



ESL Podcast 177 – A Wild Driver

GLOSSARY

Staples Center – the large stadium in downtown Los Angeles for basketball games, events, and concerts

* I just bought tickets to see the next Lakers' game at the Staples Center.

to warn – to caution; to tell someone in advance about problem

* I warned Tom that getting a pet would be a lot of work.

ride – to be in a moving car or vehicle, usually with someone else driving

* I was happy that Mary agreed to give me a ride to the airport.

to rear-end – to crash into the back of a car

* The man rear-ended my car while talking on his cell phone.

SUV – stands for "Sports Utility Vehicle"; a large type of car that is good for rough driving, such as driving in the mountains or on bad roads

* Diane is excited about driving her new SUV to the mountains to go camping this weekend.

take it easy – calm down or relax

* Take it easy! I know dinner was expensive, but I will pay for it all.

to have (everything) under control – to be well-prepared

* Don't worry about the party, Jake is good at planning events. I'm sure he has everything under control.

speeding – driving too fast; driving at a speed that is over the legal speed limit

* I got into a bad accident because I was speeding in a neighborhood with children playing in the street.

You're the one who... – you are responsible, this is your fault or your decision; an expression that places blame

* Don't blame me for the fire! You're the one who was playing with matches.

in one piece – safe or not damaged

* I fell on the stairs, but luckily, I'm still in one piece!



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U-turn – to turn your car around and go in the other direction

* There was a “No U-Turn” sign at the stoplight, so I had to wait until the next street to turn around.

lanes – lines on the road to show cars where they should drive

* Three of the four freeway lanes were closed because of the car accident.

one-way street – a street where cars can only go in one direction

* It would be a very dangerous mistake to go the wrong way on a one-way street.

to take 10 years off one’s life – to scare someone very badly, to frighten someone very much

* When Ana jumped out from behind the tree, I was so scared. It took ten years off my life!

wuss – someone who is weak or gets scared easily

* Pete called me a wuss when I screamed during the scary movie.

to buckle up – to fasten your seatbelt; to put on your seatbelt in a car

* Always remember to buckle up when you’re in the car.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Pedro afraid?
 - a) Yasmine drives very fast.
 - b) Yasmine wants to be Pedro's girlfriend.
 - c) He and Yasmine are late for the show.

2. Yasmine tells Pedro to
 - a) relax and to put on his seatbelt.
 - b) drive the car for her.
 - c) not speak to her for ten years.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

ride

The word "ride," in this podcast, is a noun that means being in a moving vehicle, such as a car. Usually someone else is driving and this is called "getting a ride," or, "going for a ride." "To ride" is the verb and it means to travel in a moving vehicle: "I was riding on the bus when it broke down." You can also "ride" other objects that help you travel: you can "ride a horse," or "ride a bicycle." Ride can also be used as a noun to mean the fast moving games at amusement parks: "I went to Disneyland and rode on all of the rides."

to take it easy

In this podcast, the phrase "to take it easy" means, "to calm down," or "don't worry": "Try to take it easy. Getting angry won't help." "Take it easy" can also be used to mean "to relax." When you are going on vacation and you plan to spend everyday at the beach, you are "taking it easy." If someone asked you, "What are you planning to do on your vacation?" you would answer, "I am going to take it easy," meaning "I am not going to do much. I am going to relax."



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CULTURE NOTE

As in most countries, if a police officer in the U.S. sees a driver doing something illegal, the officer will give the driver a traffic ticket. A traffic ticket is a piece of paper that a police officer gives a driver because they have broken the law. This ticket tells you how much you must pay as a fine, an amount of money you pay to the government as your punishment. When you get a ticket, you have two choices. You can pay the fine or, if you don't think you broke the law, you can "fight" the ticket. To fight the ticket, you must go to traffic court to prove to a judge that you are right and that you did not break the law. In traffic court, you will "testify," or tell your story, and the police office will testify, too. If the judge believes you and decides that you did not break the law, you will not need to pay the fine. However, if the judge decides against you, you will need to pay the fine.

Getting a traffic ticket can have some bad results. In most states, drivers are required to have car insurance, that is, to have a company that promises to pay for any problems with your car, such as having an accident or having your car stolen. To get this service, drivers pay an "insurance premium," an amount of money, to the company each year. How much you need to pay depends on many things, including your age, the age of your car, and your driving record. For this reason, if you have traffic tickets, your premium will go up and you will need to pay more, usually a lot more, for insurance.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – a ; 2 – a



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast Number 177, “A Wild Driver.”

This is English as a Second Language Podcast Episode 177. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California. Remember to visit our website at eslpod.com to get the Learning Guide for this podcast, which includes the entire transcript, additional activities, comprehension questions, culture notes, and much more. Today's podcast is called, "A Wild Driver." Let's go.

[start of story]

Yasmine and I were going to a show at the Staples Center and Yasmine was driving. My friends warned me about her driving, but they didn't prepare me for this ride.

Pedro: Whoa, slow down! You almost rear-ended that SUV.

Yasmine: No, I didn't. Take it easy. I have everything under control. I'm not even speeding, that much. You're the one who doesn't want to be late for the show.

Pedro: Yeah, but I want to get there in one piece. Hey, what are you doing? You're not going to make an illegal U-turn across four lanes of traffic, are you?

Yasmine: I have to.

Pedro: Why?

Yasmine: I was going the wrong way on a one-way street.

Pedro: Oh, geez. I think you just took ten years off my life.

Yasmine: Don't be such a wuss. Buckle up and enjoy the ride. We're just getting started.

[end of story]



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Today's podcast is called, "A Wild Driver." A "driver" is the person who is driving a car or a truck. And, if they are "wild," means that they are driving very dangerously. They're a little crazy. They're doing things with the car that they should not be doing. That's a wild driver.

In the story, Yasmine and I are going to a show at the Staples Center. A "show" means some type of entertainment. It could be a concert. It could be, usually a concert, but it-it can also be...you can talk about a show as a movie. "I'm going to see the show tonight." It could be a play. It could be a musical, lots of different things could be called a show. Well, in this case, the show is a concert at the Staples Center. And, the Staples Center is the large...the name of the large auditorium, the large center here in Los Angeles, in downtown Los Angeles, where they have big rock concerts. So, it's a big stadium. And they play basketball games in there. And, they have big conventions in the Staples Center. So, it's a big stadium. It's a big auditorium. It has a roof over it, however, so you can do things there in any kind of weather.

Well, the Staples Center is where Yasmine and I are going. Yasmine is driving the car and "my friends warned me about her driving." "To warn" someone means to tell them about something that is possibly dangerous or something negative. "I'm going to warn you about walking at night by yourself in Los Angeles." I'm telling you that that could be dangerous. So, that is to warn someone, to give them information about something that could be dangerous.

Well, even though my friends warned me, "they didn't prepare me for this ride." "Ride" means, in this case, this trip. Going from one place to another in a car. You can say, "I'm going to take a ride." I'm going to get in my car and drive somewhere. A ride, then, means a trip.

Well, the dialog begins by Pedro saying, "Whoa, slow down." That expression, "whoa," is one that we use in a couple of different ways. You can say "whoa" to someone when you think they are moving too fast, they're running too fast, or maybe they're even talking too fast. It would only be something you would say to someone who is a friend. It's an informal expression. You wouldn't say that to your boss, say "whoa." No, you wouldn't do that. The expression is in part from a horse. When you're on a, riding a horse, and you want the horse to stop, or to slow down, you-you often hear people say, "whoa." So, "whoa" means to slow down. Sometimes, it can just be an expression of surprise, or of shock. "I went outside and, whoa, it was raining." I wasn't expecting it. It was very surprising to



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me. So "whoa" can be slow down or it can just be an expression of surprise. Well, here it definitely means slow down. Don't drive so fast.

I say to Yasmine that, "You almost rear-ended that SUV." "To rear-end" is a verb which means to hit your car on the back, hit the back of another car with your car. To hit the back of another car with your car, the front of your car hits the back of their car. That is to rear-end someone. "Rear," you probably know, means the back of something, the back of a car. Could also mean the same as, informally it could mean the same as, what you sit on--your, your butt, is also called, can be called, your rear or your rear-end. But here, as a verb, it means for a car to hit another car.

Now, the car that she almost rear-ended was an SUV. "SUV" stands for "Sports Utility Vehicle." And, a vehicle is just any name for a car or a truck. A sports utility vehicle is a car, a big car that you could use to drive places where there aren't roads, where there aren't any good roads. For example, if you were going hunting, or camping, or you wanted to walk in the mountains, but there weren't any roads, well, a Sports Utility Vehicle is supposed to be a big car that helps you drive in places where they don't have very good roads. Now, Sports Utility Vehicles are big cars and they've become very popular in the last five years or so, here in the United States. Most people do not use them, however, to go to a place where there aren't any roads. They just use them as their regular car. They're big, they cause a lot of problems for some drivers because they're more difficult to control and they use a lot of gasoline, so they're not very good for the environment. But, they're still very popular--just not with me.

Yasmine says that she didn't almost rear-end. She says, "No, I didn't. Take it easy." The expression, "take it easy," means to relax. It's an expression that you would only say to a friend of yours. Because when you say, "take it easy," you are saying the other person is either excited, or angry, or getting too upset about something. You would not want to say to your boss, "Take it easy." So, "take it easy" means to relax, to calm down. Sometimes, it can also mean to slow down. If someone is driving very fast, you may say, "Take it easy. Don't go so fast." So, to relax, to calm down. Those are all meanings of...to "take it easy."

Yasmine says, "I have everything under control." To have something "under control," means that you have taken care of everything, that you know what you are doing, and that you are not being unsafe, you are not being dangerous. I have everything under control. You can also use that expression when you are



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planning a big event, a party. And, you say, "I have everything under control." It means I have all of the little details, all the little parts of the plan; I've taken care of them; I know what I'm doing.

Yasmine says, "I'm not even speeding, that much." "To speed," as a verb, speed, means to go very fast in your car, to go faster than what you can legally go. In the United States, the speed limit, the fastest you can go in your car on a highway or freeway, is usually sixty-five miles an hour. In some states, it's different. Every state has its own rules about how fast you can drive in the United States. There isn't one national speed limit. And, to speed means to go faster than what you can legally do. Of course, in the city, on regular streets, the speed limit is much lower, usually thirty, thirty-five miles per hour. So, Yasmine says she wasn't even speeding that much. That expression, "that much," means not very much. And, of course, that means that she was speeding a little bit. She was going a little too fast.

Yasmine then says, "You're the one who doesn't want to be late for the show." "You're the one who" - that expression is used when you are having an argument, a discussion with someone. And, you say something to them that you think they are responsible for the problem. And, they say back to you, they respond to you that you're the one who's the problem. You're the one who wants to do something. Let me see if I can give you an example of that. You say to your friend that you want to see the baseball game tonight. The Los Angeles Dodgers are playing baseball and you want to go to the game. And, your friend says, "Okay, well let me call my friend and see if he can get me some tickets to the game." And, you say, "No, no, no. Don't call your friend. I don't want you to do that." And, your friend would say, "Well, you're the one who wants to go to the baseball game," meaning it was your idea. You're the one who wanted to do it. So, that is the expression that Yasmine is using here. "You're the one who doesn't want to be late for the show." And, that's why she's driving so fast, so that they're not late for the show. And, you said, Pedro, that you didn't want to be late for the show. So, that is what Yasmine is arguing with Pedro here.

Pedro replies, he responds by saying, "Yeah, but I want to get there in one piece." "In one piece." "In one piece" means that you don't want to get in an accident, you don't want to get injured. It's an expression we use when someone is being unsafe. Someone is doing something dangerous, especially driving too fast. You say, "I want to get there in one piece." - means I don't want my body to be in several different pieces. A "piece" is a part of something. So, "in one piece,"



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would be you want your whole body to be there. You don't want to get into an accident.

Pedro then says, "Hey, what are you doing? You're not going to make an illegal U-turn across four lanes of traffic, are you?" A "U-turn," which is spelled with the letter U-turn, is when you turn your car in the opposite direction. So, if you're going North and now you want to go South, you can make a U-turn. And of course, it looks like the letter U when you turn your car around. And, that's why it's called a U-turn. A "lane of traffic" is on a road, especially on a freeway. You have different places for cars to drive. Usually, you have four lanes or three lanes so that you have cars driving right next to each other going in the same direction. So, that is what's called a "lane of traffic" or a "lane on the freeway." Freeways usually have, here in California, three, four, sometimes six or seven lanes. On the streets on the...in the city most streets just have two lanes, one going in each direction. So, Pedro is asking Yasmine if she's going to make a U-turn across four lanes of traffic, means that she is in the far right lane and she is going to make a U-turn cutting across these four different lanes.

Well, Yasmine says, "I have to make a U-turn" and Pedro asks why. And she says, "Well, I was going the wrong way on a one way street." A "one-way street" is a street where the cars can only go in one direction. And, to go the wrong way on a one-way street means that everyone else is going North and you are going South. Or, everyone is going East and you try to go West. Well, of course you will cause an accident that way because all the cars are going against you. So, that would be "going the wrong way on a one way street."

Pedro then says, "Oh, geez." "Oh, geez." "Geez" is an expression of, could be expression of surprise, usually an expression of disappointment, when you're upset with something. Pedro says, "Oh, geez, I think you just took ten years off my life." "To take time off (someone's) life" is a kind of a joking expression. It means you've scared me, you've scared me a lot. You've scared me so much that I feel that my life is now shorter. So, to take years off your life is when you are very afraid, something happens that makes you very scared.

Yasmine says back to Pedro, "Don't be such a wuss." A "wuss" is definitely an informal expression that you would only want to use with a good friend of yours. A wuss is somebody who is weak, someone who is perhaps even a coward. A coward; someone who doesn't have any courage is a coward. So, a wuss is a coward, a wuss is someone who is weak. It's really an insulting term, especially



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one that you would say to a man. But here, of course, they're good friends, so she's kind of joking with him. "Don't be such a wuss."

She says, "Buckle up and enjoy the ride." "To buckle up" means to put on your seatbelt in your car. A buckle, you may know, is what you use to keep your belt around your pants on. In the front you have a buckle that connects the two parts of the belt together so it makes a circle. Well, "to buckle up," means to take the seat belt and put it into what we would call the buckle and that keeps the seatbelt on your body so that it can protect you.

Now, let's listen to the dialog, this time at a native rate of speech.

[start of story]

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Yasmine: Don't be such a wuss. Buckle up and enjoy the ride. We're just getting started.

[end of story]

The script for today's podcast was written by our very own Dr. Lucy Tse. Thank you, Lucy.



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If you have a question or a suggestion for ESL Podcast, you can email us. Our email address is eslpod@eslpod.com. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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