn't forget that not everybody likes the cinema. Christopher in Brazil says 'it isn't good to be inside a dark warm room with very loud noises', but maybe the best advice is from j d trzsnayai in Romania:

*I don't really like going to the cinema. I much prefer reading a good book or studying English with your podcasts.*

That's my favourite advice!

As usual, thank you all for all your great comments and sorry we can't mention them all. As usual, please let us know what you think by writing to us at [www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish](http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish) or look for us on Facebook.

Now it's time to catch up with Tess and Ravi. In these podcasts they've been looking at things that people think are typically British – things you think about when you think about Britain. I wonder what they'll tell us today...

**Tess and Ravi**

**Ravi:** Excuse me. Could I possibly have a cup of tea, please?

**Tess:** Certainly, sir, here you are.

**Ravi:** Ah, thank you. How much is that please?

**Tess:** Thank you. Two pounds please.

**Ravi:** Thank you. Here you are, five pounds.

**Tess:** Ah! Thank you. And here's three pounds change, thank you.

**Ravi:** Ah, thank you!

**Tess:** Hi, it's us, Tess and Ravi, and that little conversation might give you an idea of what we're talking about today.

**Ravi:** As usual, we're going to look at something you, our listeners, think you know about Britain – some typically British things – and today, we're going to talk about British politeness.

**Tess:** Lots of people think that the British are very polite. What do you think, Ravi?

**Ravi:** Hmm, I don't know. I think it's quite old-fashioned, don't you? London certainly doesn't feel very polite in rush hour in the morning.

**Tess:** I think one thing that makes people think we're polite is that we say 'please' and 'thank you' a lot – like you and I did just then. I don't think people say 'please' and 'thank you' so much in other places.

**Ravi:** Really?

**Tess:** Yeah. My Spanish friend said that when she first came to visit Britain, when she went to a café, she'd say 'A coffee' – not 'a coffee, please' because in Spain, people don't say 'please' so often. For me, it feels quite rude, quite impolite, if you don't say 'please' when you ask for something in a shop.

**Ravi:** Yeah, but it can get silly sometimes, saying 'please' and 'thank you' all the time. Anyway, just saying 'please' and 'thank you' a

lot doesn't mean you're polite. I think London feels quite impolite; I think people in Manchester are more polite than they are here in London.

**Tess:** Well, you would say that, you're from Manchester, but you might be right – capital cities are often very different from the rest of the country. The other thing my friend thought was funny about English is our polite language, like, 'Excuse me, I'm very sorry, but I wonder if I could ask you a question' – that kind of thing.

**Ravi:** Yeah, we seem to use a lot of words to say things when we want to be polite. 'Could I possibly use your telephone if you don't mind'. But that's polite language – does that mean that we're really more polite than people in other countries? I have to say, I don't really think we are, actually.

**Tess:** To be honest, I don't either. I don't really think the British are especially polite. It's probably the same everywhere – some people are very polite – and some people are not so polite.

**Ravi:** I'm very polite aren't I?

**Tess:** Yes, Ravi.

**Ravi:** Thank you.

## Outro

So, Adam, if you don't mind my asking, would you perhaps believe that it's true? Are the British very polite?

Thank you very much for asking, Adam. I think there are different kinds of politeness. There's following rules, for example when you eat in a particular way, and then there's politeness by thinking about other people, for example when you give your seat to someone else on the bus. I think you can be kind to other people even if you don't follow lots of rules about how to speak and act.

But what do you think? Do you think British people are polite or not – tell us about your experiences – good or bad! And how about in your country? Do you think people in your country are polite or not? We'd love to hear from you. As usual you can contact us at [www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish](http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish).

You know, it's true what Ravi said - we seem to use a lot of words to say things when we want to be polite. And we also use fixed expressions when we're being polite. It's useful to learn these fixed expressions. For example, what do you say when you want to get past someone – if you want to get off the train for example?

“Excuse me”

How about when someone says ‘thank you’ to you?

“You're welcome” or “that's all right”.

We've put some activities to help you with this on the website.

You'll also see some activities about negative prefixes: *impolite*, *unimportant*, *incorrect*. They'll help you remember which prefix goes with which adjective.

OK, that's all we've got time for today. I'll be back next time with Rob and with more from Carolina. Thank you very much for listening – bye!