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**ESL Podcast 26 – At the Movies**

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**GLOSSARY**

**blockbuster** – a movie that is very popular; a movie that many people have paid to see

\* The new blockbuster made more than \$30,000,000 on the first weekend it was shown in theaters.

**action movie** – a movie in which the characters fight and go through many other dangerous situations

\* The exciting action movie was filled with car chases, explosions, and gunfights.

**ticket** – a small piece of paper one gets after paying the price required to enter a place or to participate in an event

\* Selina could not enter the concert hall because she did not have a ticket.

**escalator** – moving stairs; a machine that takes people up and down to different floors or levels of a building using a moving set of steps

\* Ulysses stepped onto the escalator and traveled up from the first floor to the second floor.

**out of breath** – panting; taking large breaths of air because one does not have enough air in one's lungs, often as a result of physical exercise

\* After playing basketball all afternoon, Andria was tired, thirsty, and out of breath.

**ticket window** – a counter or table with a glass window or divider, where one pays for admission

\* Chase went to the ticket window and bought four tickets so that he and his family could go to the zoo.

**senior** – an elderly person, usually someone 65 years old or older

\* Marcela looked younger than 65, so she often had difficulty convincing people that she was a senior.

**discount** – reduced price; a lower than normal price

\* Students only need to pay \$7 to get into the theater instead of the normal \$9 because the theater offers a discount for students.

**ticket taker** – an employee at a theater who takes tickets from people entering to verify that each person has paid

\* The ticket taker stopped someone who tried to enter the theater without a ticket.



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**stub** – a small portion of a ticket that a customer keeps in the event that the customer needs to exit and re-enter and can do so without paying again

\* After showing the ticket stub, Jarrod was allowed to go back into the theater after leaving it earlier to use the restroom.

**concession stand** – an area in a movie theater that sells drinks and snacks

\* The theater's concession stand sold soda, bottled water, candy, and pretzels.

**popcorn** – a snack food made from a type of corn in which the kernels "pop" or crack open after being heated

\* Hubert heated a batch of popcorn in a pan on the stove and watched as the kernels burst open.

**screening room** – the room at the movie theater in which a movie is played on a large screen (a special wall on which an image is projected)

\* The movie theater had twelve screening rooms, so it could play twelve different movies at the same time.

**packed** – crowded; with a large number of people in a small space

\* Many people rushed to the store during the sale, so the store was packed.

**screen** – a flat surface on which a large image is shown; a large, flat surface on the wall inside a theater, on which movies are shown

\* Courtney does not like to sit close to the movie screen because it hurts her neck.

**preview** – short videos shown before the main movie with scenes from movies that will be released soon

\* In September, Keith saw a preview for a movie he wanted to see that would not come out until December.

**to wolf down** – to eat quickly; to devour

\* Lynda was in a rush, so she wolfed down her breakfast and ran out of the door to try to catch the bus.



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**CULTURE NOTE**

**Hollywood, (Former) Capital of Movies and Television**

Many actors dream of going to “Hollywood” to “make it big” (to be a big success), and a few are probably surprised to learn that there is no city of Hollywood in California. Hollywood is actually just a neighborhood of Los Angeles. “Moreover” (in addition), many of the “film studios” (places where movies and TV shows are made) are not even in that neighborhood, so the term “Hollywood” really describes the larger entertainment “industry” (business) in this city. Now comes a new surprise: Most movies and TV shows aren’t even made in Hollywood/Los Angeles anymore.

According to a 2009 *Los Angeles Times* article, only about 30% of movies are now “filmed” (made) in California, “down from” (decreasing from) more than 60% just five years before. Only 57% of all TV shows’ first episodes, called “pilots,” are filmed in Los Angeles, down from more than 80% in 2004.

So why is everyone leaving? The reason is simple: Other cities and states are giving filmmakers incentives to film in their locations. “Incentives” are things you are given to motivate you to want to do something. These incentives are mostly “financial” (related to money), including lower taxes and fees for filming. Los Angeles, however, doesn’t have any organized program of incentives, and has therefore been losing jobs to other cities and states, such as New York, Connecticut, and “elsewhere” (other places).

Los Angeles is trying to create its own incentive plan to keep the studios from moving their business to other states. But some think it may be too late. Soon, instead of actors dreaming of coming to Los Angeles, perhaps they’ll “flock” (go in large numbers) to Vancouver, Hartford, and Dallas instead.



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 26 – At the Movies.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 26. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

In this episode, we're going to discuss going to the movies over the weekend. Let's get started.

[start of story]

My friend Jim and I decided to see the latest blockbuster this weekend. I like a good action movie once in a while. We decided to meet at the movie theater after work.

When I got to the theater, I looked around and didn't see Jim. So, I thought I would get in line to buy tickets. There were two different lines, so I asked a woman standing in the first one, "Is this the line for Mission Impossible 4?" She said, "Yes, I'm afraid it is." I turned around and saw why she said that. The line was really long and had about 20 people in it already. Oh, well. I went to the back of the line and waited.

About 10 minutes later, I saw Jim coming up the escalator. When he got off the escalator, he looked out of breath. He said, "Hey, sorry for being so late. I hit a lot of traffic on the way over." I told him, "Don't worry about it. As you can see, we have a long wait."

We finally got to the head of the line and walked up to the ticket window. The clerk behind the ticket window asked, "Can I help you?" I said, "Two tickets for MI-4, please." We weren't children, students, or seniors, so there were no special discounts for us. The clerk handed me two tickets and we headed inside. There was a ticket taker just inside the door. He took our tickets and handed back our stubs.

Coming straight from work, I was really hungry. Jim and I went to the concession stand and got a couple of Cokes, hot dogs, a tub of popcorn, and a box of candy. We were set. We went into the screening room and it was packed. Luckily for us, we found some seats together that weren't too close to the screen.



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We sat back and waited for the movie to start. While we watched 10 minutes of previews, we wolfed down our food. By the time the movie started, I was feeling pretty good. I don't know which was better, the movie or the great junk food!

[end of story]

Today I talked about my friend Jim and me going to see a movie. The movie was “the latest blockbuster.” A “blockbuster” (blockbuster) is a very successful movie or book, one that is very popular. I said, “I like a good action movie once in a while.” An “action (action) movie” is a movie with lots of car chases, fights, and violence. That’s an action movie.

I said that Jim and I “decided to meet at the movie theater after work.” When we say “after work,” we mean after we are finished with our jobs. When I got to the movie theater, I thought I would “get in line to buy tickets.” “To get in line” means to stand in line with other people who are also buying tickets. “Tickets” (tickets) are what you need to get into the movie theater. A ticket is a little piece of paper that they give you that allows you to enter the theater where the movie is showing or playing.

I said that I wasn't sure which line I should get into or stand in, so I asked a woman if this was the right line for my movie, and she said, “Yes, I'm afraid it is.” The expression “I'm afraid” here doesn't mean that she is actually scared or afraid of something. It's an expression we use sometimes when we have to tell someone some bad news. “I'm afraid that you failed the test,” the teacher might say to the student; it's bad news. So, we use the expression “I'm afraid” when we're telling people some news they probably don't want to hear.

I decided to get into the line, and I used the expression “Oh, well.” “Oh, well” is an expression that we use to mean, “Well, I guess I can't do anything about it” or “That's just the way that it is.” I can't change it. Oh, well. I said that I went “to the back of the line.” A line of people can be thought of as having three parts: the “head of the line,” which is the front; the “middle of the line”; and the “back of the line,” which is the end of the line.

My friend “got off the escalator.” An “escalator” (escalator) is a set of stairs that moves mechanically. It's a moving staircase. Notice the verb we use: “to get off” the escalator. You can also use that verb for an elevator. An “elevator” (elevator) is something that goes straight up and straight down in a building and takes you from one floor to another floor. You “get on” the elevator and you “get off” the elevator, just as you get on and get off the escalator. You can also get on or get



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off an airplane or a boat or a bus. Jim “got off the escalator” when he reached the end of it.

I said that Jim “looked out of breath.” “To be out of breath” means you are breathing very hard and very fast, possibly because you have just been running or walking quickly up some stairs. Jim told me that he “hit a lot of traffic on the way over.” “To hit traffic” means that you’re driving and suddenly there are a lot of cars on the road at the same time, and everyone has to slow down. “On the way over” means on my way here – on my way to the theater, in this case.

When Jim and I got to the head of the line, we “walked up to the ticket window.” The “ticket window” (window) is the place in a movie theater or any sort of theater where you buy tickets. So, we walked up to the ticket window, and because we were not children or students or seniors, “there were no special discounts for us.” Movie theaters in the United States often give a “discount” (discount) – a lower price – if you are a child or if you are a student at the university or if you are over a certain age, usually 65 years old. We call those who are over 65 years old “seniors.”

I said the clerk “handed me two tickets” and “we headed inside.” “To hand” something to someone means to give it to them; you are giving something to them with your hand. “To head inside” means to go inside or to go in the direction of. “I am headed to San Francisco” means I am going in the direction of San Francisco.

When we got inside, there was “a ticket taker.” A “ticket taker” is the person who takes your ticket so you can get inside the theater. In this case, the ticket is torn or ripped in half, and the ticket taker gives you back half of the ticket, sort of like a receipt. That little part of the ticket that you get back is called a “stub” (stub). So, the ticket taker “handed back,” or gave back, “our stubs.”

I said that I had come straight from work. When we say, “I came straight from work” or “I came straight from school,” we mean that we didn’t stop anywhere. We didn’t stop to eat. We didn’t stop at home. We went directly from one place to another place. You can “come straight from” any location, any place. “I went to my girlfriend’s straight from work.” Well, right after going to the bar with my friends.

If you want to buy some food in a movie theater or any sort of theater or stadium, you have to go to the “concession stand.” A “concession (concession) stand” is a place where they sell food and drinks, and sometimes other things like shirts and hats, if it’s in a sports stadium. In a theater, a concession stand sells soda, like



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Coca-Cola. They also sell popcorn, and usually they put the popcorn in a big container that we call a “tub” (tub). “A tub of popcorn” is a big container of popcorn, like a big bowl of popcorn.

“We went into the screening room and it was packed.” There are two parts to most movie theaters. There’s the “lobby,” which is outside of the screening room and where you’ll find the concession stand and the “restrooms,” or public bathrooms. And then there’s the “screening (screening) room,” which is where all the seats are and where you actually watch the movie. Sometimes we just call this the “movie theater,” although the term “movie theater” can also refer to the entire building. Nowadays, many movie theaters have more than one screening room. Sometimes there are a dozen or more screening rooms in a single theater, so that instead of having one or two bad movies to choose from, you have twelve.

I said the screening room “was packed.” When we say something is “packed,” we mean that it is full. It is very, very full. When a theater is packed, almost every seat is taken. We can also use that expression for other things. We can say, for example, “I went to my friend’s party and his house was packed” – his house was very full of people. I then said that we “found some seats together that weren’t too close to the screen.” The “screen” (screen) is the big white thing that we watch the movie on. It’s what is hanging on the wall at the front of the screening room. We say that the movie is “projected onto” or “shown on” the screen.

I said we “watched 10 minutes of previews.” In most movies that you go to in the U.S., there are a lot of “previews.” “Previews” (previews) are basically commercials or advertisements for other movies that are going to be showing at the movie theater soon. Usually the previews last about 10 minutes and are shown before you get to watch the actual movie you came to see.

I said that Jim and I “wolfed down our food.” “To wolf (wolf) down” means to eat very quickly. When you’re really, really hungry, you may eat your food very fast. The informal expression for this is “to wolf down.” A “wolf” is an animal that is the enemy of “sheep,” which are the animals that we get wool from. But the idea here is that a wolf eats very quickly. So, “to wolf down” your food means that you are eating like a wolf.

The kind of food that you buy in a movie theater is what we would call “junk food.” “Junk” (junk) is garbage – something that’s not worth very much, something that isn’t very good. We call that junk. Well, “junk food” is food like popcorn and hot dogs and potato chips. It’s not good for you, but it tastes really good.





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Now let's listen to our story, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]

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[end of story]

Thanks to our wonderful scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for her hard work. And thanks to you for listening.





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From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.

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