



ENGLISH CAFÉ – 63

TOPICS

Dates for dogs, “Me, too!”, Something 101, I’m game, to hover over, travel vs. trip vs. journey, up to vs. until, “Word up!”

GLOSSARY

to bound into – to enter a place jumping quickly forward, very happily

* The children bounded downstairs when they heard their grandparents arrive.

play date – a meeting for children to play together

* Do you have time next week for a play date with our kids?

a dog of (something) – something bad or terrible

* I have a dog of an investment right now, and I’m losing money every month.

to be pampered – to be spoiled; to be given a lot of attention, a lot of things one wants, or every comfort

* On her birthday, her family pampered her with breakfast in bed and a lot of presents.

empty-nesters – parents whose children have grown up and are no longer living in the parent’s home

* Brenda and Lou are empty-nesters now that all of their kids have gone off to college.

Me, too! – I have the same belief, experience, or opinion as you do; that is true for me also

* You were in Damascus last year in August? Me, too!

(something) 101 – a basic course on a topic; low level information about something

* These cookbooks are too complicated. I need Cooking 101.

to be game – to be interested in doing something; to be willing to take a risk

* We’re going to drive from California to Florida this summer. Are you game?



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to hover over – to stay in one place in the air (above the ground); to watch over someone closely as they do something

* The police helicopter has been hovering over those mountains for half an hour. Do you think they're looking for someone?

to travel – to go to another place, usually far away, often for vacation

* I wish I could travel to every country in the world just once before I die.

trip – moving from one place to another; going to a place and returning; traveling to another place

* I'm going to make a quick trip to the market. Do you need anything?

journey – going from one place to another; usually longer than a trip; often with some difficulty

* On our three-week journey, we'll be hiking through both forests and mountains.

up to – total amount; the limit

* We've been saving to buy a new car for months. What are we up to now?

until – a specific limit; usually used for time and dates

* Dan has a 50%-off coupon that is good until January 15.

Word up!/Word! – I agree; you said that well; that is correct

* When he said that Shrek was the funniest movie ever made, I said, "Word!"



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WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

PETA – People for The Ethical Treatment of Animals

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, also called “PETA,” is the largest “animal rights” organization in the world. Its purpose is to protect animals and stop people from treating them as the property of people. PETA began in the U.S. in 1980, and now has offices in many other countries. The organization believes that animals should not be eaten, used for clothing, used for entertainment, or used for experiments in “laboratories” (places for scientific tests).

PETA has had a lot of influence on “media” (television, radio, newspapers, and magazines) and on fashion. The organization is known for its “media campaigns,” using all kinds of media to spread their message. It has been very successful in getting “celebrities” (famous people) to support them. Paul McCartney, a former member of the 1960’s rock group, “The Beatles,” is a big supporter of the organization. Another famous celebrity who supports PETA is Pamela Anderson, an American actress who used to be on the well-known TV series Baywatch. These and other celebrities are against using “fur” (soft animal skin) for clothing, and “protest” (show that they are against) companies who use or harm animals to create their products.

PETA is a controversial organization. Some people don’t like their “tactics” (planned actions). “Activists” (people who take action to create change) have burned laboratories where animals were being kept and were used for experiments, and people wearing fur, including celebrities, have been “harassed” (strongly pressured or attacked). However, it is an organization that has a lot of supporters and has had a lot of influence on preventing “animal cruelty” (the hurting or killing of animals).



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESLPod.com's English Café number 63.

This is English Café episode 63. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

On this, more or less, sunny day here in LA, we're going to talk about a story that I saw in the New York Times newspaper about dates for dogs. And as usual, we're going to answer some questions. We have a lot of questions to answer today, so we'll only have one cultural topic and then we'll answer several questions. Let's get started.

A reminder, as always, to visit our website at eslpod.com and download the Learning Guide for this podcast.

The first topic today is a article that I found in the New York Times newspaper. The New York Times, as I've mentioned on other podcasts, is probably the best newspaper in the United States. It isn't perfect; no newspaper is, but it's considered the best newspaper. You can read them online also, of course, at nytimes.com.

There was an article a few weeks ago called, or the title of it was, "A Dog of a Date, Just as Scheduled." The expression "a dog of" something usually means a very bad example or a terrible something. "I had a dog of a trip" would mean I had a terrible trip - a very bad trip. To date means to be romantically involved, usually with someone, or to schedule a time - to set up or agree on a time that you are going to meet someone. So, a date can be romantic, it also could be just for a friend.

The title of the article, again, then is "A Dog of a Date, Just as Scheduled," and it's about dogs having dates with other dogs. Of course, the owner of the dog sets up or arranges these dates. The article begins by saying that "On Thursday morning, three-year-old Jicky bounded into her friend Jolie's Park Avenue apartment for a play date." That's the first sentence of this article, and three-year-old Jicky - is the name of the dog, Jicky - so this is a three-year-old dog who "bounded into" - that verb, to bound, "bound," into, here means to walk into somewhere being happy - you are very happy to be there. You come in quickly and you are happy about it.



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Well, she bounded into her friend Jolie's - which is of course, another dog - apartment. The apartment is on Park Avenue, which is one of the most expensive places to live in New York City, and she was there for a play date. A play date is usually something we associate with children. When children have other friends and the parent takes the child - the mother or the father takes the child over to someone else's house so that the kids can play together, we would call that a play date.

Well, these are play dates for dogs, and this story is about people in New York City who set up or schedule dates for their dogs. I thought it was a rather interesting idea. The article says that many dogs in the United States are treated like pampered children. To treat, here, means to behave towards or act towards someone. Pampered is a good adjective, "pampered." Pampered means someone who gets everything they want. A parent can pamper his or her child by giving them all the toys they want, anything they want to eat and so forth. Being nice to someone by giving them anything they want; that would be someone who is pampered. The verb is to pamper.

The article says that many dog owners pamper their dogs. This is more common, according to the article, among nontraditional families. That is not a mother, father and child, but perhaps just one parent. It's also common among empty nesters. A nest, "nest," is a place where birds go - it's the home of a bird. The bird builds a nest for him or herself and his or her children.

When we say someone is an empty nester, as a noun, it's describing a person, usually parents, who have children who grew up and moved away from home. So, a parent may have a child when they are 25, and when the child turns 20 - 20 years later - the child leaves the house and goes to live by himself. That would be a case where the parents are now empty nesters. They have no one in their nest - they have no one in their home other than themselves. It refers to middle-aged and older parents whose children have all grown up.

This is something in New York that, apparently, many people are doing. In fact, there are even some websites that you can go to. One of them is called datemypet.com, and you can go on this website and find a play date for your dog. It seems kind of strange to me, but this is New York City where a lot of people own pets, especially dogs. It is something, of course, not just for the dog but for the owners of the dog. They get a chance to talk to - to socialize - with other dog owners.



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I remember when I was young and living in a different part of the city here of Los Angeles, a part where there were many single people. I was single also, at the time, single and happy...(sigh). Well anyway, back in those good old days, the very common custom in this neighborhood was to get a pet - to get a dog usually - and you would walk the dog, meaning that you would take the dog with you and walk around the neighborhood so the dog could do what dogs have to do. This was a way of meeting other people because you would see someone's dog and you would say, "Oh, what a nice dog. Boy, that's a beautiful dog. What's his name?" And of course, if you're a man and you're talking to a woman, this is a good way to introduce yourself. It never worked for me, unfortunately. Probably because I didn't have a dog!

That's one of the stranger customs that you will find here in the United States. Many people love their pets, which I think is just great. Some of them really want to help their pets be happy, so they have these dog dates.

Now let's answer a few questions.

Lots of questions to answer today; we're going to start with one from Jay, "Jay," from Hungary in Europe. Jay wants to know why we sometimes use the expression "me too." For example, someone says, "I'm hungry," and you say, "Me too."

Technically, or traditionally, in grammar - English grammar - this would be considered incorrect. You would normally say, "I am also," or "I am too." But in real conversation, almost no one says that. In fact, if you were to say that, you might seem a little too formal. So, "me too" is the much more commonly way of saying, "I am also," or "I am as well."

Gustavo, "Gustavo," down in South America in Uruguay, has a question about the expression "Internet 101," or anything that uses the numbers "101." What does that mean?

I think I might have talked about this in another podcast, but briefly, "101" usually refers to a beginning class or an introductory course in something - very basic information about how to do something or about a certain topic. It comes from American universities. In American universities, when you first start your first year at the university, you take the beginning classes, and the classes have numbers. The numbers begin with 100 or 101, and then you move up to 102 and then 103, and then 201 and 203. So, the higher the number of the class, the



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more advanced the class is. So, a class that had a number of 101, such as Economics 101, that would be a beginning class in economics. So, we use that same expression sometimes when describing other things. “I’m going to give you a class in podcasting 101” - I’m going to tell you the basic things - how you do it, how you record and so forth.

So, thank you Gustavo for that question.

Our next question comes from Miguel Angel, “Miguel Angel,” and he is from Spain. Miguel Angel wants to know the expression, “I’m game,” “game” - what does it mean when someone says, “I’m game.”

“I’m game” is an informal expression we would use to mean I am up for it - I am willing to do that - that’s something that I will do as well. Usually it’s when someone asks you to do something such as go on a trip or go to a move. For example, “I want to go see the new James Bond movie, the 007 spy movie,” and someone else would say, “Oh, I’m game,” meaning yes, I would like to do that as well.

Our next question goes back to South America again, this time in Columbia. Jehudi, “Jehudi” - I’m not sure if I’m pronouncing that correctly - wants to know what the meaning on the Internet or on a computer of the expression “to hover over.” To hover, “hover,” over something.

To hover, as a verb, in general in English, means to go over or be on top of something. You can have a helicopter, which is hovering over a particular part of the city. It means it’s on top of it - it’s going over it - it’s close to it. To hover over can also mean to be a little too close. You may say to your mother, “Stop hovering over me when I’m trying to do my homework” if your mother was standing there and looking at you and watching everything you did. So, it can also mean to watch too closely.

When we talk about hover as a verb in the computer world, we mean to take your mouse and put the little pointer of your mouse, what we would call your cursor, “cursor,” and you put it over a certain thing on a web page. And often, web pages have little messages, what we would call little pop-ups, “pop-ups.” Pop-ups are when you have something that pops out of the web page - that comes out of the web page like a special message. Well, to hover over something means to take your mouse and move your cursor so that it is directly over a certain part of a web page.



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Our next question takes us over to Japan, to Akira, “Akira.” Akira wants to know the difference between the words “travel,” “trip” and “journey.”

Travel is normally a verb. It means to go somewhere. To go from one place to another is to travel. Usually it's a long distance; we don't use this verb when we talk about going to the store. You probably wouldn't say, “I'm traveling to the store,” or “I'm going to travel to the store.” You would use it if you were going, say, to another city or another country.

Usually it's a verb. It's possible to use travel as a noun as well. “On my travels,” you could say, meaning on the places - on the trips where I've gone. But normally, if you want to express the idea as a noun, you would use the word trip, “trip.” “I'm going to take a trip,” means I'm going to travel to somewhere else. It could be a business trip; it could be a trip for pleasure or for a vacation.

Journey, “journey,” is a special kind of trip. Usually it means a long trip. It's a noun, usually in this case, although I guess it's possible to use journey as a verb; it's not as common that way. “I'm going on a journey,” means I'm going on a very long, perhaps, difficult trip. So, that's travel versus trip versus journey.

Cassius, “Cassius,” in Brazil, going back now to South America, wants to know the difference between the expression “up to” and “until.” What's the difference between “up to” and “until?”

Sometimes these can mean the same thing. Normally “until” means something related to time, “I'm going to be here until nine o'clock,” “I'm going to be in Los Angeles until January 29th.” So, you're referring to the limit of time that you are going to be somewhere.

The expression “up to” is more common when you are talking about, for example, a number or the quantity of something. If you are, for example, trying to sell a lot of things and your boss says to you, “Well, what are we up to today,” meaning how much have we sold today. “Until” has more of a connection with the idea of time.

I should also mention, too, that “up to” can also be a verb. If you say, “What are you up to,” to be up to something means to be doing something. So, someone says, “What are you up to,” they mean what are you doing - how are you spending your time. Sometimes that expression can mean or imply that you are



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doing something wrong or you are doing something you shouldn't be doing.
“What are those kids up to” - what are they doing that they shouldn't be doing?

Finally, we have a question from Alexander, “Alexander,” back over in Europe, in Germany this time. Alexander wants to know the meaning of the expression “word up,” or simply “word.”

This is a slang expression that is actually not as common now as it was probably ten years ago. One of the things about slang is that it continues to change, but you'll still hear this word - this expression, “word” or “word up.” It can mean a couple things; it can mean that you agree with someone. Someone says, “It's really hot out here,” and you say, “Word,” meaning I agree with you.

It's only something you would hear among teenage kids or a rap song on MTV, something that would be associated with younger people. So, it can mean to agree, it can also be sometimes used as a greeting, like what's up. “Hey, what's up?” “Word up.”

It can also mean that you think someone has said something very well - it was well said. So, they'll say, “Boy, this guy is a real idiot,” and you say, “Word,” meaning you agree with that statement - you agree with what that person said, and that it was very well said.

That's all we have time for on today's Café. Remember, you can email us your questions at eslpod@eslpod.com. 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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