



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

GLOSSARY

simulcast – a live (not recorded) broadcast of an event or performance; something that is shown in two places or in two ways at the same time, such as on the television and the radio

* I was watching the basketball game at home, but I had to drive to my sister's house before it ended. Fortunately, the game was being simulcasted, so I was able to listen to the end of the game on the radio while I was in the car.

live – being shown on the radio or television at the same time that something is actually happening; not being broadcasted from a recording

* This afternoon at 4:00 there will be a live speech by the President on TV.

campus radio – a radio station owned by a college or university and operated by students

* Chantelle likes to listen to campus radio, because it has music from many different countries and information about events at the university.

public radio – a radio station that is not owned by a private company; a radio station that is a non-profit organization and asks for money from its listeners instead of selling advertising

* NPR, National Public Radio, is the most well known public radio station in the United States.

reception – how well a radio (or television) program can be heard (or seen) due to the quality of the airwaves and signals that are being received

* We usually listen to the radio when we drive, but in the mountains the reception isn't very good, so we bring CDs to listen to.

antenna – a long, thin piece of metal that makes the quality of sound from a radio or the picture on a television set better

* Try moving the TV antenna to the right so that we can see the program more clearly.

low-tech – low-technology; not sophisticated; technologically simple; using simple, old technologies

* Candace is so low-tech that she still uses a typewriter instead of a computer.

AM/FM – Amplitude Modulation / Frequency Modulation; two types of air waves that one can listen to on a radio

* When someone stole the expensive CD player that was in Henrietta's car, she decided to buy a simple AM/FM radio that no one would want to steal.



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

satellite radio – a type of digital radio that uses satellites in space, can be heard anywhere, and has very good quality

* They bought a new satellite radio that lets them listen to thousands of radio stations in hundreds of languages.

format – the type of music or talk show on a radio program; the design of a program and the order in which things happen

* This radio program has a format where experts talk about something for 30 minutes and then listeners can call in to ask questions.

station – a radio or television company and the programs that it offers to listeners on a particular TV channel (3, 4, 7) or radio frequency (93.1, 104.7)

* My favorite radio station is 102.9 because it has lots of blues and jazz music.

DJ – disc jockey; a person who plays music and speaks between songs on a radio station

* I wish the DJ on this station would talk less and play more music.

static – a hissing noise that one hears on a radio or TV program that isn't supposed to be there, and is usually caused by the signal or reception being weak

* There's too much static on this program! Let's find another station to listen to.

broadcast – a program shown on TV or played on the radio; radio or TV transmissions that anyone can receive

* People who live far away from a large city usually don't get very many broadcast TV stations, so many of them have cable TV.

snob – a person who thinks that he or she is better than other people because he or she likes a certain type of thing or knows a lot about it

* Richard is a wine snob! He's always talking about the expensive wines he owns and he always says that I don't drink very good wines.

to settle for (something) – to be satisfied with something; to be content with something even though it may not be the best

* On Friday nights I'm usually tired from work and ready to settle for a quiet night at home instead of going to a party with friends.

to jump on the bandwagon – to begin doing something that everyone else is doing; to begin doing something because it is very popular with other people

* Six of Mark's friends bought a new home last year, so he decided to jump on the bandwagon and buy a new house, too.



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

This is the thanks I get – a sarcastic and funny phrase that is used to show that one is disappointed with how another person responded to something that one said or did while trying to help him or her

* When Luke tried to help a cat get down from a tree, the cat bit his hand. Luke said, “This is the thanks I get for helping a cat!”

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of radio does Kurt like to listen to?
 - a) AM/FM radio.
 - b) Satellite radio.
 - c) Broadcast radio.
 2. Why does Gloria call Kurt a technology snob?
 - a) Because he thinks that new technology is better than old technology.
 - b) Because he never has any static.
 - c) Because he jumps on the bandwagon with Gloria.
-

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

reception

The word “reception,” in this podcast, means how well a radio (or television) program can be heard (or seen) due to the quality of the airwaves and signals that are being received: “The farther you are from a radio station, the worse the reception will be.” A “reception” is also a formal event to welcome someone: “The conference will begin with a breakfast reception so that people can meet each other.” Or, “After the marriage ceremony, there will be a wedding reception at the Grand Hotel so that guests can congratulate the new couple.” A “reception area” is the large room at the entrance of a hotel or a large office building where people can meet with others or wait for a meeting. Finally, a “reception desk” is the desk at the front of a hotel where one can ask for a room or check in.

static

In this podcast, the word “static” means the noise that one hears on a radio or TV program but that isn’t part of the program: “During a storm, radio stations have more static than they usually do.” The word “static” also means something that doesn’t move or change: “Sales are static – they’re the same now as they were one year ago. What can we do to start selling more of our product?” Or, “The



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

dancers were so static on the stage the audience began to wonder when the dancing would begin.” “Static” also refers to “static electricity,” which is the electricity that is made when two things rub together quickly: “Whenever I wear these shoes and walk on the carpet, I always get shocked by static when I touch anything made of metal.”

CULTURE NOTE

In the United States, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is the government agency that “regulates” (controls) TV and radio communication. The FCC does this by deciding which new radio and TV stations can be “established” (created), and by deciding what types of things can be “broadcast,” or shared with the public in radio and TV programs.

When a person or company wants to establish a radio or TV station, it must send an “application” (a written request) to the FCC. The FCC “considers” (thinks about) what the local community needs and whether a new station will “interfere,” (negatively affect) the other stations. If it thinks that the new station should be established, it “issues” (gives) a “license” (written papers that let the station operate).

Once a station has been established, the FCC is partly responsible for deciding what the station can put in its programs. In the United States, “freedom of the press,” or the idea that the media should be able to say whatever it wants to say without government “censorship” (being told what can and cannot be said or written) is very important. So the FCC has a “limited” (not full) ability to say what can and cannot be in the programs.

In general, the FCC can ask a station to pay a “fine” (money paid as a punishment) or it can take away a station’s license if its programs include any “obscene” or “indecent” language, meaning bad and offensive words. This is especially true if the obscene or indecent language is used when children might be watching or listening to the programs.

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



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 265: Listening to the Radio.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 265. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in the beautiful City of Los Angeles, California.

Remember to visit our website at eslpod.com, and download a Learning Guide for this episode.

In this episode, we're going to listen to a dialogue between two students, I think, college students, who are talking about "Listening to the Radio." Let's get started.

[start of story]

Kurt: Turn that radio down!

Gloria: No way! I'm listening to a simulcast of a performance and it's live.

Kurt: Is it on campus radio?

Gloria: No, it's on the public radio station. I finally got good reception after putting this long antenna outside my window and I'm not turning it off now.

Kurt: You are so low-tech. I can't believe you're still listening to AM/FM radio. You should get satellite radio. You get shows in hundreds of formats, and there are a lot of stations without DJs. And there's never any static!

Gloria: I like listening to the regular broadcast radio. I don't have to pay for it and I'm happy with the stations we have in this city. You're just a technology snob. If it's high-tech, you love it and have to have it.

Kurt: It's true that I know quality when I see it, and I don't settle for less. What's wrong with that?

Gloria: Nothing, but I don't have to jump on the bandwagon. Now, be quiet. I'm trying to listen.

Kurt: Fine. This is the thanks I get for trying to give you a little good advice.



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

Gloria: Shh!

[end of story]

The dialogue begins with Kurt saying to Gloria, “Turn that radio down!” To “turn something down” means to lower the volume; to make it less loud, to make it quieter. “Turn down” is the opposite of “turn up,” which means to make something louder. So, Kurt is saying to Gloria turn down that radio, meaning I don't want the volume so loud.

Gloria says, “No way,” which is an informal way of saying, “no, absolutely not.” It's something you might say if you were angry or mad. Gloria says, “I'm listening to a simulcast of a performance and it's live.” A simulcast (simulcast) is when you have a live—not recorded—broadcast of an event, usually something that is shown in two places or in two ways at the same time. So for example, there is a concert on the television for the symphony orchestra—they're playing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony—and you can watch it on TV, but the local radio station also has the same concert; we would say that's being “simulcast.” It's short for “simultaneously broadcasting.” To do something “simultaneously” means at the same time. When we say something is “live,” we mean it's not recorded; it's happening right now.

Kurt says to Gloria is this program “on campus radio?” “Campus radio” would be a radio station that is owned by a college or university. Most colleges and universities in the US have their own small radio station—many of them do—and students are the ones that operate, or run, the radio. I, when I was in college, worked at a campus radio station. Not at my university, but at a university that was close to where I lived, and a friend and I had a music show every week on campus radio. That's where I first got behind a microphone, I guess.

Gloria says that it's not campus radio; it's a “public radio station.” A “public radio station” is one that is not owned by a private company. In the United States, public radio stations are not owned by any one company; they're what we would call a “non-profit” organization. They don't try to make money; they don't have commercials or advertising.

Public radio is not government radio in the United States, however. The United States doesn't have a government radio station for here in the US; there is something called “Voice of America,” which is a radio station for international audiences. This is different than the BBC—the British Broadcasting Corporation—for example, in England, where the government gives a lot of



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

money to the public radio and public television station. That's not true here in the US; the government only gives a small amount of money. But, most cities have a public radio station that often plays classical music and has news.

Gloria says that she finally was able to get “good reception after putting this long antenna outside my window.” “Reception” (reception) is how well a radio or a television program can be heard or seen. We say, “I have good reception,” that means I'm able to hear it very clearly, or see it without any problem. To have “poor reception,” or bad reception, means you can't hear it or see it very easily. An “antenna” (antenna) is a long, usually thin piece of metal that you use to get the radio “waves,” or signals, into your radio. Most radios have an antenna so that you can get good reception.

Kurt says to Gloria, “You are so low-tech” (low-tech), which is short for “low technology,” which means that it's very simple or old; that it is not sophisticated. The opposite of “low-tech” would be “hi-tech” (hi-tech). “Hi-tech” would be, for example, using a computer to write something; “low-tech” would be using a pen and a piece of paper.

Kurt says, “I can't believe you're still listening to AM/FM radio.” “AM radio,” sometimes called “amplitude modulation radio,” and “FM,” or “frequency modulation,” are two kinds of common ways of listening to the radio—they're the two types of radio signals that you will hear, usually. “FM” is usually a little better in terms of the sound. So, “AM” and “FM” are types of “radio signals,” or radio waves.

Kurt says to Gloria, “You should get satellite radio.” “Satellite (satellite) radio” is a kind of digital radio that uses satellites that are up in space to get the signal. A “satellite” is a machine that is up in the very highest part of our earth's atmosphere, and is used to send different radio and television signals.

Kurt says that on satellite radio, you can get “hundreds of formats, and there are a lot of stations without DJs.” The “format” (format) of a radio station is the kind of radio station. It could be classical music format, or country music format, or rock music; these are all different formats.

A “station” is a particular channel on your television or on your radio. “DJs” (capital D capital J) is short for “disc jockey.” A “DJ” is a “disc (disc) jockey”. A “disc jockey” is the person who plays the music on the radio station, who talks and tells you the name of the song; that's the “DJ,” it's called a “disc jockey.” It's a very strange term; “disc” is something that is round and flat, such as a CD—compact disc. A “jockey” is usually someone who rides a horse, but here we use



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

it to mean someone who controls not a horse but controls the music; that's a "disc jockey."

Kurt says that on satellite radio, there is "never any static!" "Static" (static) is noise on a radio or television program that is not supposed to be there. When you have poor reception—when the signal is not coming in very well, you can get "static." It sometimes can sound like "ssss"; that is static. Static has a couple of different meanings in English, as does the word "reception." Take a look at our Learning Guide today for more definitions of those words.

Gloria says back to Kurt, "I like listening to regular broadcast radio." "Broadcast" (broadcast) is a program that you will see on your TV or on your radio that you only need an antenna to receive. "Broadcast radio" is what anybody can get with a simple antenna.

Gloria says that Kurt is a "technology snob" (snob). A "snob" is someone who thinks that they are better than other people, usually because they like a certain kind of music or movie, or they know something more than other people. Someone who is a "snob" may say that they are better than other people because they like listening to opera or classical music. To be a "snob" means to think other people are lower than you. Of course, you can like classical music and opera, and not be a snob!

Kurt says that if he knows something is good quality, he doesn't "settle for less." To "settle (settle) for" something means to be satisfied with something, even if it's not the best. "Don't settle for anything less than the best" is an expression you might hear; it means don't be satisfied with any thing that is not as good as you want it to be.

Gloria says that she is not going "to jump on the bandwagon." To "jump on the bandwagon" (bandwagon) means to begin doing something that everyone else is doing; to begin to do something just because everyone else is doing something. So, everyone else is getting an iPod, and you decide, "Well, I'm going to buy an iPod," you are "jumping on the bandwagon." The word "bandwagon" also means the thing you use in a parade or a procession to carry the musicians—the band that is playing music, but nowadays, we usually just use this word in the expression "to jump on the bandwagon." "All of my friends decided to get green hair, so I decided to jump on the bandwagon and get green hair, also. It looks pretty good on me, I think!"

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



ESL Podcast 265 – Listening to the Radio

[start of story]

Kurt: Turn that radio down!

Gloria: No way! I'm listening to a simulcast of a performance and it's live.

Kurt: Is it on campus radio?

Gloria: No, it's on the public radio station. I finally got good reception after putting this long antenna outside my window and I'm not turning it off now.

Kurt: You are so low-tech. I can't believe you're still listening to AM/FM radio. You should get satellite radio. You get shows in hundreds of formats, and there are a lot of stations without DJs. And there's never any static!

Gloria: I like listening to the regular broadcast radio. I don't have to pay for it and I'm happy with the stations we have in this city. You're just a technology snob. If it's high-tech, you love it and have to have it.

Kurt: It's true that I know quality when I see it, and I don't settle for less. What's wrong with that?

Gloria: Nothing, but I don't have to jump on the bandwagon. Now, be quiet. I'm trying to listen.

Kurt: Fine. This is the thanks I get for trying to give you a little good advice.

Gloria: Shh!

[end of story]

The script for today's podcast was written by Dr. Lucy Tse.

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

English as a Second Language Podcast is written and produced by Dr. Lucy Tse, hosted by Dr. Jeff McQuillan. This podcast is copyright 2007.