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TOPICS

New York City, abbreviations after a name (Ph.D., MD, RN, DDS, Esq.), say vs. talk vs. speak vs. tell, towel vs. napkin, what to say when you're shopping

GLOSSARY

borough – a town or area that has its own laws or government; the five areas of New York City

* My sales job takes me to three of the five boroughs every week.

skyscraper – a very tall building with many stories (levels)

* If you look in that direction, you'll see downtown with all of its skyscrapers.

Broadway musical – a play with music and singing at one of the professional theaters in New York City

* Why don't we try to get tickets to a Broadway musical? I'm sure your parents would enjoy it.

pushy – too forceful; too assertive; trying to get what one wants too forcefully

* Darya left the car lot without buying a car because she thought that the salesperson was too pushy.

frank – open, honest, and direct, usually with difficult topics

* Let me be frank. She may play well, but she doesn't have the motivation to become a professional musician.

in your face – aggressive; ready to attack; likely to be too forceful

* Aaron was so in your face at the party that none of the girls he tried to talk to gave him a chance.

JFK – President John F. Kennedy; the 35th U.S. president, between 1961-1963; name of an airport in New York City

* There's going to be a documentary on TV tonight on the JFK presidency.

Esquire – one of the titles put at the end of a lawyer or attorney's name; the abbreviation is "Esq."

* When she looked at his business card and saw the "Esq." after his name, she knew he was a lawyer.



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Ph.D. – a title put at the end of the name of a person with a doctorate degree; abbreviation for “Doctor of Philosophy”

* It took him nearly 10 years to get his Ph.D. and he’s working as a podcaster?

MD – a title put at the end of the name of a person with a medical degree; abbreviation for “Doctor of Medicine”; a university degree that doctors need to practice medicine

* Carla got into the medical school of her choice where she’ll be studying under some of the best MDs in the country.

RN – a title put at the end of the name of a person with a nursing degree; abbreviation for “Registered Nurse”; a university degree that nurses need to practice nursing

* This is the fifth year we’ve had a shortage of RNs at this hospital.

DDS – a title put at the end of the name of a person with a dental degree; abbreviation for “Doctor of Dental Surgery”; a university degree that dentists need to practice dentistry

* I took my daughter to a new dentist and knew that we were in the right place when I saw a sign on the office door that read, “Rena T. Treba, DDS.”

napkin – a square piece of cloth or paper used during a meal to wipe one’s hands or lips, and to keep one’s clothes clean

* Could you please fold the napkins and put them on the table?

to work out – to be successful; to be acceptable

* I think that Jim is a good worker, but I don’t think he’ll work out as our new manager.



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WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

Harlem

Harlem is a neighborhood in New York City. It is a large area located on the northern end of the island of Manhattan, and it has several smaller “districts” or areas. Harlem is known as an area of African American culture and business, except for one district called “Spanish Harlem” in the eastern part. In Spanish Harlem, you will find one of the largest “Latino” (Hispanic or Spanish-speaking) populations in New York City, with people mostly from Puerto Rico (a U.S. territory), but now also from Mexico and other Spanish-speaking places.

From the early parts of the 1900’s, Harlem was an area that many thought of as a “ghetto” (an area with people from one culture that usually has a lot of crime and is poor). Since many “landlords” (people who rent out homes) in other parts of New York would not rent to African Americans, many moved to Harlem to live.

In the 1920’s, Harlem was the a place where a lot of influential music was being made and played by African American artists, and this period became known as the “Harlem Renaissance.” Some of the best American jazz music came out of this time by artists such as Duke Ellington and Billie Holiday. Famous places to hear these great singers and “composers” (people who write music) at that time were the “Cotton Club” and the “Savoy Ballroom.” People from all over the world came to these clubs to hear music and to dance.

Since the late 1990’s, there has been a big change in Harlem. The government put a lot of money into the area to fight crime and to create areas for “retail” (selling to the public) stores. This began a “gentrification” of the area, where the old buildings were torn down and new ones built, and the value of the property in this neighborhood went up a lot. Many wealthy or rich people moved into this area, including President Bill Clinton after he left office. When he needed to set up an office, he picked Harlem.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to English as a Second Language Podcast English Café number 62.

Hello and welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast episode 62. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

On today's Café, we're going to talk about another famous American city, perhaps the most famous city: New York. We're also going to talk about abbreviations that people put after their name in English, and as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

Our first topic today is New York City. New York City, which is officially called the City of New York, but everyone calls it New York City or just New York. Now, this can be confusing because there's also a State of New York; New York City is in the State of New York. Some people call it New York, New York, which of course, is possible.

It is the largest city in the United States and one of the largest cities in the world. The city has about eight million people currently that live there. It's also what we would call one of the most densely populated cities in the US. Dense, "dense," is when you have a lot of things in a small space, and in the case of New York City, there's a lot of people in a very small space.

New York City is divided into five separate parts, and some people think that these are different cities, but in fact, they're all part of the same City of New York. These are called boroughs, "boroughs," boroughs. There are five boroughs in New York. The most famous is probably Manhattan. Manhattan is an island; it is where most of the famous buildings in New York are and where a large percentage of the people live. The other four boroughs are called Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, which is an island, and the Bronx. The Bronx is kind of interesting because most people don't just say Bronx; they say the Bronx, but the other boroughs just have their name: Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, and Manhattan.

I want to talk a little bit about Manhattan, that's the most famous area in New York City. If you visit New York City, this is where you will probably go. It is



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where all the skyscrapers are in the city. A skyscraper, “skyscraper,” is a very tall building, and New York has several famous tall skyscrapers.

Right now, the largest skyscraper in New York is the Empire State Building. The Empire, “Empire,” State Building. The Empire State is a nickname for the state of New York; they call it the Empire State. An empire is normally a country that has many different other colonies or many different other possessions. It can also describe a - a business - a huge business. Well, New York is called the Empire State, and so this is the Empire State Building, and it's very famous. It has been in a lot of movies. King Kong, for example, goes up the Empire State Building.

They are now planning to build new buildings on the old site of the World Trade Center, where, of course, on September 11, 2001, the two towers - the twin towers, as they were called - were destroyed by terrorists.

Other famous things about New York City would include the theater district, or the theater area in New York, and all the most important theaters are on a street called Broadway. If you go to New York and you want to see a play, you will probably go to see a play on Broadway. The most famous kinds of plays are musicals, where people sing and they dance. I have always wanted to be a star in a Broadway musical. Unfortunately, as many of you know, I can't sing. But someday, maybe someday!

So, Broadway musicals are another thing that Americans go to New York City for. Since I'm talking about Broadway, I should also mention another very famous place in New York City, in Manhattan, and that is the intersection of Broadway and Seventh Avenue, what we call Times Square. Times Square is a very famous tourist spot in Manhattan. You would definitely want to visit that if you go to New York City. There are lots of lights and stores and theaters in that area. There is also a famous celebration in Times Square on New Year's Eve, December 31st. So, if you want to see a little part of what Americans do when they celebrate New Year's Eve, which is watch the celebration in Times Square in Manhattan.

New York City has a certain reputation in the United States. Many people think that the people who live in New York are sometimes rude - sometimes not very nice. They've been described as being pushy, “pushy.” Someone who is pushy is someone who's very aggressive. There's a verb to push, which means to move something in a certain direction. This is an adjective that sometimes gets used to describe people who live in New York, a little pushy.



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Some people also think that New Yorkers are more honest, perhaps, in telling you their opinion. The word we might use here is they're more frank, "frank." Frank is a name in English, short for Francis, but as an adjective, frank means somebody who will tell you their opinion even if it may hurt - even if you won't like it. Another word for this is to be forthright. "He was very forthright" - he didn't hide anything - he gave his opinion.

Finally, you may describe people in New York, at least some people in New York, as being a little in your face. In your face is the same as being frank, being a little rude; usually it's an almost always a negative thing. Pushy and in your face are negative descriptions. Frank, forthright, honest; those are positive or mostly positive descriptions.

New York City also has some famous areas that you may have heard of. The most famous area would be Central Park. This is a very large park, with trees and grass and small lakes in the middle of Manhattan.

New York is also famous for other things: important museums. The most important museums in the United States are in New York: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, sometimes just called the Met. New York is also home to Lincoln Center, which is a large theater where you can see opera and classical music performed.

If you have a chance to visit the city, you will probably fly into one of its three airports. One of the most famous airports is called JFK. JFK stands for John F. Kennedy, who was president of the United States in the early 1960s. The other two airports are called LaGuardia, who was a famous Italian-American mayor of New York; as well as the airport of Newark, which is actually not even in New York State but it is in the state next to New York City called New Jersey.

Interestingly enough, New York City is not the capital of the State of New York. The capital of the State of New York is Albany.

We're going to talk a little bit today about letters that appear after your name. In English, some people put letters after their names, and I want to talk a little bit about what those letters mean.

I, for example, when I write my name sometimes put the letters Ph.D., which is usually written capital P, or large P, a small h period, and then a capital D period.



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Ph.D. originally comes from Latin, and it means doctor of philosophy. But really, it's a title that anyone who gets a doctorate - most anyone who gets a doctorate can call themselves a Ph.D., they do not have to be in philosophy, as we know it in English. This is usually someone who has studied history or science or just about any topic. I have my Ph.D. in applied linguistics and education.

That is one possible set of letters that you might see after someone's name. Sometimes people will instead of saying their name with the letters after it will simply just say Dr., so Dr. Benjamin Johnson. That person would not write both Dr. and Ph.D. after their name, however. You can be Dr. Johnson or you can be Ben Johnson, comma, Ph.D., but you can't be Dr. Ben Johnson, comma, Ph.D., you can't use both of them.

Another common letters, or set of letters, you will see after someone's name is MD. An MD, capital M capital D, stands for medical doctor. This is someone who goes to medical school, and anyone who gets a medical degree calls themselves MD. Again, they can say Dr. So and So, or they can say their name, comma, MD.

A few other abbreviations you might see after names in English: one is RN, "R N," which stands for registered nurse. This would be in a hospital or a clinic. DDS is also a medical related abbreviation. DDS stands for doctor of dental surgery, someone who is a dentist in other words. People who are in accounting may have the letters CPA after their name. That's not quite as common, but it is possible to say your name, comma, CPA. CPA is an abbreviation for certified public accountant. Certified public accountant.

Finally, you may sometimes see the letters Esq period (Esq.) - capital E, small s, small q, period - after someone's name, and that is an abbreviation for esquire, which is an old name for someone who is a lawyer or an attorney.

Now let's answer a few of your questions.

Our first question today comes from Shon, "Shon," in South Korea. The question has to do with the difference between four words: say, tell, talk, and speak - four verbs.

This sounds like an easy question, but in fact, it is somewhat complicated because all four of these verbs have similar meanings but they're not exactly the same. Sometimes you can use one verb or another verb, other times there's



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only one of these verbs that you can use. They all have the general idea of communicating with someone else. I'm not be able to tell all the differences - to tell you all the differences, I should say - but we'll talk about some of the main uses of these words.

Let's start with the word say, "say." To say means, or can mean, to communicate or to tell someone what someone else said. "He says that he went to the store yesterday," you are communicating what this other person said to you. This is sometimes called reported speech. You're reporting on or giving information on something that someone else said.

We can also use say to reveal information. "I want to say his name" means I want to give you his name. We often use that if it's something private or perhaps secret. You can also use say to get someone's attention at the beginning of a sentence. It's sort of like excuse me. "Say, could you tell me where the nearest bus stop is?" That would be they use of the verb say in that way.

Now, the next verb we have is to tell. To tell is also used to give information to someone, and there are many times when you can use either say or tell when you are talking about giving information. "I told her that she was beautiful." "I said to her that she was beautiful." Both of these mean the same thing. Notice, however, when we say, "say," when we use the verb to say, we usually have a proposition after it, which in this case was to, "to." So, "What did you say to her," "What did you tell her," both of those are related to giving information to someone.

We also use the verb tell when we are giving instructions - when we are giving someone a command. "Tell your brother to call me," you're saying I want you to say to your brother - to tell your brother - to call me. So, using tell as a command or as instructions is also a popular use.

Sometimes we use the verb tell when we are talking, again, about secret or private information. "I don't want to tell you my middle name." Well, my middle name is Lawrence if you really want to know, but that would be a use of the verb tell. So, you can see that tell and say are similar. There are some special uses of tell and say that only one of the verbs will fit correctly - will match correctly.

The next two verbs are talk and speak. Talk means to - again, can mean to give information to someone. Usually, it has to do with communicating with someone in a conversation. "I'm going to talk to your brother," means I'm going to have a



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conversation with your brother. Often, it is about something personal or private, but not necessarily. If someone says to you “We need to talk,” what they are saying is we need to have a private talk - we need to communicate something with each other.

Just like say and tell are often used to mean the same thing, talk and speak can also sometimes be used to mean the same thing. You can use the verb to speak to mean to give information - to communicate an idea to someone. “She wants to speak to you” - “She wants to talk to you” - same basic idea. We will often, when using the verb speak to mean a conversation, use the preposition with, as well as to. “I’m going to speak with John” - “I’m going to speak to John.”

We use speak when we are talking about languages. “He speaks Italian. She speaks Japanese,” meaning they are able to communicate in that language. We also use to speak when you are giving a formal speech in front of a large group. “The President is going to speak to the Congress.” That means he’s going to stand up in front of them and give a formal talk - a formal speech.

I think the best way to understand the differences between say, tell, talk, and speak is the same way to understand all vocabulary, which is to do a lot of reading and a lot of listening, but I hope my explanation will help you a little bit.

Our next question comes from Markus, “Markus,” from Germany. Markus wants to know the difference between a towel, “towel,” and a napkin, “napkin.”

A napkin is really a kind of towel. It’s a special towel that you use at the dinner table when you are eating. A napkin is something you use to wipe your mouth. You can also put a napkin on the top of your legs, what we would call your lap, “lap,” which is the top of your legs when you are sitting down. That would be a napkin. A towel is usually something we use to clean other things. Or, to get some water off of the floor, I may get a towel. A towel, then, is for cleaning; napkins are for when you eat.

Our final question today comes from Kristy, “Kristy,” who is, I believe, Chinese but living in Australia. Kristy’s question is a good one. She wants to know what you say to someone in a store, for example, where you are shopping, and you try something on, say a piece of clothing. You go and you want to buy a new shirt, for example. You try the shirt on and you don’t like it - you don’t want to buy it. Now you have to give it back to the person working at the store - the clerk.



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The most common thing to say when you are talking about clothing is to say that it didn't work out. "This didn't work out for me." That means I don't want to buy it. You probably don't want to say, "I hated it, this is ugly." That probably would not be a very polite or nice thing to say, so instead you would say, "it didn't work out."

If it's something else - a camera - something that isn't a piece of clothing, you might just say, "This isn't going to work for me." "This isn't going to work for me." "It's not right for me." "It's not what I am looking for." Any of those would be possible ways of returning something to the store clerk.

Well, I hope this podcast worked out for you - I hope it works for you. You can visit our website at eslpod.com, and there you can get the complete Learning Guide to this podcast.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on the English Café.

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