



TOPICS

American Cities (Territories): American Samoa; how to become a pilot in the U.S.; objective versus subjective, to be flanked by, power versus empowerment; to delegate versus to defer

GLOSSARY

territory – land that belongs to the United States but is not part of a state

* Guam is a U.S. territory with over 175,000 residents.

southern hemisphere – the land on the planet that is below the equator (the imaginary line half way between the most northern and southern points on Earth)

* What season is it in the southern hemisphere when it's summer here?

indigenous – original people and things in a place; people or things that are native to a place; people who live in a place before other people arrive

* This museum has a large collection of art made by the indigenous people of this area.

to occupy – to take control of a place; for a military or government to take control of an area

* When our neighboring country occupied this city 50 years ago, there was a lot of violence.

remote – far away from other places; far from other people or cities

* Jan and Dawn moved to a house in the remote woods of Alabama and seldom traveled outside of the area.

cannery – business where fish is processed and put into cans to be sold as food

* After working in a cannery for a year, I can't eat any fish out of a can!

solo – alone; without anyone else

* I like to dance, but I can't do it solo. Will you dance with me?



ENGLISH CAFÉ – 181

maneuvers – doing the basic things of an activity; performing the basic requirements of an activity

* The racecar driver's fantastic maneuvers on the racecourse made his fans cheer.

endorsement – the act of giving someone public approval and support

* Which candidate for mayor will get your endorsement?

flying hours – the hours that a person flies an airplane

* How many flying hours do we need to get our pilot's license?

commercial pilot – a person who is paid to fly airplanes for large airline companies

* After learning to fly in the military, Ben took a job as a commercial pilot for an international airline.

military – the organizations and people who fight for a country in the army, navy, air force, and other organizations

* Leslie joined the military when she finished high school, just like her father had done.

objective – not influenced by personal opinion or feelings; fact

* We want you all to give us your objective evaluation of our new business plan.

subjective – based on or influenced by personal opinion, tastes, or feelings; opinion

* Which color is the prettiest is a subjective question.

to be flanked by – to have someone (or something) to the left and right of something/someone; to have something on either side of someone/something

* Mike was flanked by his best friends when he walked onto the playground to fight the class bully.

power – having the ability to do something or to act in a particular way; having the authority to do something

* We don't have the power to give you a refund. You'll need to speak with the manager.

empowerment – giving someone else power or authority to do something

* The aim of this program is the empowerment of girls to study math and science.



ENGLISH CAFÉ – 181

to delegate – to give someone else work to do, usually someone who works for you

* My boss delegated all of the phone calls for our project to me.

to defer – to delay; to do at a later time

* My son is going to defer his decision on which college to go to until next month, when his girlfriend will make her decision.



WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

Classic Comedy: Airplane!

A “spoof” is something that “imitates” or copies something else in a funny, humorous way. In other words, a spoof usually takes something that is serious and makes a funny version of it. That’s what the makers of the 1980 classic comedy movie Airplane! did. Airplane! was a spoof of the disaster movies that were very popular in the 1970s. These “disaster movies” involved a sudden and serious event or accident that causes a lot of damage or hurts a lot of people. These could be “man-made” disasters that are started by people or they could be “natural disasters,” such as major fires or “earthquakes” (when the ground moves suddenly and sharply).

The plot or story of Airplane! follows the typical disaster movie. An airplane full of passengers “take off” (begin the flight) and while the airplane is in the air, the “flight crew,” the pilot and co-pilot, become ill. They have “food poisoning” (having eaten food that is bad and that causes illness) and cannot finish the flight. Without pilots, the passengers have no hope of “landing” (arriving on the ground) safely.

Fortunately, there is a passenger on board who used to be a military pilot. Unfortunately, he was “traumatized” (hurt seriously emotionally) while flying in the war and he had not flown an airplane since that time and is afraid to do so. To make matters worse, the weather is bad, with a lot of rain, wind, and lightning, and his “ex-girlfriend” (former girlfriend) works as a “flight attendant” (workers who give service on an airplane) on board. Not only do silly and ridiculous things happen on the airplane, but the “air traffic controllers” (people who tell airplanes when and where to land) who talk him through the landing behave in strange and funny ways, too.

Airplane! was a major “box office” (ticket selling) success. The movie won many awards, including ones for its original writing. It is even listed as number 10 on the American Film Institute’s list of “100 Funniest Movies.” Perhaps most importantly, it influenced other filmmakers to make spoof movies and the “genre” (category) is “alive and well” (exists and active) today.



COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 181.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 181. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development – let's all say it together – in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at eslpod.com. Download this episode's Learning Guide, an 8- to 10-page guide we provide for all of our current episodes that gives you some additional help in improving your English. While you're there, you can also take a look at our ESL Podcast Store, including our new course Introduction to the United States, as well as our ESL Podcast Blog.

On this Café, we're going to continue our series on American cities, but we're actually going to talk about something that is a U.S. territory, called American Samoa. Then we'll talk about how to become a "pilot," a person who flies airplanes in the United States, what the typical American pilot does in his or her training. And as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

This Café begins by talking about an American "territory," or land that belongs to the United States but is not part of any one state – it is not a state or part of a state. The United States has several territories, including Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and others. Today, we're going to focus on a territory called American Samoa. American Samoa is in the South Pacific Ocean; it is a long, long way from the United States – the rest of the United States. It's about halfway between New Zealand and the state of Hawaii, which is also a long way from the mainland of the U.S. – from California. American Samoa is the only land that the United States owns or has in the southern hemisphere. The southern hemisphere is all of the land that is below the equator. The capital of American Samoa is Pago Pago, so I guess a true continuation of our series on American cities would just talk about Pago Pago, but we're going to talk about the entire area known as American Samoa. The capital of American Samoa can also be pronounced "Pango Pango."

For many years, American Samoa has had an "indigenous" population, people who lived there before Europeans came to the island. In the late 1800s – in the late 19th century, Germany and the United States "split," or divided the Samoan Island "chain," or group of islands, between themselves. Germany took part; the United States took the other part. In 1900 the United States actually began to



ENGLISH CAFÉ – 181

“occupy,” or take over the eastern islands. But very few Americans have gone to live in American Samoa; very few people have ever even visited American Samoa from the United States. Today almost 90 percent of the population on American Samoa is Samoan, those who were there before the white man arrived. Most of them speak both English and the local language, called Samoan.

American Samoa is very small. It’s a little bit less than, or just less than 77 square miles, which would be about 200 square kilometers, equal to the size of our nation’s capital, Washington, D.C. American Samoa has seven islands.

The number of people who live in American Samoa is rather small, about 65,000 people. In fact, there are many more Samoans who live outside of American Samoa and the other part of the Samoan Islands, the independent country of Samoa. If you combine together the number of some Samoans living in California, Hawaii and other cities, it is much more than the number who actually live in Samoa – in American Samoa.

It’s “relatively,” or comparatively easy for people born in American Samoa to move to the United States. People who are born there and in other U.S. territories are known as U.S. nationals. They are not exactly American citizens, but it does mean that they don’t have to pay U.S. income taxes, which is the money you have to pay depending on how much money make through your work. However, they cannot vote in U.S. presidential elections, either. But as U.S. nationals they can move to the United States and become U.S. citizens.

Because American Samoa is small and “remote,” or far away from other places, the islands have a somewhat limited economy. The biggest companies – the biggest employers are two tuna canneries. “Tuna” is a fish that you find in the ocean. A “cannery” is a place where you take the fish and you clean it or do whatever you need to do in order to put it in a can and sell it as food. A lot of money in American Samoa’s economy also comes from the U.S. national, or federal government. The U.S. government gives American Samoa a lot of money.

The government would like to strengthen, or make American Samoa’s economy stronger by “promoting,” or encouraging tourism, but unfortunately, there are often strong “hurricanes,” large wind storms over the ocean, that make this somewhat difficult. Nevertheless, American Samoa does have many beautiful mountains, beaches, and coral reefs. A “reef” (reef) is a structure under the



ENGLISH CAFÉ – 181

water, found in oceans where there are many fish and other animals. It's found mostly in warm oceans – in the tropical oceans. For that reason, many people travel to American Samoa even though there aren't a lot of fancy or expensive hotels there, because it is, I am told, a very beautiful place to visit.

The United States also created a national park on American Samoa. The park was created to, in part, protect the tropical “flora” (flora), or plants, as well as the “fauna” (fauna), or the animals. The expression “flora and fauna” refers to plants and animals. The National Park was also “formed,” or created to protect the traditional life and cultural traditions of the Samoans. The park doesn't have very many tourist facilities, but some people may want to go there so they can experience American Samoa as it used to be, and still is.

Now let's turn to our next topic, which is how you become a “pilot,” a person who flies airplanes. In the United States there is a national government agency called the Federal Aviation Administration, or FAA, that “regulates,” or makes laws and rules about who can fly and who cannot. The way to become a pilot “varies,” it is different depending on what you want to fly – how big of a plane or what kind of plane you want to fly. People who want to fly things like a hot air balloon would not need a pilot's license, but if you want to fly an actual plane, then you do.

Almost anyone can take flying lessons to start to learn how to fly. You don't need any special permission to take these classes, but you are not allowed to fly “solo,” or alone unless someone else who is a licensed pilot is with you. There is a flying instructor who will teach you how to fly. He or she will teach you basic “maneuvers,” how to do basic things in the airplane, like how to take off (how to leave the ground and go up in the air) and how to land (or return back down to the ground).

Once people learn these basic maneuvers, they usually want to fly solo (by themselves), but you still need to get what's called a student pilot's license first. To get this pilot's license, you need a medical certificate, a statement from a doctor saying that you are healthy enough to fly. You must be 16 years old. After you get the student pilot's license, then you need to get additional training – additional experience if you want to fly bigger or different kinds of planes, you would have to get what is called an “endorsement,” approval from the instructor to fly each kind of “aircraft,” or plane that you want to fly.

After flying solo for a certain number of hours, what we would call “flying hours,” you can then get something called a recreational pilot's license. “Recreational”



means for fun, not professional. In order to get this kind of license you have to pass a test – a written test, as well as a flying test.

Many people who get these licenses then decide they want to become “commercial pilots,” people who are paid to fly planes for large airline companies and others. Getting a commercial pilot license requires additional flying hours, another written exam, an oral test (or oral exam), and another flying test. Being a pilot is a very desirable career, meaning that many people want to become commercial pilots, but there are many more people with pilot licenses than there are jobs, so relatively few of the people who have pilot’s licenses in the U.S. actually work as commercial pilots.

My nephew, my brother’s son, is a commercial pilot. He works and also has his own flying school, so you can learn how to fly from him. I don’t plan on learning how to fly from him, but you might be interested; he’s back in Minnesota.

Getting a pilot’s license, a commercial pilot’s license especially, can be very expensive. You have to pay for a lot of flying lessons. On average, you need to fly between 60 and 70 hours to finish all of the training and to be ready to take the flying test to get your license. The lessons, books, and other fees (or amounts of money you have to pay) can cost anywhere between \$8,000 and \$10,000, depending on where you are learning to fly. This is, of course, a lot of money for most of us, but some people who are really interested in flying will pay for it.

One way to get a pilot’s license without spending very much money is to join the “military,” such as the American Air Force. The U.S. Air Force is the part of our military that is concerned with planes and flying. The military provides pilot training for free, and once your time the military has ended you can then go over and get a commercial pilot’s license. In fact, many of the pilots that you find on American airplanes were at one time members of the U.S. Air Force, or members of the military who had gotten their pilot’s licenses when they were in the military.

I, myself, have no interest in getting a pilot’s license. I am very good as a passenger, and I think that will be what I will remain for the rest my life!

Now let’s answer a few of your questions.

Our first question comes from Ebrahim (Ebrahim) in Iran. The question has to do with the differences between the words “objective” and “subjective.”



“Objective” (objective) means that you are not influenced by others’ opinions, you’re not influenced by your own feelings; you only look at the facts.

“Subjective” means that you are influenced by your personal opinions or tastes. Subjective tends to be just another word for opinion. If someone says, “This is very subjective,” they mean, well, it depends on who you are; everyone could have a different opinion about it. Objective means that everyone can see the same thing – everyone can agree on the same thing.

Traditionally, people say that science should be objective, that data (information; evidence) should be considered only, and not your own opinion. In normal conversation, someone who says something is subjective means everyone can have a different opinion. Someone who says that it is objective means that it is the fact; it is not influenced by opinions and feelings.

Tzu-Ling (Tzu-Ling), originally from Taiwan, now living in the United States, wants to know the meaning of the expression “to be flanked (flanked) by someone.” To be flanked by someone means that you have someone standing or sitting on the right of you and on the left of you. If you have someone or something on both sides of you, then you are flanked by those things. So, if I’m standing in the middle, and Julie is on my right and Huong is on my left, I am flanked by Julie and Huong.

The word “flank” has a couple of other meanings as well. A flank can be a part of an animal’s body. For example, you can talk about the flank of a cow. You can even buy meat that’s called flank steak; it comes from a certain part of the cow. Flank is also used as a noun to describe a group of soldiers in a particular position in a battle (when you are fighting). You can have a left flank and a right flank; a group of soldiers on your right, a group of soldiers on your left, and then you would have a group of soldiers in the middle. That would be another use of the word flank.

Bernard (Bernard) in the country of Haiti wants to know the difference between “empowerment” and “power.”

“Power” has to do with the ability to do something or the ability to act in a certain way. Someone could say, “I don’t have the power to spend this money,” they mean I don’t have the ability; I don’t have the authority to spend this money.



“Empowerment” is the act of giving someone power or authority; the verb is “to empower” (empower). If you say, “The president was empowered with the authority to declare war,” this would mean the president was given the ability – was given the power to do that particular thing.

Now, “power” has a couple of different meanings also, in addition to the one that we just gave. “Under the power of” means under the influence or under the control of someone: “Ed is under the power of his girlfriend and does whatever she tells him to do.” Poor Ed! There’s also a term “superpower,” which is used to describe a country that has a lot of power. The United States and Russia have been described as “superpowers,” large countries with a lot of military and economic power.

Yoshi (Yoshi) in Japan wants to know the difference between the verbs “to delegate” (delegate) and “to defer” (defer).

“To delegate” is a verb that you will often hear in business; it means to give someone else a job to do. Your boss, for example, may have five things she wants to get done, so she delegates four of them to you; says, “Here, you do these four things.” That’s to delegate, to give it to another person to do. We would all like to delegate all our work to someone else, so we can watch TV and listen to ESL Podcast!

“Defer” means to do something later: “I’m going to defer my decision on this.” I’m going to delay; I’m going to wait before I make a decision. The expression “to defer to (someone)” means to let somebody else make a decision. For example: “I defer to my wife when it comes to making decisions about what color to paint the house.” I defer to her knowledge; I let her make the decision. That is another meaning of “to defer to” when you are talking about a person. If you are talking about a decision or an action, then it means to do it later, to do it at a later period in time.

If you have a question for ESL Podcast, there’s no need to defer it! You can email us today. Our email is eslpod@eslpod.com. We don’t have time to answer everyone’s questions, but we’ll do the best we can and answer as many as we can here on the Café.

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



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ENGLISH CAFÉ – 181

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