



ESL Podcast 1219 – Expressing Disapproval

GLOSSARY

to approve – to accept; to agree that something is good or acceptable and to not oppose it

* Did the admissions committee approve your college application?

disgrace – something that is shameful and dishonorable, not something that one should be proud of

* The way they fired Blake without any warning was unfair and a disgrace.

shame on (someone) – a phrase used to show one's disapproval of another person and one's belief that he or she should be embarrassed by his or her actions or words

* Shame on the city police for allowing that abuse to continue for so many years.

objection – a statement or action that shows one's opposition and refusal to accept or have something

* The priest asked if anyone had an objection to Henri and Sally getting married.

condemnation – a very strong statement of criticism, especially regarding the correctness or morality of someone's behavior

* No child wants to face their parents' condemnation when he or she has done something wrong.

to give (someone) an earful – to tell someone that one is very angry with that person; to express one's criticism or disapproval verbally

* I'd like to give that teacher an earful. She has no right to yell at our son!

to take (someone) to task – to hold someone accountable for his or her words or actions and to strongly criticize that person

* Management is going to take us to task for losing such a profitable client.

irresponsible – not demonstrating proper responsibility; not behaving in the necessary way to protect or assist someone or something

* Those parents are so irresponsible! Don't they know it's dangerous to leave a child alone in a car on a hot day?

not (one's) place – not one's duty or role; someone else's responsibility

* It's not our place to tell other people how to live their life.



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to criticize – to emphasize the faults, weaknesses, problems, or shortcomings of another person or thing

* The reporter has written several articles criticizing local government for keeping secrets from the public.

housewarming gift – a present given to someone who moves into a new home or apartment, intended to make that person feel welcome and comfortable in the new environment

* Our new neighbors brought us this plant as a housewarming gift. Wasn't that nice?

to disapprove – to not accept; to not agree that something is good or acceptable and to oppose it

* The CEO disapproves of most of the salary increases in our budget for next year.

to go behind (one's) back – to do something secretly, without another person's knowledge, intentionally hiding one's actions from another person

* James can't believe Raul went behind his back and bought a boat without telling him!

reproach – a statement or expression of disappointment and disapproval; criticism

* Karim probably would have dropped out of school years ago if he weren't so afraid of his parent's reproach.

to come through loud and clear – to be extremely clear and easily understood by others, with no ambiguity or confusion

* You don't need to shout! Your answer came through loud and clear.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Godfrey disapprove of Maggie and Gerry moving in together?
 - a) Because he doesn't think their relationship will last.
 - b) Because he doesn't think they can afford it.
 - c) Because he thinks it is wrong for unmarried couples to live together.

 2. What does Godfrey say he would do if he were their parent?
 - a) He would yell at them.
 - b) He would stop providing financial support.
 - c) He would love them no matter what.
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WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

not (one's) place

The phrase “not (one's) place,” in this podcast, means not one's duty or role and is used to refer to someone else's responsibility: “It's not our place to choose Beatrix's college major. She needs to do that herself.” The phrase “(one's) place” refers to the home or apartment where one lives: “We're all going to hang out at Selena's place after the show tomorrow night.” The phrase “out of place” means not where something should be: “Why are all these tools out of place? Who didn't put them away after using them?” Finally, the phrase “to be going places” means to be successful and to be progressing or advancing in one's career: “Sonia is a young politician who is clearly going places.”

to go behind (one's) back

In this podcast, the phrase “to go behind (one's) back” means to do something secretly, without another person's knowledge, intentionally hiding one's actions from another person: “Why did you go behind my back and hire a new employee before I had an opportunity to conduct the interview?” The phrase “in the back of one's mind” refers to a thought that one would prefer to ignore: “Even while we were dating, I knew in the back of my mind that he was probably cheating on me.” Finally, the phrase “to put (one's) back into (something)” means to work very hard, especially while performing physical labor: “If you put your back into it, you could finish shoveling the snow off the driveway in under 20 minutes.”



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CULTURE NOTE

Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert

At the Movies was a popular TV program that “reviewed movies” (provided professional opinions about the quality of movies) between 2008 and 2010. The show’s “predecessors” (something that came before) were known by other names, such as Siskel & Ebert & the Movies, and dated back to 1986.

In the original show, the two “hosts” (the main people who speak during a show) were Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert. They had very strong, “divergent” (different) “opinions” (beliefs) about movies and often “engaged in heated discussions” (had passionate arguments) about the movies they were discussing. This made the show entertaining for viewers and both Siskel and Ebert became well known and often “quoted” (having their words repeated by others).

The hosts discussed the movies in great detail, but at the end of each show, they provided a “thumbs up/thumbs down” summary in which they would close their “fist” (the shape made by closing one’s hand tightly) and hold their “thumb” (the largest finger on one’s hand) “up” (pointing to the ceiling) to show approval and “endorsement” (recommendation) or “down” (pointing to the floor) to show their disapproval of a film. This was a “departure from” (something different from what others were doing) the traditional system of rating movies with a number or stars.

Many people relied on the thumbs up/thumbs down recommendation when deciding which movies to watch. “Movie studios” (the companies that make movies) noticed this and began to advertise that their movies had received “two thumbs up” if both of the show’s hosts had recommended them.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 1,219 – Expressing Disapproval.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 1,219. 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 episode is a dialogue between Lucinda and Thomas about expressing disapproval – when you don't like something. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Lucinda: Maggie and Gerry are moving in together. They want to start a family.

Thomas: I don't approve of that. They're not married and it's a disgrace. Shame on them!

Lucinda: I understand your objections, but they love each other and need our support, not our condemnation.

Thomas: If I were their parents, I'd give them an earful. Someone should take them to task for making such irresponsible decisions.

Lucinda: They know what they're doing and it's not our place to criticize their decision.

Thomas: But I don't have to like it. I'm not sending them a housewarming gift, that's for sure.

Lucinda: Too late. I sent one and signed both our names.

Thomas: You did what?! How will they know I disapprove of what they're doing when you go behind my back and do that?



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Lucinda: I think your reproach will come through loud and clear.

[end of dialogue]

Lucinda begins the dialogue by saying to Thomas, “Maggie and Gerry are moving in together. They want to start a family.” Maggie and her boyfriend Gerry are going to move in together – that means they’re going to live in the same place, the same house, the same apartment. They want to start a family.

Thomas says he doesn’t approve of that. “To approve” (approve) is to agree that something is correct or, really, that something is good or acceptable – to accept what someone is doing. If I “approve of your decision,” I agree with your decision, or I say your decision is okay. “Approve” can mean both to say something is good or acceptable, as well as to give permission for someone to do something. Your boss approves your plan for a new project. Here the verb “to approve” means that you agree with it, that you agree it is correct.

Thomas doesn’t think the fact that Maggie and Gerry are moving in together is a good thing. He points out that “they’re not married and it’s a disgrace.” A “disgrace” (disgrace) is something that you should not be proud of, something that is considered what we would call “shameful” or “dishonorable” – something that is perhaps immoral or unethical to do.

Thomas says, “Shame on them.” This expression “shame (shame) on” someone is used to show how very much you disapprove of something – how you do not approve of what another person is doing and in fact think that the person doing what you don’t agree with should be embarrassed by his or her actions. You think this person should feel bad about what he or she is doing.

Lucinda says, “I understand your objections.” An “objection” (objection) is when you say that you disagree with something. It’s a statement to show that you think someone is wrong – usually it’s a reason why you think someone is wrong, although it could just be a statement showing that you oppose or disagree with another person. Someone may say, “I have objections to this,” meaning I have reasons why I think this is wrong. Lucinda says, however, that “they love each other and need our support, not our condemnation.”

“Condemnation” (condemnation) is when you disagree with another person and criticize them for their actions, especially when you think their actions are immoral or unethical, or simply wrong and harmful either to themselves or to others. Lucinda thinks that Maggie and Gerry need Lucinda and Thomas’s



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support. She's saying that Lucinda and Thomas should help Maggie and Gerry, not condemn them, not criticize them, though I'm not exactly sure why. I guess it's because they love each other.

Thomas says, "If I were their parents, I'd give them an earful." "To give someone an earful," (earful) means to tell someone that you are very angry with that person, to perhaps yell at someone, to tell someone why you think he or she is wrong, but to do so in an angry way. Thomas is saying that if he were Maggie and or Gerry's parents, he'd "give them an earful." He'd yell at them. He'd tell them in an angry way why they were wrong.

He says, "Someone should take them to task for making such irresponsible decisions." "To take someone to task" (task) means to criticize someone for something he has done wrong or to hold someone responsible for his mistakes. To say, "Well, you did this wrong, and therefore you have to take responsibility for being wrong." "To take someone to task" is to tell the person why he or she is wrong.

Thomas thinks this decision to move in together without being married and to start a family is "irresponsible" (irresponsible). "To be irresponsible" is to be not responsible – that is, to not behave in a way that is necessary according to some rules or simply is a good idea. "To be irresponsible" means not to do what you are supposed to do.

Lucinda says, however, that "they know what they're doing and it's not our place to criticize their decision." To say something is "not your place" to do something means it's not your responsibility. It's not for you to do. It's not your duty. It's not your role. Lucinda says it's not Thomas and Lucinda's place to criticize Maggie and Gerry's decision. "To criticize" means to show why someone is wrong, to show why someone has problems with something.

Thomas says, "But I don't have to like it. I'm not sending them a housewarming gift, that's for sure." A "housewarming gift" is a present you give to someone who has moved into a new home or apartment. It's sort of a way of congratulating someone, perhaps, of giving someone something he will need in his new place. Lucinda says, "Too late," meaning it's too late not to send them a housewarming gift because Lucinda just sent one "and signed both our names," meaning she said the gift was from both Thomas and Lucinda.

Thomas is not happy about this. He says, "You did what?! How will they know I disapprove of what they're doing when you go behind my back and do that?" "To disapprove," of course, is the opposite of "to approve." "To go behind someone's



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back” is to do something secretly without another person knowing. In this case, Lucinda went behind Thomas’s back. She didn’t tell Thomas what she was doing.

We often use this expression when it affects the person you didn’t tell. So here, Lucinda sent a gift and signed both her and Thomas’s name. She did this without telling Thomas. She “did it behind his back.” Thomas wonders how Maggie and Gerry will know that he disapproves of what they have done after she sent this gift with his signature on it.

Lucinda says, “I think your reproach will come through loud and clear.” A “reproach” (reproach) is a statement of disapproval, criticism, and disappointment in another person. It’s a somewhat formal word describing when someone criticizes you, disapproves of what you did, often because of some ethical or moral failing on your part, meaning the person believes you did something wrong morally or ethically, not just because you broke a rule.

Lucinda thinks that Thomas’s reproach “will come through loud and clear.” The phrase “to come through loud and clear” means to be easily understood by others. In this case, Lucinda thinks that Maggie and Gerry will know that he disapproves of their actions despite the fact that Lucinda sent them a gift with Thomas’s signature on the card.

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

[start of dialogue]

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[end of dialogue]

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From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. Come back and listen to us again right here on ESL Podcast.

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