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## TOPICS

American Cities: Albuquerque; Survivor Reality TV Show; yet; differentiation versus distinction; so near and yet so far

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## GLOSSARY

**desert** – an area with a very hot and dry climate that receives very little rain throughout the year

\* Aren't you afraid to camp in the dessert in the middle of the summer, with so little water and far away from any town?

**to settle** – to move to a place to live; to make a place one's permanent home

\* When I was young, my family moved from city to city, until we settled in St. Louis when I was 13 years old.

**to occupy** – to live or to have one's business in a place; to have people or animals already living in a place

\* Janis couldn't find a parking space at the shopping mall the day before Christmas. Every parking space was occupied!

**Old West** – a time period in the western United States when there were few laws about how people should behave

\* Nearly every man owned and carried a gun for his own protection in the Old West.

**outlaw** – a person who often broke the law and was difficult to catch, especially in the Old West

\* The townspeople wanted the outlaws caught and made to leave town.

**folklore** – popular stories and songs that are part of a culture, developed and passed down over many, many years

\* Part of the folklore of this state is that there are ghosts in the hills.

**hot-air balloon** – a very large, colorful cloth balloon that is filled with hot air and that has a large basket tied underneath it, so that people can ride in it as it flies through the sky



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\* For her birthday, Demitri took his wife on a hot-air balloon ride over the city and they could see as far as the river.

**reality television** – television shows that record the words and actions of real people instead of actors

\* A lot of people now watch reality television to see how other people from different backgrounds and other parts of the country live.

**stranger** – a person whom one does not know

\* My mother always told me not to speak to or to take candy from strangers.

**shelter** – a place to live that provides protection from the weather

\* Jacky and Lance were lucky to find shelter from the rain until the storm passed.

**reward** – prize; something given in recognition of one's achievement or effort

\* As a reward for cleaning the backyard all by himself, Dan gave his son a new bicycle.

**alliance** – an agreement among two or more people to help each other and/or to gain an advantage over other people

\* Our alliance with the other three large companies in this area give us a business advantage.

**yet** – but; in spite of; besides

\* Sally has had a lot of difficulties in her life. Yet, I believe she will achieve her goals.

**differentiation** – a point of difference; the process of showing or seeing the difference between two people, places, or things

\* What are the main areas of differentiation between these two similar business plans?

**distinction** – a point of difference; a quality that makes something seem different; the process of showing or seeing the difference between two people, places, or things

\* In high school, there is a big distinction between the freshman and senior students.

**so near and yet so far** – a phrase used to mean that one has almost achieved one's goal, but what one must still do to achieve it is very difficult or impossible



\* Luis wants to weigh less than 180 pounds and has been losing weight for a year, but he can't seem to lose that final 10 pounds. His goal is so near and yet so far.

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## **WHAT INSIDERS KNOW**

### **Amusement Rides Based on TV Shows**

In this English Cafe, we talked about the popular TV show Survivor. If you are a “fan” (someone who likes something very much), your Survivor experience does not need to end with the TV show. You can actually go on an amusement ride based on the show.

An “amusement ride” is a large machine that people sit in or stand on as it moves very quickly, usually in unexpected directions, to scare, to excite, and to entertain them. We find amusement rides most often in “amusement parks,” places with many forms of entertainment and fun things to do that are all related to some general idea.

In Santa Clara, California, you'll find an amusement park called California's Great America. In 2006, a new amusement ride “debuted” (was shown or revealed for the first time) called “Survivor: The Ride!” The “riders” (people who go on an amusement ride) are separated into four groups or tribes. Each tribe participates in “chants” (words said over and over again) and “rituals” (things that all members of a group do in the same way). They also “spray water” on the other tribes, meaning that they use things they hold in their hands to cause water to go onto the other tribe members to get them wet. At the end of the ride, the riders “encounter” (come to; meet) a “fireball” (a ball that looks like it is made of fire) and hot air sprays onto the riders.

“Survivor: The Ride!” is not the only amusement ride based on a TV show. If you like The Simpsons TV show, Universal Studios in both Hollywood and Florida have rides based on the show. If you're a fan of the old TV show The Twilight Zone, you can visit Disney's California Adventure Park to go in the “drop tower,” which allows riders to experience “weightlessness,” or the feeling of floating in space and not being pulled by “gravity” (the force that keeps people and things on the ground).



## **COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT**

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 263.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 263. 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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On this Café, we're going to continue our series on American cities, focusing on the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico. We're also going to talk about a popular television show, a reality show called Survivor. And, as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

This Café begins with a continuation of our series on American cities. Today we're going to talk about Albuquerque (Albuquerque), which is the largest city in the state of New Mexico. New Mexico is located in the southwestern United States, just west of Texas, east of Arizona, and north of Mexico.

Albuquerque is located in a "desert," a very hot, dry area. It's in the Chihuahuan Desert. This particular desert has many mountains around it, which make up what are called the Sandia Mountain Range. The Rio Grande River also goes through Albuquerque on its way to Texas.

Albuquerque was originally "settled" by the Spanish in 1706, meaning that the Spanish explorers moved there in that year. But the area had been "occupied" or lived in for hundreds of years before that by the Native American "tribes" or groups of people in the area. These included the Navajo, Apache, and Ute Indians. Many "artifacts," things that people make and leave behind after they die, can still found in around Albuquerque today that come from the original Indian or Native American or American Indian tribes that were in this area before the Spanish arrived.

The Spaniards – people from Spain are called Spaniards in English – occupied Albuquerque beginning in 1706, and in 1821, about 100 years plus later, Mexico



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won its independence from Spain and the town of Albuquerque became part of Mexico. During the 1840s, about 20 years after that, there was the Mexican-American war in which Mexico lost part of its territory to the United States, and so Albuquerque became a U.S. city.

The United States government wanted people to move to these new territories that they had gained from Mexico and so they gave people “incentives,” that is gifts, money – things that make you want to do something are called incentives. They gave people incentives to come and live in places like Albuquerque. They gave them land, sometimes they gave them other things, but mostly they gave them land if they would come and live there. Unfortunately for Albuquerque, there were a lot of criminals who also decided to take advantage of this offer. The result is what we sometimes called in the U.S. the Wild West, or the Old West, which refers to a time when there wasn’t a lot of law enforcement in this part of the U.S. territories. The western United States, because there were so few people there, did not have the same number of police and military to control things like crime, so these criminals that moved to the Old West often became what we would call outlaws. An “outlaw” (outlaw) is someone who would be a criminal – who would break the law, often by killing people. Albuquerque was visited by a lot of these outlaws. Billy the Kid, in particular, spent time in Albuquerque. He’s probably the most well known outlaw from that time; he was responsible for many shootings and robberies. Billy the Kid, he was called. Outlaws should not be confused with in-laws (in-laws); your “in-laws” are, for example, the mother of your wife, the father of your husband, the brother of your wife. The relatives of the person you are married to is what we call an in-law. I think some of my in-laws are outlaws too, but not sure. I’m kind of afraid to ask, to be honest! Outlaws is a term that we typically use now to describe criminals from this part of American history.

The wild reputation of the Old West or Wild West became part of American folklore. “Folklore” (folklore) are the popular stories and songs that become part of the culture. There were hundreds of songs and later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century many movies made about the Wild West. Those movies became known as “Westerns,” and you will see typically in a Western a lot of “cowboys,” people who work on ranches and ride horses, and Indians, or what we more commonly call today Native Americans or American Indians. But when someone talks about movies having cowboys and Indians, they’re talking about these Westerns either movies or they could be books. There have been several authors that have written hundreds of books about this period of time.



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Around the turn of the century, that is the year 1900, Albuquerque became a little more sophisticated town. It became a little safer, more predictable place to live. In 1912, New Mexico became the 47<sup>th</sup> state to join the United States. The state just west of New Mexico, Arizona, also went from being a territory to a state in 1912, the 48<sup>th</sup> state. It's important to remember that places became states – territories became states not necessarily in geographical order, from east to west. Generally that's true but there are exceptions. In the case of California, as soon as gold was discovered in California thousands of people moved here and it was made a state in 1850, California being on the west coast of the U.S. Compare that to Minnesota, which did not become a state until 1859, and as we've mentioned, Arizona and New Mexico, which didn't become states until 1912.

By the mid-1920s, cars were becoming more and more common in the U.S., and so states started to build “highways,” roads where these cars could travel. One of those highways was called Highway 66, more commonly known as Route (route) 66 (route, here, is the same as a highway). Route 66 connected the city of Chicago, which is in the Midwest part of the U.S., to the city of Los Angeles, on the west coast of California. So the highway went all the way halfway through the country, and it passed through, or it went through many of the cities in between Chicago and Los Angeles including Albuquerque. In fact, there was a famous song called Route 66 that many different groups have sung: *Just get your kicks on route 66*. “To get your kicks” means to have fun. Route 66 has its own folklore – its own history that people identify with the western United States.

Today, Albuquerque is what we would call a medium-sized “metropolis” or metropolitan area – city. There are about 900,000 inhabitants in Albuquerque. “Inhabitants” are people who live in a certain area. In 2007, Albuquerque was considered one of the fastest-growing cities; people were moving there for jobs. I'm not sure if it is still growing three years later with the economy being as it is, at least when this episode was recorded in 2010. However, Albuquerque is a place where the weather is certainly better during the wintertime; it's, after all, in a desert and so it's much warmer in the winter. The other side of that story is that it is also much, much hotter in the summer, just like the cities in Arizona. So if you're going to visit Albuquerque, winter is an excellent time to do so.

Albuquerque is known for a couple of things. If you ask people what Albuquerque is famous for, many people would say the fact that it's so difficult to spell, but it's actually famous for a couple of things. One, it has a large hot-air balloon festival. A “hot-air balloon” is a large balloon that is filled with air and



rises above the earth. This hot air causes the balloon to go up. The balloon is a big, round ball, basically, and it goes up into the air. If you go to the hot-air balloon festival you will see more than 700 hot-air balloons that go up into the sky. It's very impressive. I have never seen it myself, but I have seen pictures of it. The "festival," or celebration, is held in the fall, usually during the first few weeks of October. So that's a good time, after the summer, to visit Albuquerque.

There's a section of Albuquerque called Old Town Albuquerque. This is the oldest part of the city where you can still see some original architecture or buildings. Albuquerque and New Mexico are also known in the U.S. for being places where there are science laboratories. The Sandia National Laboratory, which is right outside of the city of Albuquerque, was one of the most important places especially during the 1940s. That's where the nuclear bomb was developed in something called the Manhattan Project. These laboratories are still around. They are "funded," or get their money from the federal government, and they continue to do scientific research.

I've been to Albuquerque a couple of times for conferences, where I would go and give a speech to a group of people. I had not really gone there as a tourist, so perhaps someday I will. If I do, I will let you know – I will tell you.

Our next topic is a popular television show in the U.S., but also now in other countries, called Survivor. Survivor is one of the first what were called "reality television" shows. "Reality" (reality) refers to what is real. A reality TV show is one where you don't have actors and actresses; you have real people who are observed and filmed, usually over a period of several days or weeks. And they take all of this filming and they put it together into a one-hour show. Typically reality shows have some sort of competition, and someone is trying to win this competition. Reality TV is supposed to be what happens in real life, in fact it really is not. Many of the people on these reality shows people, although they say they are just normal people with normal jobs, many of them are actors, many of them are people for looking to become famous, so it's not really reality even though they say that. Reality television, however, is very popular, and Survivor was, as I said, one of the first shows to begin with this particular approach.

Survivor began in the year 2000 in the U.S., although it was actually based on a television show from Sweden. Survivor was the first "highly-rated," or first popular reality TV show. It is now the second longest running reality show, meaning it is still going on. Of course, they have different people every year in the show. The longest running reality show was one on the television channel





Music Television, really known as MTV, and that would be their show called The Real World, which again, isn't really real. People on the show are manipulated: given alcohol and drugs, told things so that they will get angry or emotional. It's more like watching a group of college students who get drunk and want to show how funny they are or how stupid they are – most of them are pretty stupid, I have to say! As you can tell, meaning as you notice, I just love these shows!

Anyway, Survivor began with a group of 20 people who do not know each other; they were 20 strangers. A "stranger" is someone you don't know. The idea is that you put these strangers in a "remote" (remote) – a faraway place, an isolated place where there is nobody else around. The group, then, is divided into smaller groups, which on the show they call tribes. Normally, a tribe is associated with the American Indian community. The purpose of these shows – this particular show, Survivor, is for people to have to find their own food, their own water to be able to survive without any outside help. Although, there are of course cameras all over the place filming, so again, it's not really isolated.

Survivor has the members of these tribes build their own shelter. "Shelter" (shelter) is a place where you live: a house, a tent. There are, as I mentioned before, certain contests during the show, what they called "challenges," and if you win the contest – the game; the challenge – you get a "reward," perhaps something nice from the outside world, maybe a better place to live, and so forth.

Each week, the members of this group – these tribes – vote for someone to leave. They vote for the person they think should leave the show. They call this "voting someone off the island," meaning they would have to leave the island since many of these Survivor shows have been made on islands. So, a part of the game is making friends with other people so that they won't vote you off the island. When you have a relationship with other people or other groups, we sometimes call these in international politics or in national politics "alliances." An "alliance" is an agreement between two groups of people to help each other. The United States and Western Europe had an alliance, and many other countries have alliances with other countries to protect themselves. At least that's the idea. Well, there are alliances on this show.

I mention that they have contests or games on these shows. One of the rewards is immunity. "Immunity" (immunity) usually refers to things in your body that help you defend against getting sick or disease. But on these reality shows, immunity means that you cannot be voted off the island or off the show. If you win the contest, you are safe, at least for one week. So of course, every week someone





leaves; the group gets smaller and smaller, and eventually there are fewer people to make decisions. People, then, continue to get voted off the island, and eventually the last person, the one to win, is called the Sole Survivor, and that person wins a million dollars. They actually bring back some of the people who were voted off to decide who the Sole Survivor is. Obviously, if there are just two people, each person would vote for the other one to leave.

That's the show Survivor. I have never watched an entire one-hour show – and probably won't! But, it is very popular here in the U.S., and perhaps in your country too – if you are so unfortunate!

Now let's answer a few of your questions.

Alaa (Alaa) From Libya wants to know how we use the word “yet” (yet) at the beginning of a sentence. “Yet” is very similar to the word “but”; it's also similar in meaning to “in spite of (something).” For example: “Nobody likes Joe, yet he doesn't seem to mind (he doesn't seem to care).” “We didn't want to stay, yet leaving seemed impossible.” In both of those cases, you can put the word “but” in for “yet” and it means the same thing.

There are some books that may tell you that “yet” should not begin a sentence. There are some people think the word “but” should not begin a sentence, because these are what are called conjunctions; they're supposed to join two parts of a sentence. However, almost no one pays attention to this rule. Not just informally but I would say also formally you will find lots of writers who begin a sentence with the word “yet” or the word “but,” so that something you can pretty much forget about.

“Yet” has a couple of other meanings. “Yet” can also mean up until now or up until a certain point in the past or the future. For example, I'm making a cake and I tell you the cake is not ready yet. I've been working on it for a half an hour, but it is still not ready.

Becky (Becky), originally from China, now living in Seattle, wants to know the difference between the words “differentiation” and “distinguish.” “Differentiation” is a noun that comes from the verb “to differentiate,” which means to be able to see differences between two or more people, places, or things. It could also mean to create a difference between two or more people, places, and things. What differentiates a dog from a cat? Well, both of them have mouths, both of them have ears, both of them are sort of annoying – you don't really like them



usually, well I don't! But, you would differentiate them by the sounds they make for example. Or...I really don't know, I don't like dogs and cats. I'm not sure why I would want to differentiate them. Let me give you a different example. How would you differentiate Minnesota from California? Well, it's colder in Minnesota during the winter; it's hotter in California. That's one way of differentiating states is by their average temperature.

"Distinction" comes from the verb "to distinguish." It means really the same thing: you are trying to figure out what differences exist between two things.

"Differentiation" and "distinction" are merely the nouns that come from these verbs. "Differentiation," then, is the difference or the process of seeing the difference between two things. "Distinction" is also the difference; it can also mean the quality of something that makes it different from something else.

I should add that "distinction" can also mean someone who has done a very good job at something, someone who has achieved something good or great and often is recognized by others for this good achievement. "The governor served in office with distinction," meaning he or she did a very good job – which doesn't happen very often!

Our final question comes from Bakhtiar (Bakhtiar) in the country of Kurdistan. The question has to do with a common expression, "so near and yet so far." "So near and yet so far" is a phrase we use when you have almost achieved something but you still haven't completely done it – you still haven't completely finished, often because it's very difficult or perhaps even impossible. "I'm almost finished writing this book, but the last chapter is the hardest. I'm so near and yet so far." "Dan is working in the same office as Monica, but now Monica has a boyfriend. He's so near and yet so far." He's close, but he can't quite complete what he wants to do. He's near his goal, but because of this difficult situation he's very far from the goal because she already has a boyfriend. But you know what Dan? Someday Monica may not have that boyfriend, so you just keep waiting!

We don't want you to keep waiting if you have a question, email us at [eslpod@eslpod.com](mailto:eslpod@eslpod.com). We don't have time to answer all of your questions, and, quite honestly, it does take a while to get to your question, but we'll do our best here on the Café.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on the English Café.



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