



## ESL Podcast 450 – Getting a Bad Reputation

### GLOSSARY

**skimpy** – not enough of something, especially clothes; clothes that do not cover very much of one's body, letting other people see a lot of one's skin

\* He didn't want to wear the swimming trunks his wife bought him because he said they were too skimpy.

**to leer** – to look at someone in an unpleasant, sexual way

\* Luca became very angry when he noticed that other men were leering at his sister.

**nice girl** – a young, unmarried woman who does everything right, doesn't break the rules, and doesn't go out with a lot of men

\* His mother always asks him, "Why can't you date a nice girl like Kass?"

**reputation** – the way that other people think about someone, especially if they think about a woman in a negative way because she is too sexual

\* Amanda is getting a reputation because she's dating too many boys at the same time.

**easy** – a woman who has sex with men soon after she meets them; a woman who has many sexual partners

\* Her mother told her to never have sex until she's married, or else men will think she's too easy.

**to jump to the wrong conclusions** – to quickly form an incorrect opinion; to decide what one thinks about something so quickly that one has the wrong idea

\* When you came to work late on your first day, I thought you were one of those people who are always late, but I must have jumped to the wrong conclusion, because you haven't been late at all.

**promiscuous** – having sex with many different people; having many sexual partners

\* Soldiers serving overseas have a reputation for being promiscuous.

**based on (something)** – relying on something; with information related to something; with information about something

\* We chose a price for our home based on how much other homes in the area were selling for.



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**to boast** – to brag; to talk about something that one has done or something good that has happened to oneself so that other people will be envious

\* Ulysses spent most of the party boasting about how much money he makes in his job.

**conquest** – win; someone whom one has had a sexual relationship with

\* A gentleman never talks about his conquests.

**credibility** – believability; deserving to be trusted or believed in

\* Reynolds lost a lot of credibility when his boss found out that he had lied about how many sales he'd made in March.

**rumor** – information that people tell to each other, often about other people's secrets, and often not true

\* Did you hear the rumor that Jeff played the character Chewbacca in Star Wars?

**to go ballistic** – to get very angry or upset very quickly and unexpectedly

\* The cashier went ballistic when I gave him a \$50 bill and he didn't have change.

**catty** – someone who says mean or bad things about other people when they are not near

\* Magdalena is too catty, always saying bad things about her friends when they're not with her.



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### COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How might people jump to the wrong conclusions about Kim?
  - a) They might think she isn't very smart.
  - b) They might think she sleeps with many men.
  - c) They might think she doesn't dress well.
2. What does Lance mean when he says, "don't go ballistic on me"?
  - a) He doesn't want Paulina to make jokes about him.
  - b) He doesn't want Paulina to tell Kim what he said.
  - c) He doesn't want Paulina to be angry at him.

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### WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

#### **easy**

The word "easy," in this podcast, means a woman who has sexual relationships with men soon after she meets them: "Many people think that Raquel is easy, but the truth is that she's never had sex." The word "easy" also means simple or not difficult: "I did the math assignment in just five minutes because it was really easy." The phrase "as easy as apple pie" is used to talk about things that are very easy: "Using the microwave is as easy as apple pie." The phrase "to take it easy" means to relax: "You've had a long week, so let's take it easy this weekend, staying at home to sleep, read, and watch movies." The same phrase can also mean to calm down and become less angry or upset: "Take it easy! There's no need to be so angry."

#### **to go ballistic**

In this podcast, the phrase "to go ballistic" means to get very angry or upset very quickly and unexpectedly: "Mikhail's mom went ballistic when he broke her favorite vase." "Ballistics" is the study of how things like bullets and bombs move through the air: "Bi Hong is studying ballistics in the Army." A "ballistic missile" is a powerful bomb that can travel high up in the air over very long distances and then explode or blow up when it touches the ground or a building: "How often does the army send ballistic missiles into that area?" Finally, when talking about exercising, "ballistic stretching" is a way of moving one's body to warm up the muscles by bouncing, making the same movements repeatedly: "Trent does ballistic stretching for five minutes before he starts running."



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### CULTURE NOTE

Many people have a bad reputation, not only “socially” (connected with friends), but also “professionally” (connected with work). People can have a bad reputation for being “selfish” (not sharing with others), mean, “thoughtless” (inconsiderate, accidentally hurting other people’s feelings), dirty, or “lazy” (not wanting to do work). It’s easy to get a bad reputation, but difficult to “fix” (correct) it.

Some experts have advice about how to fix a bad reputation. They say that if you “realize” (find out and begin to understand) that you have a bad reputation, the first thing that can be done is to “determine” (find out) whether it is “justified” (fair and rational). Has your “behavior” (the things one does) created the bad reputation, or are people saying untrue things about you? Ask a friend or co-worker to help you understand whether your reputation is justified.

If the bad reputation is justified, you may want to try to fix it. First, try to identify the behaviors that you want to change and begin making those changes each and every day. The next step is to “apologize” (say that one is sorry) to the people who have been hurt by your behavior. If you have a reputation for being lazy, apologize to your co-workers who have had to work harder because you weren’t doing your part of the work. Then tell your co-workers that you’re trying to change and ask them for their “support” (help).

If the bad reputation is “unjustified” (not fair; irrational), then it’s important to learn why you have that reputation. Has someone been “gossiping” (saying things that are not true about a person when he or she isn’t near) about you? If so, speak with that person and calmly discuss it. Once you have “confronted” (spoken directly with) the gossip, he or she will probably stop saying those things and your reputation should “improve” (get better).

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



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 450: Getting a Bad Reputation.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast number 450. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. Go there to download a Learning Guide for this episode that contains information to help you improve your English even faster.

This episode is called "Getting a Bad Reputation." It's a dialogue between Lance and Paulina talking about a woman and her "reputation," or what other people think of her. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Lance: Did you see Kim at the party last Saturday?

Paulina: Yeah, I saw her. Why?

Lance: She was wearing a skimpy dress and all of the men were leering at her all night. I used to think she was a nice girl. Isn't she worried that she'll get a reputation?

Paulina: A reputation for what?

Lance: For being...you know.

Paulina: No, I don't know.

Lance: For being easy! It doesn't take much for people to jump to the wrong conclusions when a woman is dressed like that.

Paulina: So based on one dress she wore to a party, you're ready to consider her promiscuous.

Lance: No, not just based on that. The guys at the party were talking and one of them said he used to date her, and he said...



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Paulina: Now you're listening to some sleazy guy at a party boasting about his conquest. The question is, why are you so ready to give credibility to rumors like that?

Lance: Whoa, don't go ballistic on me. I was only telling you what I heard. I thought you might be interested.

Paulina: Well, you thought wrong. I used to think that women were catty, but you men are much, much worse!

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Lance saying to Paulina, "Did you see Kim at the party last Saturday?" Paulina said, "Yeah, I saw her. Why?" Lance says, "She was wearing a skimpy dress." "Skimpy" (skimpy) usually means that you are wearing clothing that does not cover very much of your body; letting other people see a lot of your skin. This is often a term used to describe women's clothing that does not cover up a great deal of the body. For example, you could say that a dress was skimpy or that an outfit (a set of clothing) was skimpy. Usually we use this word when the amount of clothing that the person is wearing isn't appropriate for the occasion. So if you go to a formal dinner and you wear, for example, a bikini top, if you're a man that's a little strange; if you're a woman that would probably be considered a little skimpy, not enough clothing.

Lance says that Kim was wearing a skimpy dress and all of the men were leering at her. To "leer" (leer) means to look at someone in a sexual way. It's a negative term to describe the way a man might look at a woman, for example; it's not something that a woman would like. She may say, "Stop leering at me" – stop looking at me in a sexual way.

Lance said, "I used to think she was a nice girl." Here, "nice girl" would refer to a young, unmarried woman who does everything right, who doesn't date a lot of men. Lance said, "Isn't she worried that she'll get a reputation?" "Reputation" is a general term to refer to how people think of you – what people think of you. However, if someone says, "he has a reputation," usually they mean he or she has a bad reputation. For a woman to have a reputation is to have people think that you are sexually active with many different men, for example, or that you are too sexual.

Paulina says, "A reputation for what?" Lance says, "For being...you know." Paulina says, "No, I don't know." Lance doesn't want to say it directly. Finally he says, "For being easy!" "Easy" is a term used to describe a woman who has sex



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with other men usually soon after she meets them, a woman who may have many sexual partners. Once again, it's usually a negative or insulting term. The word "easy" has several meanings in English; take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Lance says, "It doesn't take much for people to jump to the wrong conclusions when a woman is dressed like that." The expression "to jump to the wrong conclusions" means to decide something quickly without necessarily thinking it through, without looking at all of the evidence, to form a quick and often incorrect opinion about something. Just looking at someone and how they are dressed and deciding what that person is like may be jumping to the wrong conclusion, you are reasoning incorrectly.

Paulina says, "So based on (or because of) one dress she wore to a party, you're ready to consider her (Kim) promiscuous." "Promiscuous" is similar to "easy," it's someone who has sexual relations with many different people. Lance says, "No, not just based on that," that is, not just with that information or because of that information. Lance says, "The guys at the party were talking and one of them said he used to date her, and he said..." Paulina interrupts and says, "Now you're listening to some sleazy guy at a party boasting about his conquest." To describe someone as "sleazy" means that you are saying that person is immoral or unethical, someone who is not very nice. It's a very negative way to describe someone.

Paulina says that Lance is listening to some sleazy guy at a party boasting about his conquest. To "boast" (boast) means to talk about something that you have done so that other people will be envious of you or will think highly of you. To boast is normally not a good thing, to go around and tell everyone how good you are, how great you are. Another word for "to boast" is "to brag" (brag). So, Paulina is saying that this person – this man, this sleazy guy, was boasting about his conquest. To have a "conquest" means to win, to have some victory. Here, it refers to having a sexual relationship another person. If a man talks about his conquests, he may be talking about women that he has had sexual relations with. Paulina says, "The question is, why are you so ready to give credibility to rumors like that?" "Credibility" means deserving to be trusted or to be believed in, believability. If someone lies a lot, you could say that person doesn't have very much credibility; when they speak no one believes them. "Rumors" are information that people tell each other usually about some secret, and often these are things that are not true.

So, Lance is giving credibility – believing in rumors that he heard at this party. Lance says, "Whoa (meaning "wait a minute"), don't go ballistic on me." The



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expression “to go ballistic” (ballistic) means to get very angry, to get very mad at someone very quickly, and perhaps unexpectedly. The person wasn’t expecting you to get so angry so quickly. Lance says, “I was only telling you what I heard. I thought you might be interested.” Paulina says, “Well, you thought wrong.” That’s a common expression. When someone says, “Well, I thought that (something something)” (that is, they are thinking something that the other person knows is wrong), the other person may say, “You thought wrong,” meaning you are incorrect. It’s not a nice way to express your opinion, but it is a very direct way. Paulina says, “You thought wrong. I used to think that women were catty, but you men are much, much worse!” To be “catty” (catty) means to say that someone else is mean or to say bad things about someone when they are not present (when they are not with you).

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

[start of dialogue]

Lance: Did you see Kim at the party last Saturday?

Paulina: Yeah, I saw her. Why?

Lance: She was wearing a skimpy dress and all of the men were leering at her all night. I used to think she was a nice girl. Isn’t she worried that she’ll get a reputation?

Paulina: A reputation for what?

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Paulina: Well, you thought wrong. I used to think that women were catty, but you men are much, much worse!

[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by someone with complete credibility, Dr. Lucy Tse.

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

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