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## ENGLISH CAFÉ – 101

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### TOPICS

American cities: Honolulu; fantasy sports camps, to freeze a bra, coupon versus voucher, illicit versus illegal

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### GLOSSARY

**monarchy** – a government with a king or queen; a country where a king or queen is the leader of the government

\* The United States has never been a monarchy. It has always had an elected president.

**to annex** – to occupy another country; to use force and violence to take control of another country

\* Chile annexed part of southern Peru during the War of the Pacific.

**to overthrow** – to use force and violence to remove the leader of a country; to take power from a country's government leader

\* Do you think that the people of this country will overthrow the dictator?

**territory** – an area of land that is controlled by the U.S. government but isn't a state

\* Puerto Rico has been a U.S. territory since 1898.

**palace** – the large, beautiful home of a king or queen

\* Many little girls dream that they are princesses who live in palaces.

**harbor** – an area of the ocean, partly surrounded by higher land, where ships are protected from strong winds and storms by the land

\* We went to the harbor to watch the fishing boats unload what they had caught.

**fantasy** – imaginary; something that one would like to have happen, but isn't very likely

\* Karrie has a fantasy where she becomes a famous actress and wins an Oscar.

**to coach** – to train; to help an athlete or a team do better in a sport; to help someone improve his or her athletic performance

\* This year, Rafael is coaching his son's baseball team.



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**all-star** – with many famous athletes, musicians, actors, or other people

\* The Broadway musical has an all-star cast of the country's best singers.

**autograph** – a famous person's signature, usually on a book, ball, photograph, or flyer

\* Chelsea asked J. K. Rowling for an autograph on her copy of Harry Potter.

**bra** – a piece of woman's clothing that is worn around one's chest and back and over one's shoulders to cover and support one's breasts

\* This bra is very uncomfortable because the elastic is too tight.

**slumber party** – a party where a group of young children (usually girls) sleep at one child's home

\* Karen went to a slumber party last night where the girls ate pizza and ice cream and talked about boys until almost 4:00 a.m.

**coupon** – a small piece of paper that gives a buyer a discount so that he or she pays less when buying a certain thing

\* Tracy found a \$2 coupon for cat food in the newspaper this morning.

**voucher** – a piece of paper that can be used instead of money to pay for something; a piece of paper that lets one do or have something for free

\* The airline gave Ted a travel voucher that will let him take one flight anywhere in the United States for free.

**illicit** – not approved of by society; something that society does not believe is right or acceptable

\* The illicit business deal didn't break any laws, but Vicky felt very uncomfortable when she learned about it.

**illegal** – against the law; something that breaks one or more laws

\* In the United States, it is illegal to drink alcohol before you are 21 years old in most states.



## **WHAT INSIDERS KNOW**

### **Sports Figures' Controversies and Scandals**

A “sports figure” is an athlete who is very famous and “admired” (respected and liked) by many people. Unfortunately, these sports figures get involved in many “controversies” (things that people disagree about) and “scandals” (actions that the public thinks are wrong).

Many sports figures are involved in controversies over whether they took “performance-enhancing steroids” (drugs that make athletes bigger, stronger, and faster). Barry Bonds, for example, is a baseball player for the San Francisco Giants who is widely “criticized” (people are saying bad things about him) for using steroids. He continues “to deny” (to say that one has not done something) steroid use. Lance Armstrong is a professional “cyclist” (bicycle rider) who has won the Tour de France race seven times. Many people believe that he must have taken steroids to be able to ride so well and quickly, but he continually denies drug use. These controversies “distract” (take attention away) from the sport and sometimes “damage” (hurt) the athletes’ careers.

Even without “accusations” (statements that one has done something wrong) of steroid use, sports figures get involved in many scandals. One scandal involved two “figure skaters” (people who skate on ice to music) at the 1994 U.S. Figure Skating Championships: Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan. During the competition, Tonya’s ex-husband hired someone “to attack” (be physically violent against someone) Nancy by hitting her on the knees. Tonya won the competition, and Nancy was not able to compete, because of her “injury” (something that is hurt on one’s body). Later, after an “investigation” (work done to find out what really happened), Tonya lost her “title” (the award for winning). Nancy “recovered” (got better) and continued her figure skating. This scandal was “covered” (written and talked about) by the media for many months.



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 101.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast English Café episode 101. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

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This Café, we are going to talk about the city of Honolulu in the state of Hawaii – Hawaii, you will hear it pronounced both ways. We're also going to talk about something called "fantasy camps," especially fantasy sports camps, what those are and why they are popular. And as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

Our first topic today is another famous American city; today we're going to be talking about the city of Honolulu in Hawaii. Honolulu is the capital city of Hawaii. It is located on one of the eight main islands of Hawaii. Hawaii is a state in the Pacific Ocean, about six hours by plane from Los Angeles, so it is very far west of the main part of the United States. To give you a comparison, New York is only five hours from Los Angeles, and that's on the other side of the country, so it is very far away.

Hawaii, as a state, does not have a very big population, a little more than a million people, and most of those people live on the island of Oahu where Honolulu is located. Honolulu is the capital. The name of the state has different pronunciations. Most Americans, at least most Americans who live outside of Hawaii, pronounce the state as I just did: "Hawaii." But if you go to Hawaii, you will hear a couple of other pronunciations that are closer to the native language of Hawaii. Hawaii has its own language, called the Hawaiian language. One pronunciation is "Ha-vi-ee," with a "v" almost, and another is "Ha-wi-ee." So "Ha-vi-ee" or "Ha-wi-ee" are both possible pronunciations that you will hear in the state's most Americans call "Hawaii."

Hawaii, as I said, has its own language. Although most Hawaiians today do not speak the Hawaiian language, it's still exists; there are still people who speak it. The University of Hawaii teaches the Hawaiian language in their language department one of the words in Hawaiian is "wiki," which means quick or fast,



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and of course, Wikipedia gets its name from that word. If you fly into the Honolulu airport, the little buses that take you from one side of the airport to the other are called “wiki wikis.”

Hawaii was a kingdom. It was, in fact, the only American state that was once a kingdom. Back in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, it had a queen; it had a king. Hawaii was its own government – its own nation – until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The English were the first Europeans to arrive in Hawaii, back in 1794, and the Americans began arriving, also, a little later. Unfortunately, many of the Americans came over and took over the businesses in Hawaii, created new businesses, and eventually began to try to control the government. Finally, there was an overthrow of the Hawaiian government. An “overthrow” is when a group of people use force to change the government. The Hawaiian monarchy was overthrown. A “monarchy” is a government that is run by a king or a queen.

After this overthrow by, basically, American businesses – business people in Hawaii, Hawaii was annexed by the United States. To be “annexed” (annexed) means, basically, you take it over; it becomes part of your country. And, Hawaii was part of the United States beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century; it was what we would call a “territory.” A “territory” is a part of a country. In the case of the United States, part of the United States that is not yet, or is not, a state. The United States has different territories that are not states. Puerto Rico, for example, is a territory; Guam, in the South Pacific, is a territory, but they are not states.

In 1959, Hawaii became a state; it became the last state – the 50<sup>th</sup> state. Of course in the future, we may have other states, but right now it is the youngest state – state number 50. Alaska also became a state in 1959; they are state number 49.

If you visit Hawaii – and I have been to Hawaii, and love Hawaii – and go to Honolulu, there are many beautiful things there. One of the most beautiful things is the beach in Honolulu; it’s called “Waikiki Beach.” You can also visit the old home of the Hawaiian kings and queens. We call it a “palace” (palace); that’s where the king or queen would live. The palace is located in downtown, the main part of Honolulu. It is the only royal palace in the United States, or what was once a royal palace.

If you go to Honolulu, one of the first things you will notice, other than the beautiful weather, is that most of the people who live in Honolulu are not white.



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They are mostly Asian American, coming from different countries originally, many years ago, from Asia. There are also many native Hawaiians, who were there from the beginning, or at least long before the white people arrived. About 60% of the population in Hawaii is Asian American, or what we would call “Pacific Islander,” people who are originally from different islands in the Pacific. Hawaii has a very multicultural environment; there are many children who belong to more than one racial group: mixed couples – Asian Americans marrying white Americans or black Americans, or Pacific Islanders marrying Latinos, and they have children that have a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds. So Hawaii is a very interesting place for that reason.

If you ask Americans outside of Hawaii what they think of when they think of Hawaii, I think there are a couple of things. Some Americans will think about the harbor in Honolulu. A “harbor” (harbor) is a place in the ocean where ships can come and be somewhat protected. Usually a harbor has some sort of a round, semi-circle shape that helps protect the ships. Honolulu has Pearl Harbor. Pearl Harbor is most famous, of course, for the beginning of World War II, when Pearl Harbor was bombed. You can go and see the ship – one of the ships that is still in Pearl Harbor, underneath the water.

But it’s also famous for other things, when people think of Hawaii, they think of the word “aloha” (aloha). “Aloha” is a Hawaiian word that can mean a couple of different things. It can mean “hello”; it can mean “goodbye”; it can mean “love”; it can mean “peace.” In Hawaii, you will sometimes see signs or signs on people’s cars – what we would call a “bumper sticker” – that say “Live Aloha,” and you will hear people talk about the “aloha spirit.” And the idea is that to “live aloha” is to be peaceful, is to be friendly, is to be calm, to be relaxed – that’s part of “living aloha.” One of the great things about Hawaii is that it is a very relaxed atmosphere – very calm. People are very informal; you won’t see a lot of people in suits and ties like you might in New York City, for example. Whenever I go to Hawaii – when I’m lucky enough to go to Hawaii – I always feel relaxed right when I get off the plane. It just seems a very calm – people are much calmer there compared to big cities here in the other parts of the United States.

Americans also associate Hawaii with pineapple, the fruit. If you go to Hawaii, and you drive through outside of the city of Honolulu, you will see the pineapple fields – the place where they grow the pineapples. Another thing that people think of when they think of Hawaii is a famous television show that was popular in the 1970s; it was called Hawaii Five-O. “Five-O” is, of course, 50 (five-zero), but the show was called Hawaii Five-O. It was a police detective show, but it became famous, and many beautiful parts of Oahu, in Hawaii, were the part of



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the program. And so it was a good thing for the tourism in Hawaii; people began to see how beautiful the state was.

Honolulu, I said before, is located on the island of Oahu; there are other islands. Two islands that are very popular now with tourists are Maui and Kuai. These are much more expensive, however. They're very nice; they're not as crowded, but I personally like Honolulu – I like the island of Oahu better because the people there are more interesting. It's a more interesting to visit. Someday I hope you have a chance to visit the beautiful islands of Hawaii.

Our next topic is quite different, we're going to talk about something called a "sports fantasy camp." "Fantasy" (fantasy) is something that is imaginary – something that isn't real. We often used the word "fantasy" to describe things that comes from someone's imagination. A "fantasy camp," however, is something that has become popular in the United States in the last 20 or 30 years. Sports fantasy camps are places where you can go and meet and play with famous sporting celebrities – famous athletes: famous baseball players, football players, basketball players.

What happens is these professional – and even college – teams have a week long, usually, camp, where you can pay and you get to go and play with famous athletes. You also get some coaching, that is they give you advice about how to be a better baseball player or a better football player. The level of your playing – how good you are – doesn't really matter; anyone can go to one of these sports fantasy camps. Many of the camps have famous athletes, or athletes who were once famous many years ago, who operate and run the camps. Many professional sports teams have these camps. For example, the Minnesota Twins, which is the professional baseball team of my home state, Minnesota, has a fantasy camp – what they call an "all-star" fantasy camp. "All-star" (all-star) refers to the best players – the greatest players in that sport.

So, there's a Minnesota Twins baseball fantasy camp where you can go for one week and play with these famous players and be coached and learn more about baseball. It costs \$4,000 for one week, however this includes your hotel and your breakfast and lunch. So, it sounds like a good deal to me – actually, it sounds very expensive! It is not the most expensive, however. Michael Jordan, the famous basketball player, has a fantasy camp that is four days long. It costs \$17,500 – \$17,500! This is very expensive, but if you really want to meet Michael Jordan and play basketball with Michael Jordan, who was one of the greatest basketball players in the history of the game, well, you can pay \$17,500 and do that!



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You get to wear the uniform – the clothes – of the team that is running the fantasy camp. You usually get “autographs,” the signatures on a picture, for example, of these famous professional athletes. I don’t, myself, understand exactly why people want to go. I suppose it’s interesting to meet these people who you like to watch in sporting events. I don’t know if fantasy camps are popular or exist in other countries, but they have become popular in the United States. I guess it is a way of paying to meet a famous person and feel like you are part of a famous team.

Now let’s answer a few of your questions.

Our first question comes from Eric (Eric) in France. Eric has an unusual question; he wants to know about the expression “to freeze (freeze) your bra (bra).”

Well, a bra is a piece of clothing that women usually wear that covers the front part of their body – their top front, their chest. The bra covers their breasts; usually they wear a shirt over that – usually! To “freeze” means to take something and put it in a cold place – a refrigerator, for example – so that it is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit, which would be zero degrees Celsius.

Now, why would anyone want to freeze a bra? Well, this is actually a game that girls – or a trick that girls sometimes play on other girls, especially young girls – teenage girls – when they have what we would call a “slumber party.” A “slumber (slumber) party” is when you go, as a child, you go over to another child’s house and you have three, four, five, maybe more friends who come over and sleep. It’s sometimes called a “sleep-over.”

Well, in these sleep-overs – these slumber parties that girls sometimes have when they are young – some girls like to play a trick on the other girls, so as a joke, if one girl falls asleep, they sometimes take her bra and put it in the freezer, and in the morning, of course, it will be frozen and not very comfortable to wear. Why is this funny? I don’t know, you’ll have to ask a teenage girl here in the United States, but they think it is funny.

Ariel (Ariel) in Taiwan wants to know the difference between a “coupon” (coupon) and a “voucher” (voucher).

A “coupon” and a “voucher” can mean the same thing. It’s a piece of paper, usually, that gives you a discount on something. If you give someone the coupon – a business, a store – they give you a discount on the amount that you have to





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pay. In the papers on Sunday, in the United States, there are always many advertisements including many coupons. The Sunday paper is the biggest paper – the largest paper. When you buy a paper at the newsstand, the Sunday paper will always be more expensive in any city you go to in the United States. And in these newspapers, especially what we would call “local” newspapers like The Los Angeles Times, you will find coupons – discount – for food, clothing, other things.

A “voucher” is also something you can use to get a discount or something free, but normally we use the word “voucher” when you are given this because of some problem or because you are poor and need more money. For example, you are on a plane – or going to take a plane and the airline sold too many seats and they cannot put you on that airplane, they give you a voucher for another airplane ride in the future. That would be a “travel voucher”; it’s almost like a coupon that you can exchange for, or give, to get a free ticket, or another ticket, or a discount on a ticket in the future.

Vouchers are also used sometimes by the government. There are things called “school vouchers” in some cities, where the government gives parents money to send their children to any school they want, including a private school. This is popular in some cities, but not all in the United States.

Finally, Ron (Ron) in Canada wants to know the difference between the words “illicit” (illicit) and “illegal.”

“Illegal” is anything that is against the law – not legal. “Il” is sometimes used in front of words to mean “not.” For example, “illegitimate” is not legitimate – not real, not true. “Illegal” is not legal, anything the law prohibits.

“Illicit” is something that is not necessarily illegal, but may be against an organization’s rules or a company’s rules. Usually “illicit” has a negative connotation – a negative association – often related to moral issues such as sex and drugs. Your married boss, for example is having an illicit love affair with his secretary. I’m saying that as an example – I don’t know your boss or if he’s having an illicit love affair! “Illicit” means against the rules but also immoral, in some sense. We also use the term “illicit” in talking about drugs. Teenagers are taking illicit drugs – drugs that are illegal but also against the rules, the customs of their families and schools and so forth.

We hope you don’t do anything illegal or illicit today; we do hope that you come back and listen to us here at ESL Podcast.



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

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