

M Hello everyone and welcome to EnglishPod. My name is Marco

C My name is Catherine and today we have an upper intermediate level lesson, it's kind of bitter, it's a little bit sad but it's also kind of sweet.

M That's right. We have a lesson today all about getting divorced. So divorcing someone.

C Yeah. So this is what happens when two people's marriage ends, they decide they want to leave each other, they have a divorce. So let's take a listen to today's dialogue, and we'll be back in a moment.

Dialogue first time 0:30- 2:35

M All right, we're back. So now, why don't we take a look at six key words on "language takeaway".

Voice: Language takeaway

C Okay Marco, this first word is what we call an S..A..T.. word , that means it's very difficult, it's so hard that many high school students in America study it, before they get to college. **Acrimonious**. (Comment: on SAT word: [see this website](#), SAT (scholastic aptitude test)).

M So the sentence starts off by saying: let's not make this divorce anymore acrimonious then it already is.

C This divorce is very acrimonious, but let's not make it worse.

M Okay, so acrimonious would be ..

C bitter ..

M bitter, very complicated ..

C hard. So people are emotional about it, you know, people Joanne and Jeff are getting divorced and very angry at each other. So they're not .. they're not having a peaceful divorce. This is the opposite, it's .. it's very bitter, it's very angry.

M Can you say: this test is very acrimonious?

C No. Usually relationships are acrimonious. For example: Ever since they had that big fight, Jeff and Joan's relationship has been very acrimonious.

M Okay, awesome. So acrimonious, a very hard word there as you say, many people study it to pass exams, or to go in to college, so now you know. Now moving on, we have a very common legal term, when people are getting married, they want to sign some times a **prenup**.

C Yeah, you say it's common. You hear this a lot in movies and TV's.

M Yeah, with celebrities,

C Yeah, you read about celebrities. So basically a prenup is a.. is a short way of saying a prenuptial agreement. **Nuptial** means having to do with marriage.

M Right. So basically if you sign a prenup, you are agreeing to a certain conditions before you get married.

C That's right. It's a contract between future husband and future wife about what happens if they divorce. E.g.: I decided not to get a prenup with my fiancée, because I don't think we'll get divorced. But eh maybe he decided to get a prenup, because in case they divorce, he wants to keep his car.

M Right. So it usually happens a lot with celebrities as we say, because they have a lot of money, and if they get divorced then usually it can get complicated: how much money the spouse gets, etcetera, so maybe there're prenuptial agreements or prenups. Well be that, if they get divorced, she the wife make it maybe a million dollars, instead of hundred million dollars.

C Exactly. It's a way many people protect themselves financially, in case of divorce.

M Very good. Now moving on, another legal term and related to money, is an **alimony**.

C Okay, so let's look at the context of this word. Joanne is talking and she says: my lawyer tells me you've accepted our alimony proposal. Alimony, so this is probably to do with money right.

M Ahem. So eh she said that her lawyer has proposed an alimony, and that's usually a settlement, an amount of money that you agree on when you get divorced.

C Right. So this is exactly in a divorce, this is how much money one person will pay the other.

M That's right. So if two people are married, and when they get divorced, their alimony maybe the husband if he gets a lot of money, he will pay an alimony of 500.000 dollars.

C Right. And so this is different from property, which is the next thing. **Division of property**

M Okay, very good. So very complicated situations when you're getting divorced, prenups and alimony. But moving on, they were talking about **custody** as well, means that you talk about who will receive the car, the house, eh things like that. custody of maybe children, maybe custody of their eh.. of their pets.

C That's right. So you talked about alimony, this is money, property, which is things, but what about people and animals? This is called **custody**. I want custody. Custody means caring for something. Or looking after something. Eh you could say: the child is in the grandmother's custody.

M Okay, so in the care of the grandmother.

C That's right.

M So usually **odd??? 6:56** as well and people get divorced, somebody gets custody of the children.

C Right, so eh: he wants custody, but he doesn't have a job, so she will receive custody. You could say that. In this case they were talking about custody of pets, animals.

M Right, in this case it's animals. But eh it's actually true right. People when they get divorced they may ask the court for custody of their pets, **their dogs? 7:19**

C That's right. And sometimes custody is what makes a divorce extremely acrimonious.

M Yes, who gets to keep the children, who gets to keep the pets. Now moving on and a little bit away from legal terms, they were dividing up their property and say well I get to keep this, you get to keep that. And Joanne said: I'm keeping the **antique gramophone** as

my grandfather gave it to me.

C Oh, so who cares about pets and money, I want the gramophone. Right. So this is actually a word you don't hear very often anymore.

M It's an old thing and that is what antique means, right? Antique is old.

C Right, so antique -this is an adjective here, it can also be a noun, an antique table - an antique gramophone, is something that is very old. Like a hundred years old. Or 150 years old.

M And a gramophone is one of those machines that you see in movies that play the old vinyl records, and has like a big horn where the sound echoes.

C That's right. So in the nineteenth century, early twentieth century, people didn't have cd's, or mp3's or Ipods. This is how they listened to music. So usually you have a hand crank, you have to turn the machine, and then the music will play, and you can dance and to whatever.

M Right, so that's a gramophone. Now moving on to our last word, Jeff said: you know what, okay fine, keep the gramophone, all right I'll concede the silly gramophone. So **to concede**.

C To concede means to give up an argument.

M Okay, so you give up, you give in, you say: all right, take it.

C That's exactly right. So in this case the argument is: who will receive the gramophone. They fight, they argue, and finally Jeff says: I concede. Okay, I give up. You'll take it.

M And eh is it only for things, or can you also concede someone .. like you say: somebody is right.

C You can say that, or in elections. E.g. there are two people who want to be president, and the vote is counted, and it's not clear who the president is, and one person says: fine, I concede. That means: I give up, you win.

M Okay, very good. So to concede. All right, six key words there, they are very interesting, especially the legal terms. It's very common and it's very ... It's very common and it's very

C Hopefully not, the next time we're getting divorced.

M All right. Eh but move, let's move on now to four key phrases that we have for everyone on "fluency builder". useful for you. You know, next time you watch maybe a movie, or something related to this topic,

Voice: Fluency builder

C Oh, Marco let's get this over with, I'm tired, I wanna go home.

M Ah, let's get it over with. Come on, just do it and get it over with.

C All right, so this is our first phrase in "fluency builder", **to get this over with**, or **to get it over with**.

M Okay, so let's take that as a phrase, and to get something over with means (this) just finish it quickly, let's stop delaying.

C That's right. This is .. this is a way to ask to finish something quickly, or to stop something. So e.g., I have to go to the dentist later, oh, maybe I really don't wanna go, I'll say to myself: Oh, let me just get this over with, and once it's done I don't have to worry about it.

M Ahem, or maybe you have homework to do, and instead of doing it later, you're just like okay I want to do it now, just get it over with.

C All right, to get over with, to get something over with.

M Okay, and when they were talking about breaking up or separating, Joanne mentioned: It's important we make **a clean break**. What does she mean by making a clean break?

C All right. We hear this phrase all the time. It's a very important phrase. In relationships it means, when two people leave each other, you don't then call them, or see each other, or hang out. It means a clean break. You stop all together. You stop something completely.

M So you don't talk anymore, you don't see each other anymore, you.. you completely just stop contact with each other.

C Exactly. You can also say this about breaking something. You could say: it was a clean break. When I broke my arm it was a clean break, there were no little peaces of bones or any problems there. "It was a clean break" that means: completely broke.

M Ahem, okay. So when we talk about clean break in a relationship that means we completely break up, we stop talking to each other, and it's over with it. It's in the past.

C Exactly.

M All right. So moving on, they were talking and completely you know arguing about "I get the gramophone", "I get the Tea set" , and eh Joanne said: Okay, fine, I don't want **to drag this out any longer** than necessary.

C Oh, so you can hear her: I don't wanna drag this out any longer than necessary. So "to drag something out" means to extend, to make something longer. To make something take more time then it should.

M Okay, so e.g. if someone is giving a speech, they maybe dragging it out. *Right and you eh wait* So someone is giving a very long speech, You're like Oh my God, he's dragging the speech out so long.

C Yeah, when will he ever stop. Or you could say in an argument, I'm tired of arguing, lets not drag this out anymore, let's just stop.

M Okay, so to drag something out is usually time-related, to make things longer than necessary.

C Exactly.

M All right, And for our last phrase, when Jeff was talking about their relationship, he says: I know our relationship has been **on the rocks** for some time. Okay, so the relationship was on the rocks.

C Okay, so this is an interesting phrase. Think about rocks, you know, you see rocks on the ground, and in the ocean. Something that's on the rocks, in this case, means something that is not going well. Something that has problems. Yes, it's not smooth. So when Jeff says our relationship has been on the rocks, he's saying we fight a lot, we have problems, it's not working.

M So if I say my company has been on the rocks recently, it means it's not doing very well.

C Business is not going well.

M Okay, so you can use this for different things. Now, obviously you may have heard it before, for drinks you say "Scotch on the rocks".

C Right, that's different. Be careful. In that sentence Marco was talking about ice.

M Right, yeah, so that's different, if you ask for a drink on the rocks. But if you describe yourself for your company or relationship as being on the rocks, it means you're having a tough time.

C It's a bad situation, exactly.

M Okay, so it's a very useful phrase, I think that's very native, very colloquial, if you say something like this.

C Absolutely. It's a great phrase to use, I encourage you, I mean I hope that your situation, your work and your relationships are not on the rocks. But I do hope that when you're practising speaking, you use this phrase a lot, because it's .. it's really really colloquial like .. like you say Marco.

M Yeah, it's really good. So I think, we've taken a look at a lot of phrases, a lot of vocab, why don't we go back, listen to the dialogue for one last time.

Dialogue second and last time 14:20 - 16:25

M All right, we're back. So a very interesting dialogue, all about divorce. Now this is a very common situation nowadays in many countries such as the United States or Europe, divorce rates are very high lately, like in the past 10, 20 years.

C Yeah, they do say that since maybe the seventies or eighties the divorce rates haven't been on the rise. I think the average now in America is about 50 percent.

M Yeah, it's like 5 in 10 marriages end in divorce.

C That's right.

M And then, from what I understand or I read once, I think out of those 50% that get divorced, if they remarry, again the probabilities of those that get remarried are again half. So most likely people will get divorced at least twice.

C That's true. Although, sometimes you meet people who've got married when they were very very young, and they realize that they grew up a little bit and their personality changed or their goals changed, and they divorced that one time, but then later in life when they marry again, they know who they are, they get married again, that's better. So I think these situations are quite different. But it is true that there are a lot of eh.. a lot of divorces in America. What about Ecuador though, I mean is there the divorce rate similar?

M Eh, no, not really. I think people are still a little bit more old fashioned in that sense. Like it was before, you know it was even a little bit tabu to be divorced. Eh, but I don't think people get divorced as often. Especially if people have been together for quite a while, that's one of the things that surprises me a lot is, I've met people who have been married 20, 30 years and then get divorced that's like .. why is that like. You've been through the toughest times you know, you pretty much beat the odds, and why you get divorced, that's

such a late age.

C Yeah, that **seems counter intuitive ?? 18:12** , but it's possible that they were unhappy for that time, and they didn't want to effect their children's life.

M Right.

C And so when their children go to college or leave, they say okay now I can .. I can, you know, make a big decision.

M I know in countries e.g. such as Chili, divorce is still illegal. I think in the Philippines as well.

C Really?

M Yeah, it's still illegal to get divorced.

C It's that because they're very religious countries?

M Eh, I know Chili is not really that religious, I don't know what it is exactly .. But a lot of people, I think it maybe legal now, I can't even remember very well. I think one of our Chilean listeners can help us out here. But I know a lot of people used to annul their marriage because of this.

C I see.

M So they'll be like: oh I put the wrong address. So, no this marriage is not .. is not valid.

C Right, or: **I stalled ??? 18:54** my name wrong.

M or stop like that, yeah yeah .

C interesting Well I'll be curious to know as you said were there any Chilian friends who know more about this or the rest of you in your country, is divorce common, is it uncommon, are there laws that prohibit or that allow divorce, let us know on our website Englishpod.com.

M All right, we'll see you guys there.

C,M Bye.