



ENGLISH CAFÉ – 61

TOPICS

Topics: How to work in the United States, interracial dating and marriage, to lean on someone's shoulder, pronouncing math expressions, rather

GLOSSARY

interracial – between or among different races, such as White American, African American, Asian American, and Latino (or Hispanic) American

* Our idea is to have an interracial meeting with leaders from all cultural groups to discuss the problem of violence in our cities.

trend – a general direction that something is changing or developing in

* Even though the trend is for men and women to marry later in life, Hanna and Bruce got married last week at the age of 20.

1.5 generation – an immigrant who arrives as a child and grows up partly in the new country

* Normally, 1.5 generation Mexican Americans have a very different life experience than their first-generation parents.

disparity – a big difference, usually between two things

* There's a big disparity between what we were told we would pay for this rental car and our final bill. Can you please explain the disparity?

green card – a permission card that allows someone from another country to live and work permanently in the U.S.

* I've been here long enough to apply for a green card, but I'm not sure if I want to stay in the U.S. long term.

to certify – to say officially that something is true

* This board was created to certify people who want to become airline pilots.

lottery – a way to select someone or something by chance, for example, by giving each person a number, putting the numbers into a box, and taking out a number without looking

* Since there are so many people who want to see the big game, the tickets will be given out by lottery.



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dependent – a person who relies on another person for help and money to live, usually a family member

* On the tax form, I've listed my two children as dependents.

spouse – someone's husband or wife

* Are spouses invited to the holiday party at your office?

refugee – a person forced to leave a country because of war, persecution (being treated badly because of their political or religious beliefs), or natural disaster such as floods or earthquakes

* The largest group of Vietnamese Americans came to the U.S. as refugees.

alien – belonging to a foreign country; someone who is not a citizen of a country

* What do you think of the proposed law that would prevent aliens from getting driver's licenses in this state?

sponsor – a person or an organization that takes the responsibility for a person or pays for a person to do something

* If we get a sponsor for our soccer team, we can get some uniforms and better equipment.

to lean on (someone's) shoulder – to rely on someone; to depend on someone; to have help from someone

* After their divorce, I told Dean that he could lean on my shoulder anytime he thought he needed help.

rather – very; extremely

* It's already 11 o'clock. It's rather late for him to be coming over, don't you think?



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WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

“Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue.”

There are many traditions in American weddings and one of them is related to what the “bride” (women getting married) will wear on her wedding day. This saying – “Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue” – tells the bride that she must wear these four things if she is to have good luck for her wedding and in her marriage.

What is the meaning behind each of these four things?

“Something old” – This shows a bride’s connection to her past and her relationship to “tradition” or the old way of doing things. If a bride wears something old, the marriage will have “longevity,” or will last a long time.

“Something new” – This shows hope for a good future. If a bride wears something new, the marriage will be bright and happy, and be filled with “joy” or happiness.

“Something borrowed” – This usually comes from another woman who is already happily married. The idea is that the borrowed item will “lend” or give the new marriage some of the good luck and happiness that the married couple already has.

“Something blue” – This represents love and “fidelity” (faithfulness and loyalty). It’s not clear why the color blue was selected. Perhaps it was chosen because the word “blue” rhymes with the word “new”!



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café number 61.

This is the English Café episode 61. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

On this Café, we're going to talk about how to get a job in the United States, how to get permission to work in the U.S. We're also going to talk about interracial marriage in the United States. And as always, we'll answer a few questions. Let's get started.

Remember to visit our website at eslpod.com. You can get the Learning Guide for this podcast that contains all of the vocabulary that we are going to be talking about today, as well as a complete transcript of this podcast.

Our first topic is about how to get a job in the United States, or how to get permission to work in the United States. This is a common question I get. Unfortunately, I am not a lawyer. I don't have any legal training. I can give you some general ideas about how people get permission to work in the U.S.

The term that is often used for having permission to work in the United States is called a green card. To have a green card means that you have permission, and I think this is because the color of the card, the piece of paper you used to get from the Immigration Service was green. That is the common term that you will hear. Someone will say, "Well, if you are not a citizen of the United States, do you have a green card?" Of course, if you are a citizen of the United States, then you don't need any special permission. But if you are coming from another country and you want to work in a company or an organization in the United States, you do need to get this green card.

There are lots of different ways of getting a green card. The most common way is probably someone in your family is a citizen of the United States and they ask for permission to give you a green card. If you marry an American citizen, your spouse, "spouse," - who is your husband or your wife, the general word is your spouse - the person you are married to can ask for permission for you to work in the United States. Of course, not everyone can marry an American. If you are



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already married, I do not recommend marrying an American. You probably do not want to have two wives or two husbands. Maybe you do, but you can't do that here!

If you are married and you want to work in the United States, there are other ways of getting permission. Probably the most common way is through someone who offers you a job in the United States. A company or an organization sponsors you to work in the United States. To sponsor, "sponsor," means that you are saying this person is going to come to the United States, they're going to work, I will be, in some ways, responsible for them. You are saying that...also that this person is necessary for our company or our organization.

Now, in order to do this the company has to certify that the job you are going to do is one that no other American can do. If there are lots of Americans who can do your job as well as you can, then the United States Department of Labor - that's the federal, or national, organization that takes care of employment in the United States, the government organization that does that - if you cannot show that there is no one else to take your job, there are no American citizens who could do your job, then you cannot get permission. So, the company has to say nobody else in the U.S. can do this job, and that means they have to advertise, they have to show that they have tried to find someone and they could not, or that you have some specific qualification that is important.

This sounds like it might be very difficult. It depends on the job. There are many computer programmers, for example, who work in California that come from other countries. There are computer programmers in the United States, of course, but sometimes companies need more workers, need more employees than they can find in the United States. So, the company has to certify that your job cannot be filled by any other American. To certify, "certify," means to prove or to show. They have to certify the job cannot be filled. We use that verb, to fill, "fill," when we are talking about finding someone for a specific job. That's the most common way that people find a job in the United States.

So, you can't get a green card first and then look for a job if you are using this particular method of getting permission. First you have to find a company that wants to hire you, that wants to make you one of their workers, and then that company has to get permission for you to work at their company.



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There are other ways of getting a green card that don't require that specific process. They are less common, however, and they are not used as much. One way is to be an investor, if you want to put a lot of money into a company in the United States. If you're rich, if you have a million dollars - like ESL Podcast - and you want to start a business or be part of a business in the United States, if you put enough money in, you can get a special green card because you have put a lot of money into a company.

There are also ways of getting into the United States through something called a lottery. The lottery, "lottery," is like a drawing. It's when lots of people come and have a ticket, and they pick numbers and certain people win the lottery, just like a lottery to win money. Well, this is a lottery for a green card. Unfortunately, this is only for countries that don't send very many people to the United States. So, if you from a large country that sends many people to the United States, you will probably not be able to be part of this lottery. But, if you're from a small country that has not sent very many people to the U.S., you can join this lottery. The lottery is not a very good way to get into the United States because you may win the lottery or you may lose the lottery. The best way is to find a company in the United States that wants to hire you, that wants you to be part of their company.

I mentioned earlier that you can sometimes have a family member who is related to an American citizen. This is true for spouses. This is also true for what we would call dependents. A dependent, "dependent," is someone that you are financially responsible for. To be financially responsible for means that you pay their expenses, you give them food, a place to live, and so forth. The most typical example would be a child. If you have children, they can get a green card, they can get permission to work in the United States if you are a citizen or if you have a green card.

The official word that they use to describe people who are not citizens in the United States is alien, "alien." An alien is anyone who is not a citizen, not from the United States, from another country. We also use that word for people who are from different planets, who are not from earth, at least in fiction we talk about aliens. There was a very famous movie called "Alien" many years ago, about people in space and creatures or people from other planets. Unfortunately, we use that same word when we talk about people from other countries.

It's possible to get a green card also if you are a refugee. A refugee, "refugee," is a person who is coming from another country because there's a war, because



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they may be killed because there was some disaster, and the United States says, “Okay, you can come to this country.” There were many refugees, for example, after the end of the Vietnam War in the 1970’s. Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian refugees who came from those countries and the United States gave them permission to stay and work, and most of them became American citizens eventually.

Well, talking about immigrants and people from different backgrounds, our second topic today is about interracial marriage. Interracial, “interracial,” you can guess, means between two different races. And, in the United States, it is becoming more common to find people marrying outside of their race, that is (a) White person marrying an African American person, or an African American person marrying an Asian American person. This is what we would call interracial dating and interracial marriage. The trend in the United States is that there are more and more people getting married to people from other races. Trend, “trend,” means the direction or the way things are going. Well, the trend is for more interracial marriages. About five percent of Americans right now are married to someone from a different race. The total number of interracial marriages in United States is small, less than five percent. But, when we look at specific groups, especially specific minority groups – Asian American, African American - you will find that there are some interesting trends and some interesting differences between men and women.

For example, it is much more common for an Asian American woman to marry a White man or an African American man. That is much more common than an Asian American man marrying a White woman, in fact it's much, much more common for an Asian American woman to marry a White man than for an Asian American male to marry a White woman. Similarly, it is much more common for an African American man to marry a White woman than for an African American woman to marry a White man.

Now, there may be many reasons for this. I certainly don't understand all of the reasons why that is, but that is the current trend. So, there is a disparity between men and women in these different groups. A disparity, “disparity,” means that there is a difference between two groups or two things. One is greater than the other. The disparity here is between men and women in these different groups.

Among immigrant groups we often use a special term to talk about how long this person has been in the United States. Many have been in the United States for



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10, 20, 30, maybe 100 or 200 years. If you are fairly recently arrived to the United States, you came here only a few years ago, we often distinguish between first generation and second generation.

First generation would be someone who came to the United States usually as an adult, after they were 18 years old. A second generation American, or second generation immigrant, would be someone who was born in the United States and had an American father or mother, or both. A 1.5 generation is someone who came to the United States before they were 14 years old - 12 or 14 years. So, if you came to the United States as a child, we don't usually call you a first generation, we don't call you a second generation, it's more typical to call you a 1.5 generation, you're sort of in the middle. If you look at 1.5 generation Asian Americans, for example, you find that there is a very high percentage who marry people outside of their race. I believe somewhere between 30 and 40 percent of Asian Americans marry someone who is not Asian American.

Many people think these are good trends, that it is allowing us not to be so concerned about race, and that interracial marriage will help make people more comfortable with other cultures and with other traditions and, of course, that is a good idea.

Now let's answer a few questions. Our first question comes from Alex, "Alex." Alex is originally from Mexico. He is living in Minnesota right now, where I am from originally. Alex wants to know the meaning of the word to lean on (someone's) shoulder. What does it mean to lean on someone's shoulder?

Lean, "lean," means to rest on something. For example, you can be standing next to a wall and you get tired, and so you put part of your arm or your back on the wall and you rest it there. We would say you are leaning on the wall. So, to lean on someone's shoulder would mean to rest on their shoulder. Your shoulder, "shoulder," is the top part of your arm, the outside of your arm where your arm connects with the rest of your body. To lean on someone's shoulder means to depend on them. It means to rely on them, to ask them or to expect them to help you. We often use this expression when someone is having problems and they say, "I need a shoulder to lean on." I need to lean on you means I need your help, I need to rely on you. So, thank you Alex, for that question.



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Our next question comes from Andrea, “Andrea,” from Italy. Andrea wants to know how to pronounce certain mathematical expressions. You often see certain math expressions, and perhaps you don’t know how to pronounce them.

If you are adding two numbers together, we use the word plus. 2 plus 2 equals 4. If you are subtracting, or taking away one number from another, we use the word minus. 2 minus 2 equals 0. If you are multiplying one thing by another, we use the word times. 2 times 2 equals 4. 3 times 3 equals 9. So, that would be for multiplication. For division, when you are dividing one number into another number we use divided by. 2 divided by 2 equals 1.

Andrea also had a question about fractions, when you have one number, a line and then another number underneath it on the bottom. And, these are a little bit more difficult. For example, if you have $11/3$, the fraction, we would say that’s 11-thirds. So, we tend to use the ordinal number on the bottom, like thirds, fourths, fifths - well second, we would say half. So, you can have one-half, one-third, one-fourth - or one quarter, one fifth and so forth. So, if you have a number like $11/3$, that fraction would be 11-thirds. If you divide 11 by 3, you will get 3.66. Notice that we use the word point when we are talking about the decimal point. You could also say that 11 divided by 3, or $11/3$ equals 3 with 2 left over, or with a remainder of 2. If you feel a little lost, take a look at the transcript for today’s podcast and you’ll see the numbers as I have been pronouncing them.

Finally, we have a question from Juan Luis, who is also from Mexico. Juan Luis wants to know the meaning of the word rather, “rather.” When you use rather as an adverb, it usually means very. So, if someone says, “The film was rather good,” they mean the film is very good. Or, someone says, “It’s rather cold in here,” that means it’s very cold in here. Thank you, Juan Luis, for that question.

We have an interesting topic in today’s Learning Guide about wedding traditions. Since we’ve been talking about marriage and getting married, the Learning Guide has some interesting information about wedding traditions in the United States, so take a look at that as well.

That’s all we have time for. 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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