



ESL Podcast 88 – Socializing at a Reception

GLOSSARY

crowded – packed; filled with a large number of people

* The bus was so crowded that all of the seats were filled.

to attend – to go to an event; to be at a place or an event

* Mr. Fowler attended all of his son's basketball games because he enjoyed watching his son play.

keynote – the main speech at an event, usually given by an important speaker

* The keynote at the leadership conference was about how to inspire other people through one's actions.

speaker – someone who speaks formally in front of other people; someone who talks to a large group of people, telling them about his or her ideas

* The speaker gave a boring speech, causing people in the audience to fall asleep as they tried to listen.

venue – the place where a scheduled event happens; the location for an event

* As hard as she searched, Betty could not find a suitable venue for the reception to be held at.

to pre-register – to sign up beforehand; to formally state that one will go to an event before the event occurs

* Deon pre-registered for the class because it was easier than signing up once he got there.

registration packet – papers and documents one receives upon going to a formal event, which provide important information about that event

* The registration packet included a schedule of speakers and a description of each session being held.

luncheon – a formal lunch served to many people at a meeting or at an event

* The topic of discussion at the business luncheon was dull, but the food was very good.

ethics – morality; the difference between right and wrong, and how that difference affects actions and decisions

* Nerissa was interested in studying ethics because she liked learning about how people make choices about what is right and what is wrong.



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panel discussion – a discussion about an important issue which is done in front of a audience; a talk between leaders or other people with knowledge about a certain topic, taking place in front of a larger group of people

* There were four people taking part in the panel discussion about changes in modern technology.

debate – a disagreement where both sides give facts to support their different opinions

* Rolanda and Miguel had a good debate, and both made very strong arguments.

finding – discovery; new information from research or investigation

* After studying the plant's strange behavior, Dr. Morgan came across some very interesting findings.

ground-breaking study – new research; tests and observations one makes to get information that no one else had before

* The group of scientists completed a ground-breaking study to learn how caffeine affects the brain.

duration – the entire time; the full amount of time an action or event takes place

* Adam arrived at the concert when it began and stayed for the duration.



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CULTURE NOTE

Peer Review

When we read about scientific research, we often hear the term “peer review.” Peer review is the process of taking a piece of scientific research, usually in the form of a written article, and sending it to knowledgeable people in the same field to get their advice on whether the research is “sound” (based on good research) and should be “published” (printed for others to read). Peer review is often used by “scientific journals,” which are publications containing professional and/or research articles published regularly—monthly, “quarterly” (every three months), “biannually” (two times a year) or “annually” (each year). Peer review is also used by “conference” (professional meeting) organizers to determine whether a presentation is appropriate for that conference and of a high quality. “In theory” (the way it is supposed to work), peer review makes sure that only good research is published or presented, so that it can gain the attention of other people in the field and/or the “media” (news organizations).

For peer review to work well, it is best to have “blind review,” which is when an article or written presentation is sent to reviewers without the name of the author(s) on it. (Sometimes, other identifying information within the article is also taken out.) This way, reviewers can’t be influenced by the name of the author, his or her “affiliation” (organization that he or she works for or is connected with), or any other factors not associated with the quality of the research and the article itself.

Although peer review is widely used, it is far from a perfect system. However, it is considered the best method researchers have to “cull” (separate) good research from bad. Keeping in mind that peer review and blind review aren’t perfect, however, we can all be better “consumers” (readers; receivers) of scientific research.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 88: Socializing at a Reception.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast number 88. I'm Dr. Jeff McQuillan, your host, from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

In this podcast, we're going to talk about what you do when you got a reception or a party after a conference or formal meeting. Let's get started!

[start of dialogue]

Man: Hi. It's a bit crowded in here.

Woman: Yes, it's always like this on the first night of the conference. Is this your first time attending?

Man: Yes, it is. By the way, I'm Dan Morimoto.

Woman: I'm Gwen Renault. Were you here this morning for the opening keynote? I thought the speaker was excellent.

Man: No, unfortunately, I didn't arrive to the venue until late morning. Luckily, I pre-registered and just had to pick up my registration packet, so I was able to catch the luncheon speaker and she was very good.

Woman: You know, I attended a really interesting session this afternoon on ethics in the profession. It was a panel discussion and there was some lively debate. The luncheon speaker, Stephanie Morse, presented some of her findings from her new ground-breaking study.

Man: I'm sorry I missed it. It sounds interesting. Do you plan on staying for the duration of the conference?

Woman: No, I'm afraid I have to leave early tomorrow. Will you excuse me? I see a colleague of mine over there and I'd like to say hello.

Man: Oh, sure. It was nice meeting you.



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Woman: Yes, you, too.

[end of dialogue]

In this podcast we hear two people who are “socializing” at a conference reception. “To socialize” means to talk to other people, to have conversations with other people, often people that you work with or people that are in the same line of work, the same type of work, but you can socialize, really, with anyone. It just means talking, being friendly, having conversations with people. We often use that verb “to socialize” when we’re talking about a party or a reception. A “reception” is really the same as a party but it isn’t quite as, perhaps, active. When you say you’re going to have a “reception,” that often means, in a professional sense, that there may be some food. There may be some drinks but there’s probably not going to be any dancing, at least not at most business receptions or conference receptions. We also use the word, however, for a wedding. When someone gets married, the party that you have at the wedding is called the “wedding reception,” and there, of course, there might be a lot of dancing and a lot of drinking and well, you know what happens.

The man in this particular conversation introduces himself or says something to the woman next to him. He says, “Hi. It’s a bit crowded in here.” “To be crowded” means that there are too many people and that there’s so many people, you can’t move easily. The woman responds by saying, “Yes, it’s always like this on the first night of the conference,” and then asked the man if this was his first time attending. “To attend a conference” means to go to a conference, to be part of the conference. The man says, “Yes it is,” and then he says, “By the way, I’m Dan Morimoto,” introduces himself. The expression “By the way” is often one that we would use in this particular circumstance. When you start talking to someone that you don’t know and you decide that you want to tell that person your name. You may say, “Oh, and by the way, I’m Jeff,” and, of course, the person, you hope, will give you his or her name.

This woman says, “I’m Gwen Renault,” and then asked Dan if he was here this morning for the opening “keynote.” A “keynote” (keynote) is a speech that someone gives to a large group of people at a conference, like either a business conference or an academic conference. It’s one of the main speakers where everyone comes together in a big auditorium or a big, what we might call, a conference “hall” (hall), which is a large space where people can listen to a speaker. And in fact, the woman refers to – Gwen refers to the opening “keynote” or the opening “keynote address,” which is the same as a speech. She says that she “thought the speaker was excellent.” Of course, the “speaker” is the person who gave the keynote address, who gave the speech.



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The man says he hadn't seen the keynote because he didn't arrive to the "venue" until late morning. The "venue" (venue), here, just means the place where they're having the meeting or the conference. The man says that he's "pre-registered" and just had to pick up his "registration packet." "To be pre-registered" (pre) – (registered) means that you sent in your money in advance. You've already registered for the conference or for the meeting and a "registration packet" is when you go to a conference or a meeting, they'll usually give you some information, sometimes a bag that has the schedule of when all the meetings are. This would be part of your "registration packet."

The man said that he was able to "catch the luncheon speaker" and thought she was very good. The "luncheon speaker" is the person who speaks at a lunch. "Lunch" and "luncheon" are pretty much the same. "Luncheon" is usually a word we use for a little more formal meal at lunch time. The expression "to catch the luncheon speaker" just means that – "to see" or "to listen to." You might say to someone, "Did you catch that movie last night on TV?" That means, "Did you watch that movie?" So, we use that expression a lot, "to catch," when we're talking about a show or a presentation, for example.

The woman said that she attended a really interesting "session" this afternoon. At a conference or at a meeting, "to have a session" means to have a smaller presentation. So, you have -- for example, in the morning, you might have a keynote address where everyone comes together in one big room, one big auditorium and then you have various "sessions," and the "sessions" are smaller presentations. You may have 5 or 10 or 20 presentations and each one of those has a "session" and you get to pick, usually, which "session" you want to attend, you want to go to. She went to a session or a presentation on "ethics in the profession." "Ethics" (ethics) is what's right and what's wrong, so we talked about what's right and what's wrong. So, we talk about, "It's a problem of ethics." We're saying, "What are the right things to do and what are the wrong things to do in terms of the morality or the weather it's a good or bad thing?" For example, honesty should be part of the "ethics" in every profession.

The woman goes to a "panel discussion." A "panel discussion" is when you have two, three, or more people, usually sitting up at a table in the front of the room. We call that a "panel" and those people are each going to have a chance to talk about a certain subject. The woman said there was a "lively debate at the panel," meaning that people were arguing, disagreeing, not necessarily being rude or impolite. You can have a "friendly debate." The luncheon speaker who was at the panel discussion presented some of her "key findings from a new ground-breaking study." When someone does a research study or any sort of



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investigation or report, the answers they get, or the conclusions that they have or they reach are called their “findings.” It’s what they found. It’s what they discovered. And it’s a noun. “Findings” is a noun. It can also be singular. One of the findings – one finding, I should say – that’s also possible. A “study,” you know already, is an investigation into something, often something that is presented at a conference or published in a magazine – scientific magazine. When we say something is “ground-breaking,” that’s a hyphenated word, “ground” – “breaking,” we mean that it is something new, something that is a whole new area of research. “Ground-breaking” is what we do when we are going to build a house or a building. You have to break the ground. You have to dig a hole in the ground and the very first hole, if you will, that you dig is often – there’s a ceremony around it. “We’re going to be having a ground-breaking for our new library.” And everybody comes and they have a shovel and the president or whoever is the leader, will take the shovel and put it in the ground and throw some dirt. Of course, they don’t continue working. The president doesn’t build the building, but it’s the beginning, the ceremonial beginning of the building. So, “ground-breaking” is the first, or it’s something that you do when you start something. And as an adjective, it’s used here to mean something that is new, something that is one of the first of its kind.

The man asked the woman if she is going to be staying for the duration of the conference. The “duration” just means for the rest of or until the end of the conference. The woman says “no” and then she says, “Will you excuse me?” meaning I want to do something else. In this case, she wants to talk to someone else. So, when you say to someone, “Will you excuse me?” what you are saying to them is, “I need to leave now. I need to stop talking to you,” but it’s a polite way of doing that. The man says, “Oh, sure. It was nice meeting you,” or, “It was nice to meet you.” It’s the same meaning. And the woman says, “Yes, you too,” meaning, “Yes, it was nice to meet you too.”

Now let’s listen to the conversation this time at native rate of speech.

[start of dialogue]

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Man: Oh, sure. It was nice meeting you.

Woman: Yes, you, too.

[end of dialogue]

Be sure to visit our website at www.eslpod.com for more information about this podcast and for the scripts of our podcasts.

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

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