



ESL Podcast 341 – An Annoying Cell Phone User

GLOSSARY

over – above another sound; with a noise that is loud enough for one to hear even though there is another noise at the same time

* We couldn't hear the movie over the people who were talking next to us in the theater.

to shout – to speak very loudly; to yell

* When the man saw the little girl playing near the window, he shouted, "Be careful!"

rude – impolite; not polite; doing things that are not nice or considerate toward other people

* It is normally considered rude to talk while you have food in your mouth.

leisurely – relaxed; comfortable; not rushed or hurried; enjoyable

* They have a leisurely family breakfast each Sunday morning.

to out shout (someone) – to shout more loudly than another person; to speak more loudly than another person

* The house was very noisy because the children were all trying to out shout each other to get their mother's attention.

inconsiderate – not thinking about how one's words and actions affect other people; impolite

* People are so inconsiderate! The train was full and no one gave their seat to that old man, so he had to stand.

nuisance – something that is annoying and bothersome; something that causes problems for other people

* Having to go to the telephone company's office to pay my bill is such a nuisance! I wish that I could pay it online instead.

etiquette – manners; ways of behaving politely; ways that people are expected to behave in society

* Good etiquette requires sending thank-you notes to people who brought gifts to a wedding.

banned – forbidden; prohibited; not allowed

* Since people became ill after taking this medication, the government banned it.



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intimate details – personal information that other people do not need to know or should not know

* Every night, she writes all the intimate details of her life in a diary.

jammer – a device that blocks cell phone or other signals; something that makes it impossible for cell phones or other devices to work in a certain area

* The Royal Theater is considering buying a jammer so that cell phones won't be able to ring during performances.

to kick up a fuss – to say something to let other people know that one is unhappy about a situation; to complain about something that is wrong

* Geraldine kicked up a fuss about the high prices for getting her car fixed, but she still had to pay the bill.

to shush – to make a “shhh” sound to let other people know that you want them to be quiet

* Aunt Emma shushed her nieces when they started making too much noise in church.

to pretend – to act in a way to try to make other people believe that something is true, even though it isn't

* They're all pretending that his drinking isn't a problem.

hold on one second – wait a minute; a phrase used to interrupt a conversation briefly so that one can do something else quickly, especially while talking on the phone

* Can you please hold on one second? Someone just knocked on my front door.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of these is an example of good cell phone etiquette?
 - a) Shushing people who are talking.
 - b) Out shouting cell phone users.
 - c) Turning off cell phones at restaurants.

2. How could Carl have kicked up a fuss?
 - a) By telling the woman to kick the ball.
 - b) By giving the woman a fuss to kick.
 - c) By complaining loudly.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

banned

The word “banned,” in this podcast, means forbidden or not allowed: “Her doctor wants to lower her cholesterol, so he has banned red meat, butter, and cheese from her diet.” The word “banned” can also mean ordered not to do something or not to go somewhere: “The judge banned him from leaving his home until the trial was finished.” Or, “When the children behaved poorly, their parents banned them from watching television for one week.” A “ban” is a restriction or a rule stating that something isn’t allowed: “Some people want to have a ban on genetically-modified foods.” A “banner” is a large, long, rectangular piece of paper or cloth with writing on it: “The children waited for their father with a brightly colored banner that said, ‘Welcome home, Daddy!’”

jammer

In this podcast, the word “jammer” means a device that blocks cell phone or other signals in a certain area: “The Navy is trying to create a jammer so that other countries’ ships can’t find its ships.” The phrase “to be jammed up” means to not be able to work, usually because a small piece has become stuck inside a machine: “The fax machine is jammed up because someone put too much paper in it.” The word “jammed” means crowded, or with many things in a small space: “There are eight people jammed into that little taxi!” Finally, the verb “to jam” can mean to push something very strongly: “He accidentally jammed his finger in the car door.” Or, “They jammed a towel under the door to stop the wind from coming into the house.”



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CULTURE NOTE

Many Americans like to talk on their cell phones while driving, because it lets them be more “productive” (efficient; able to get things done quickly) while they are “on the road” (traveling, especially by car). However, talking on the phone can be a big “distraction” (something that prevents one from concentrating on something else) and many people get into “accidents” (when cars hit other cars, people, or objects) while they are using their cell phones. Some people believe that driving while talking on the phone is as dangerous as “drunk driving” (driving while under the influence of alcohol).

“Consequently” (as a result), some state have “passed laws” (made new laws) that “regulate” (control through laws) driving and cell phone use. In some states, it is “illegal” (against the law) to talk on the phone while driving unless one is using a “hands-free device” (something that lets one use a cell phone without needing to touch the cell phone). This is supposed to leave both of the drivers’ hands free to “steer” (control the direction of) the car. However, many people believe that the real distraction is having a conversation – not holding the phone. If that is true, then it is also necessary to ban hands-free devices if “legislators” (people who make laws) want to make the roads safer.

Forty states have “proposed” (suggested something for consideration) “legislation” (laws) against cell phone use while driving. So far, only California, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Washington, D.C. have passed such laws. Arizona has a law against “text messaging” (sending written messages through one’s cell phone) while driving.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 341: An Annoying Cell Phone User.

This is ESL Podcast episode 341. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at eslpod.com. Take a look at our ESL Podcast Blog, which has additional help in learning English throughout the week. We also have an ESL Podcast Store, which contains additional business and daily English courses you might be interested in.

This episode is called “An Annoying Cell Phone User.” Someone who is “annoying” is someone who bothers you, someone who is causing problems for you. It's a dialogue between Carl and Stephanie, who are sitting at a restaurant, and someone in the table next to them starts talking on their cell phone. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Carl: I'm sorry, say that again. I couldn't hear you over that guy at the next table shouting into his cell phone.

Stephanie: That guy is so rude. We're trying to have a leisurely conversation over a cup of coffee, and we have to out shout some inconsiderate jerk.

Carl: Do you think he realizes what a nuisance he is?

Stephanie: I bet he doesn't. People don't seem to have any idea of cell phone etiquette. Cell phones should be banned from restaurants, don't you think?

Carl: I completely agree. I don't need to know the intimate details of other people's lives. I sometimes wish I had a cell phone jammer. Like the other day, I was at the movie theater, and the woman sitting in front of me answers her cell phone and has a conversation during the movie!

Stephanie: I would have kicked up a fuss or at least shushed her.

Carl: I tried to shush her, but she pretended not to hear me. I wish...[Carl's cell phone rings]...hold on one second. Hello, oh hi, Manny...



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Stephanie: [Stephanie’s cell phone rings] Hello, yes, this is Stephanie. Oh hi, Leah. Oh sure. I can talk.

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Carl saying, “I’m sorry, say that again.” He’s talking to Stephanie and he didn’t hear what Stephanie said, so he says, “I’m sorry, (could you) say that again (could you repeat that). I couldn’t hear you over that guy at the next table shouting into his cell phone.” The expression “to hear someone over someone else” means that you are able to hear a sound when there is another noise or sound that is interfering, that is very loud and preventing you from hearing. So, if you are standing next to a very loud fan that’s making a lot of noise, and someone across the room says something to you and you can’t hear them because the noise of the fan is too loud, you could say, “I can’t hear you over this fan” – I can’t hear what you are saying because the noise of the fan is interfering. Well, Carl can’t hear what Stephanie is saying because there is a man, “that guy,” at a table next to them who is “shouting into his cell phone.” “To shout” means to speak very loudly – to yell, we might say. He’s “shouting into his cell phone.”

Stephanie says, “That guy is so rude.” “To be rude” means to be impolite – not to be polite, to do things that are not nice to other people. Stephanie says, “We’re trying to have a leisurely conversation over a cup of coffee, and we have to out shout some inconsiderate jerk.” Stephanie says, “We are trying to have a leisurely conversation.” “Leisurely” means relaxed, comfortable; it’s an adverb to describe doing something with a very relaxed manner – not rushed, enjoyable.

So, we’re trying to have this enjoyable conversation “over a cup of coffee,” meaning while we are drinking a cup of coffee, but they “have to out shout some inconsiderate jerk.” “To out shout someone” means to yell more loudly, to shout more loudly, or speak more loudly than another person. Because he’s talking so loudly on his cell phone in the restaurant, they have to out shout this “inconsiderate jerk.” “To be inconsiderate” is the opposite of to be considerate. “To be considerate” means to be nice. So, “to be inconsiderate” means not to be nice, not to think about how your words or actions will affect other people. To be impolite is to be inconsiderate. A “jerk” (jerk) is an informal insult describing someone who you don’t like, who’s doing something very bad that is bothering you. It’s not something you would want to call your boss, for example, if you wanted to keep your job!



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Carl says, “Do you think he realizes what a nuisance he is?” In other words, does this man, talking on the cell phone, know – does he realize “what a nuisance he is?” A “nuisance” (nuisance) is something that is annoying, something that is causing problems for other people; that would be a “nuisance.” It could be a thing, it usually is: “That old car sitting in front of his house is a nuisance. It’s taking up space.”

Here, we’re saying that the man is being a nuisance. Stephanie says, “I bet he doesn’t (I don’t think he does.) People don’t seem to have any idea of cell phone etiquette.” “Cell phone” or “mobile phone etiquette” are the ways that you should behave, politely in this case, using a cell phone. The word “etiquette” means manners; it’s the way that you behave. For example, if you sit down to dinner, you don’t eat with your hands, at least in American culture, usually. That would be considered improper – not proper, not correct etiquette. So, Stephanie is saying this man doesn’t understand cell phone etiquette.

“Cell phones should be banned from restaurants, don’t you think?” “To ban (ban) something” is to forbid it, to prohibit it, not allow something. She’s saying that cell phones should be banned – they should be forbidden, they should be prohibited, not allowed. The word “ban” has a couple of different meanings in English; take a look at our Learning Guide for more explanations.

There are some places in the U.S. where the government is trying to ban cell phones. If you read our cultural note in today’s Learning Guide, we talk about some of these efforts and how things are changing in American culture. Many people, myself included, really dislike when people are talking on a cell phone in a restaurant when you are trying to eat. My favorite is when people are eating and talking on the cell phone at the same time! This is not proper etiquette for eating or for talking on a cell phone, in my opinion.

Well, back to our story: Carl says, “I completely agree (that we should ban cell phones from restaurants).” I, of course, agree with Carl! He says, “I don’t need to know the intimate details of other people’s lives.” “Details” are the specifics of something; “intimate details” are very personal information that other people don’t usually know about you, or you don’t tell other people. Carl is saying that he doesn’t “need to know the intimate details of other people’s lives,” details he would learn by listening to their cell phone conversation.

“I sometimes wish I had a cell phone jammer,” he says. A “jammer” (jammer) is a machine – it’s a device that blocks certain electronic radio signals; in this case, it would block cell phone signals from reaching the phones in a certain area. These are illegal in the United States, but some people are buying them and



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using them to stop people from talking on cell phones near them. I don't have one myself; they're illegal to use, but I certainly wish I had one sometimes!

Carl tells the story of how he was at the movie theater, and there was a woman sitting in front of him who answered her cell phone and started having a conversation during the movie. She didn't get up and leave the theater; she just talked and interfered with other people who were trying to watch the movie.

Stephanie says, "I would have kicked up a fuss or at least shushed her." "To kick up a fuss" (fuss) means to say something to let other people know you are angry or unhappy; to complain about something that is wrong. "She kicked up a fuss about how much the mechanic charged her to fix her car" – she complained about it. "To shush" (shush) means to tell someone else to be quiet, to stop talking, usually by making this sound: "shhh." That's to "shush." It's not something that you should do, again, in most situations, unless it's a very informal one. It's considered a little rude by some people.

Carl said, "I tried to shush her, but she pretended not to hear me." "She pretended" – she acted as if she hadn't heard him. Then he says, "I wish..." and we hear Carl's cell phone ringing. He says, "hold on one second." He's saying to Stephanie please wait a minute. We use this expression, "hold on," "hold on a minute," "hold on a second" to interrupt a conversation briefly so you can do something else quickly, and then get back to talking to someone. This is especially common if you have a phone that rings and you answer it and you were talking to another person. You might say, "Could you hold on a second, so I can answer my cell phone?"

Carl, of course, who was complaining about people talking on cell phones in the restaurant, answers his cell phone in the restaurant; he doesn't seem to get up. Stephanie's cell phone rings a few seconds later, and she answers it as well. So, Carl and Stephanie are two people who I would certainly not want to be next to in a restaurant!

Now let's listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

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Stephanie: [Stephanie's cell phone rings] Hello, yes, this is Stephanie. Oh hi, Leah. Oh sure. I can talk.

[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by the not annoying Dr. Lucy Tse. Thank you Lucy!

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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