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**ESL Podcast 687 – Shopping for a Television**

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**GLOSSARY**

**this is what I'm talking about** – a phrase used when one has found what one has been looking for or what one has been interested in for a long time

\* Look at this video camera! Now this is what I'm talking about! Too bad it costs so much.

**to upgrade** – to get or buy a newer, bigger, or better version of something

\* Why don't you upgrade your cable service to the next level, so you can have more channels?

**big-screen TV** – a television set with a very large screen (flat surface where images are shown)

\* Our new big-screen TV lets us see more details than we could on our old, small TV.

**selection** – the variety of objects or options available for one to choose from, especially when deciding what to buy

\* This store has an excellent selection of fine wines and cheeses.

**picture** – image; the things that are seen on a television screen

\* Seeing pictures of the destruction made us realize how powerful the hurricane was.

**sharp** – clear, with defined lines around objects; easy to see; easy to distinguish between one or more images or things

\* My photos are always blurry. How do you take such sharp photographs?

**comparison** – the process of considering how two or more objects are alike or different

\* A fair comparison of these two food mixers should include speed and quality, not just price.

**resolution** – how detailed an image is; how easily details in an image can be seen

\* You'll need to give the printer a high-resolution copy of your logo before they can make your business cards.

**brightness** – a measure of how much light comes from an electronic screen, making text easier to read and images easier to see

\* Your laptop's battery will last longer if you reduce the brightness of the screen.



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**contrast** – the strength of the difference between two or more objects, especially between dark and light

\* Some photographers like to take pictures at sunrise because they think it gives their photos better contrast.

**washed out** – dull and faded, without bright colors; a little bit hard to see; faint

\* After years of hanging on a sunny wall, the painting has become washed out and faded.

**sound quality** – how well recorded music or voices can be heard; a measure of how clear sounds are

\* I really like this band's music, but the sound quality is terrible. They need to record their music in a better studio.

**surround sound** – with speakers on all sides of the audience, not just in front

\* Almost all movie theaters have surround sound, because it makes people feel like the action they're seeing is happening all around them.

**century** – a 100-year period

\* Do you prefer classical music from the 18<sup>th</sup> century or the 19<sup>th</sup> century?

**viewing distance** – a measure of how much space there is between the person looking at something and the object he or she is looking at

\* The museum increased the viewing distance for its most famous pieces of art, because the curator doesn't want anyone to reach out and touch the art.

**screen size** – how small or large the screen is on a television set or computer monitor

\* Linnea's eyes aren't very strong, so her doctor advised buying a computer monitor with a larger screen size.

**to take up** – to occupy; to use a certain amount of space, time, or some other resource

\* Why did you park your car in the middle of the driveway? You're taking up all the space and there's nowhere for me to park.

**to have in mind** – to want; to be thinking about

\* First, tell us what you have in mind for the party, and then we can start talking about whether your budget is realistic.



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### COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of these things affects the quality of images on a TV?
  - a) The contrast.
  - b) Surround sound.
  - c) The viewing distance.
2. What does Byung mean when he says, “That’s exactly what I had in mind”?
  - a) He was hoping the new TV would cover the entire wall.
  - b) He believes a TV that big would make it impossible to think.
  - c) He is trying to imagine what the TV would look like at home.

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### WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

#### **picture**

The word “picture,” in this podcast, means an image, or the things that are seen on a television screen: “It’s amazing how such a tiny cell phone screen can produce such a high-quality picture!” A “picture” can also refer to a drawing or photograph: “Hal hangs his daughter’s pictures in his office, and he often looks at pictures of his daughters while he is working.” A “motion picture” is a movie or film: “Which motion picture was the first one made in color?” The phrase “picture-perfect” describes something that looks exactly as it should: “The bride wants everything to be picture-perfect for the wedding.” Finally, the phrase “to get the picture” means to understand something: “If I don’t find a job this week, we won’t have enough money to pay the rent and my family will become homeless. Get the picture?”

#### **to take up**

In this podcast, the phrase “to take up” means to occupy or to use a certain amount of space, time, or some other resource: “I didn’t realize the file would take up so much of the USB drive.” The phrase “to take (someone) up on (an offer)” means to accept an offer: “Yes, I offered to help you move, but I didn’t think you’d take me up on it!” The phrase “to take (someone) on” can mean to hire someone: “The advertising department wants to take on five new employees this year.” Finally, the phrase “to be taken in” means to be tricked or fooled by someone or something: “How could you be taken in by those images? Obviously they had been changed with photo-editing software.”



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**CULTURE NOTE**

**The TV Show The Honeymooners**

The Honeymooners was a popular “sitcom” (situation comedy; a humorous television show with the same main characters in each episode) in the mid-1950s. A “honeymoon” is a romantic vacation taken by a husband and wife immediately after they are married, and the term “honeymooners” usually refers to the couple enjoying the honeymoon, or to “newlyweds” (people who have recently been married). In the case of the TV show, the “honeymooners” are a couple who have been married much longer, about 15 years.

The main character is a man named Ralph. He is a bus driver who often becomes interested in “get-rich-quick-schemes” (opportunities where people believe they can make a lot of money very quickly, but usually fail), and is frustrated by his lack of success and lack of money. He loves his wife, but he is very “short-tempered” (becomes angry easily) and often “insults” (says things that hurt other people’s feelings) other people.

His wife, Alice, is often insulted by her husband, and she reacts with “sarcasm” (a rude but funny way of saying the opposite of what one really means). She is smart and understands that most of Ralph’s get-rich-quick-schemes won’t work, but Ralph “ignores” (does not listen to; does not pay attention to) her advice and usually fails.

The “couple” (husband and wife) is close friends with another married couple, Ed and Trixie. They live in a similar apartment in Brooklyn, New York.

The Honeymooners “depicts” (shows) “humorous” (funny) interactions among these four individuals and other, less important characters. Throughout all the “mishaps” (things that did not happen as planned), Ralph was always shown to love his wife, and the character often said, “Baby, you’re the greatest,” giving her a hug and a kiss.

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



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 687: Shopping for a Television.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 687. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at [eslpod.com](http://eslpod.com). Download the Learning Guide for this episode, an 8- to 10-page guide that will help you improve your English much, much faster than just listening.

This episode is all about buying a new television, with the vocabulary related, of course, to TVs. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Byung: This is what I'm talking about! It's time to upgrade to a big-screen TV and this is the perfect place to buy one.

Nelly: They certainly have a large selection. These new TVs have pictures that are much sharper than our current one.

Byung: There's no comparison. These new TVs have a much better resolution. Just look at the brightness and the contrast! Our old TV looks washed out by comparison.

Nelly: And listen to that sound quality. It's like being in a movie theater with surround sound.

Byung: Yeah, it's time we moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Nelly: According to what I've read, with a viewing distance of 10 feet, we should look for a screen size of about 40 inches.

Byung: I was thinking more like a 60-inch screen.

Nelly: A 60-inch TV?! That would take up the entire living room wall.

Byung: That's exactly what I had in mind!



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[end of dialogue]

The dialogue begins Byung saying, “This is what I’m talking about!” “This is what I’m talking about” is a phrase – an informal phrase used to show that you have found what you have been looking for or what you are interested in and have been for a long time; its meaning depends on the way it is said. If you go to the beach and you sit down and you say, “Oh, this is what I’m talking about,” meaning this is what I wanted, this is what I like. That’s what Byung is saying here; he says, “It’s time to upgrade to a big-screen TV and this is the perfect place to buy one.” So, Byung and Nelly are in an electronics store somewhere. Byung says, “It’s time to upgrade.” “To upgrade” (upgrade – one word) means to get the newer, bigger, or better version of something. If you had an iPhone 1, the first iPhone, and then you bought an iPhone 3G, you upgraded, and then you bought the iPhone 4, you upgraded; you got the better, newer, more expensive usually version of this particular service or product. Byung wants to upgrade to a big-screen TV. A “big-screen TV” is a television with what is a very large screen compared to a normal television, shall we say, although most televisions now are much bigger than they were 20-25 years ago, so what is normal has become a lot bigger.

Nelly says, “They certainly have a large selection,” meaning this store that they are in has a large selection – a large variety of things, or something where you have a lot of different choices and options. Nelly says, “These new TVs have pictures that are much sharper than our current one.” “Picture” here means what you see on the television screen, what you see when the television is on. We call that the “picture.” It’s the same word we would use for a photograph or a painting even, but here it means what you see on your screen. “Sharp” means very clear, with very easy to see lines, things that will distinguish one object from another. Nelly says that the new TVs they are looking at are much sharper, much clearer than our current one, the one we own right now.

Byung says, “There’s no comparison.” A “comparison” is when you look at two different things and say what they have in common, how they are alike, and how they are different. The expression, however, “there’s no comparison,” means that there is not even a question about what you are talking about, it’s obvious that one is better than the other. He says, “These new TVs have a much better resolution.” “Resolution,” when we’re talking about a television, refers to how detailed the images are on the screen, how easily you can see the smaller details in the picture. Byung says, “Just look at the brightness and the contrast!” “Brightness” refers to how much light comes from the electronic screen; it could be something on your computer screen, it could be from your television screen. Here we’re talking, of course, about televisions. “Contrast” is normally how



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different two things are from each other; in this case, the dark from the light. Byung says that these new televisions have, apparently, a very different kind of brightness and contrast, something that is better. He says, “Our old TV looks washed out by comparison.” “Washed out” here means without bright colors. We might say it’s a little dull or a little faded; it’s not easy to see, it doesn’t have bright colors.

Nelly says, “And listen to that sound quality.” The “sound quality” refers to, of course, what you can hear coming from the television. She says, “It’s like being in a movie theater with surround sound.” “To surround” means to be on all sides of something. In many modern movie theaters there are “speakers,” things that are used to project the sound so that you can hear it – there are speakers all around the theater on the sides, not just on the front. So, you are surrounded by the sound. That’s what Nelly is referring to; she says, “It’s like being in a movie theater with surround sound.”

Byung says, “Yeah, it’s time we moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” “It’s time” means that we have been late doing this, we should do it right now. What they should do is move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He means that we should now do things that people do now rather than the way they did things 10 or 15 years ago. A “century” is a 100-year period. We talk about the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that’s the century we are in right now.

Nelly says, “According to what I’ve read, with a viewing distance of 10 feet, we should look for a screen size of about 40 inches.” The “viewing distance” is how far you are sitting away from the television. So, a viewing distance of 10 feet would mean that you are 10 feet, about 3 meters roughly, from the television set, or the TV. Nelly says that they should look for a screen size of about 40 inches. The “screen” is the thing that you see the images of the television on; the “screen size” would be how large or how small it is. Normally, televisions in the United States are measured by their “diameter,” so that would be a line that connects the top right corner, for example, to the bottom left corner. That’s the measurement that you use. She says it should be about 40 inches for those who are sitting 10 feet from their TV.

Byung wants something bigger; Byung says, “I was thinking more like a 60-inch screen,” one that is considerably bigger. Nelly says, “A 60-inch TV?! That would take up the entire living room wall.” “To take up” is a phrasal verb that here means to occupy, to use a certain amount of space or possibly time. Here we’re talking about the space, how much space does the TV take up on your wall. Or, “My girlfriend keeps calling me. She’s taking up all of my time.” She’s occupying all of my time. Nelly thinks that a 60-inch TV would take up the entire living room



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wall. The “living room” would be the main room where you would be watching television, usually the largest room in a house – or one of the largest.

Byung says, “That’s exactly what I had in mind!” “To have in mind” means to be thinking about or to want. “What do you have in mind for dinner?” “Hmm, I was thinking of maybe going to a Japanese restaurant tonight.” That’s what I have in mind. Byung says that he wants to take up the entire living room wall; that’s exactly, he says, what he had in mind.

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

[start of dialogue]

Byung: This is what I’m talking about! It’s time to upgrade to a big-screen TV and this is the perfect place to buy one.

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Byung: Yeah, it’s time we moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Nelly: According to what I’ve read, with a viewing distance of 10 feet, we should look for a screen size of about 40 inches.

Byung: I was thinking more like a 60-inch screen.

Nelly: A 60-inch TV?! That would take up the entire living room wall.

Byung: That’s exactly what I had in mind!

[end of dialogue]

There’s no comparison with our scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse. We think she’s the best scriptwriter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century!





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

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