



ESL Podcast 612 – Introducing a Speaker

GLOSSARY

may I have your attention – a formal phrase used when speaking to a large, noisy audience, asking them to be quiet and listen to what one has to say
* May I have your attention, please? It's time for the best man to make a toast to the bride and groom.

honor – something that is a pleasure and makes one feel proud and respected
* It is a great honor to accept this award. Thank you so much.

to introduce – to present; to tell someone or a group of people about another person whom they are meeting for the first time
* Let me introduce you to my wife.

guest speaker – a person who is invited specifically to speak at an event or conference
* How were you able to get such a famous celebrity to be a guest speaker at your conference?

to need no introduction – to be very well known by other people, so that everyone already knows one's profession, background, interests, and more
* Madonna's music is familiar to millions of people, so the performer needs no introduction.

innovator – an inventor; someone who is very creative and willing to take risks, and becomes the first person to find new ways of doing things
* Google is an innovator that has changed the way things are done on the Internet.

revolutionary thinker – a person who has many new ideas that are shocking at first, but change the way other people think and the way things are done
* Galileo was a revolutionary thinker who taught others that the Earth was not the center of the universe.

to strive – to try to do something that is very difficult and/or uncommon
* Their organization strives to reduce poverty and eliminate hunger worldwide.

to bring attention to – to raise awareness of; to make many people think about something that they would normally ignore or be unaware of
* Researchers are bringing attention to the education benefits of filling a child's home with books.



ESL Podcast 612 – Introducing a Speaker

advanced degree – a master’s or doctorate degree; any academic degree higher than a bachelor’s degree, such as an MS, MA, MFA, MBA, Ph.D., MD, or JD

* Henry is preparing to take the entrance test because he wants to earn an advanced degree in law.

honorary doctorate – a doctorate of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree that a university gives to an individual to recognize his or her outstanding contributions in a particular field, even if he or she has never studied at that university

* Even though he never went to college, he has had so much success in business that he holds three honorary doctorates from some of the best universities in the country.

much-anticipated – something that people have been waiting for and looking forward to for a long time

* The president is expected to make a much-anticipated announcement about foreign policy today.

speech – a period of time when one person speaks on a particular topic, usually in front of a large group of people

* Lucille is going to give a speech about the new particle accelerator in her physics laboratory.

to address – to speak about or discuss a particular topic

* This proposal addresses three different ways we could try to cut costs by 10% in the next year.

without further ado – a formal phrase meaning that one is going to do something right away, without delaying or hesitating any longer

* I’ve been talking for too long already, so without further ado, let me give you what you’ve been waiting for – the names of our award winners.

to join (someone) in welcoming (someone) – to begin clapping along with the speaker so that another person can come to the stage or take the microphone and begin speaking

* Please join me in welcoming our newest board member, Kathy Willis.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does the speaker say that Edwina Litton needs no introduction?
 - a) Because everyone is already friends with her.
 - b) Because everyone is familiar with her work.
 - c) Because she isn't important enough.
2. Why has Edwina Litton been called a revolutionary thinker?
 - a) Because she believes in revolution and rebellion.
 - b) Because she comes up with many new ideas.
 - c) Because she changed the way we understand the way people think.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

honor

The word “honor,” in this podcast, means something that is a pleasure and makes one feel proud and respected: “It would be an honor to be your date at the dance.” The word “honor” also means the respect that one feels from other people and that makes one feel very proud: “He would do anything to defend his family’s honor.” The phrase “to graduate with honors” means to earn very good grades as a student and to get special recognition because of them: “Sybil studied very hard and graduated with honors.” The phrase “your honor” is used when speaking to judge: “Your honor, my client is running late, but he should be here soon.” Finally, the phrase “on (one’s) honor” is used when talking about a very serious promise: “On my honor, I’ll never tell anyone your secret.”

to address

In this podcast, the verb “to address” means to speak about or discuss a particular topic: “This book is fascinating, because it addresses many of life’s most important questions.” The verb “to address” also means to speak to a particular group of people: “Have you decided what you’re going to talk about when you address the veterans’ association next month?” The verb “to address” sometimes means to tackle an issue or solve a problem: “According to most scientists, what is the best way to address global warming?” Finally, the phrase “to address an envelope” means to write an address on an envelope, letting the post office know where it should be delivered: “Your cards will be delivered more quickly if you address them with the correct zip code.”



ESL Podcast 612 – Introducing a Speaker

CULTURE NOTE

Good “public speakers” (people who give speeches) know not only what they’re talking about and how to present it clearly, but also how to “capture” (get; catch) their audience’s attention and keep the listeners interested throughout the speech, no matter how long it is. Public speakers use many different “techniques” (ways of doing something) to “liven up” (make more interesting) their speeches, depending on the audience and the “setting” (where something happens, under what conditions, and in what environment).

Many public speakers try to liven up their speeches by telling “anecdotes” (short, funny stories) or “inspirational stories” (stories about people who did very difficult things, making other people admire them). For example, a speech about alcoholism might include an inspirational story about someone who “overcame” (won; beat) alcoholism “against all odds” (in a very difficult, seemingly impossible situation). Other public speakers tell “jokes” (funny stories), especially at the beginning of their speech, to try to get the audience members to laugh.

Other public speakers try to keep the audience “engaged” (involved) by “encouraging” (helping something to happen) audience participation. They might encourage the audience members to “speak up” (say something aloud) when they have a question, or they might ask the audience questions and wait for audience members to shout the answers.

Using “visual aids” (things for people to look at that support one’s message) is another way to liven up a speech. Sometimes speakers bring “props” (physical objects) or “posters” (large pieces of paper) related to their main ideas. More and more often, speakers are making “multimedia presentations” that use many tools, including slide presentations, photographs, music, video, and more.

Most audiences “appreciate” (like and are thankful for) speakers’ efforts to liven up their speeches, as long as the techniques don’t “detract” (reduce the value) from the main message.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – b; 2 – b



ESL Podcast 612 – Introducing a Speaker

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 612: Introducing a Speaker.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 612. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. You can download a Learning Guide for this episode on our website by becoming an ESL Podcast member. In addition to being able to download the Learning Guides for all of our current episodes, you'll feel better about yourself because you're supporting ESL Podcast. Yes, it's good for your English, and good for your mental health!

This episode is called "Introducing a Speaker." It is going to use vocabulary you would hear when someone was going to introduce a presenter, for example at a conference or at a presentation, usually a formal presentation. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I have your attention, please?

It is my great honor to introduce our guest speaker today. Our speaker is actually a person who needs no introduction, since she is well known in our field as one of its great innovators. Edwina Litton has been called a revolutionary thinker by those in our field. That's because she has strived to bring attention to those issues that we believe are so important.

Dr. Litton holds four advanced degrees and has an honorary doctorate from Harvard University. In her much-anticipated speech today, she will address what she sees as the future of our field.

Without further ado, please join me in welcoming Dr. Edwina Litton.

[end of dialogue]

I begin introducing the speaker by saying, "Ladies and Gentlemen." This is a very formal expression we use for formal events. If you are trying to get people's attention, if you are trying to get people to stop talking and listen to you in a formal situation, say a business meeting, usually a large meeting where there are



ESL Podcast 612 – Introducing a Speaker

many people would say, “Ladies and Gentlemen, may I have your attention, please?” Your “attention” is what you are focusing on. You want them to focus on you. I continue by saying, once again using some formal phrases, “It is my great honor to introduce our guest speaker today.” An “honor” (honor) is something that makes you feel proud, makes you feel respected; it’s a good thing, a pleasurable thing even. The word “honor” has a couple of meanings in English; take a look at the Learning Guide for some additional explanations. So I say, “It is my great honor,” a very high honor, if you will, “to introduce our guest speaker.” “To introduce (someone)” in this case means to tell someone or to tell a group of people about another person whom they are probably meeting for the first time. So, you bring a friend of yours to a party, and you meet someone that you know but that your friend does not, you would introduce your friend to the other person there at the party. In this case, I’m introducing the speaker; I am saying this person, who you may not know is...and then I give a description. The “guest speaker” is a person who is invited specifically to talk at an event: a meeting, a conference perhaps.

I say, “Our speaker is actually a person who needs no introduction.” This expression, “to need no introduction,” means that he or she is very well known by other people, that everyone in the audience listening would already know this person. It’s sort of a way of saying to the person you are very famous; it’s kind of a compliment to that person. So I say, “Our speaker is actually a person who needs no introduction, since she is well known in our field as one of its great innovators.” “Our field” here means whatever area we are working in or studying in. My field when I was professor was applied linguistics; that was the area that that I studied and did research in. The presenter here, the guest speaker, is well known in the field of the people at this meeting as one of the great innovators. An “innovator” (innovator) is someone who is very creative, someone who will take risks, someone who invents something new. An innovator is often the first person to find new ways of doing things or to do things for the first time.

“Edwina Litton,” that’s the name of the guest speaker, “has been called a revolutionary thinker by those in our field.” A “revolutionary thinker” means, in this case, someone who has many new ideas. These ideas may be surprising when you first hear them. They have new ideas about the way things should be done in the world, in particular whatever field we’re talking about here. So, a revolutionary thinker is someone who has very bold, perhaps controversial new ideas about something.

I say that Edwina is a revolutionary thinker, “That’s because she has strived to bring attention to those issues that we believe are so important.” “To strive”



ESL Podcast 612 – Introducing a Speaker

(strive) means to try to do something that is very difficult, to do something that is not easy: “I’m going to strive to help all of the people in the world learn English who want to learn English.” It’s not easy; I’m going to strive to do it, I’m going to put a lot of effort into it, I’m going to work very hard in order to accomplish this thing. So, Edwina has strived to bring attention to certain issues. “To bring attention to (something)” means to make many people think about something that perhaps they didn’t know before or that they would normally not think about, they would normally ignore. This can be used in many different ways. You could say to your boss, “I’d like to bring to your attention (or ‘bring your attention to’) something that was in the newspaper this morning.” You are telling him about something that he or she probably doesn’t know, because they’re working instead of reading their newspaper at their desk. So, maybe you should be working too! But, the idea is that you are telling someone something they didn’t know before. Well, Edwina has strived to bring attention to certain issues – certain topics that this group believes are important. I should point out it’s also possible to say “striven” here: she has “striven” (en) instead of “strived” (ed). They both are acceptable in American English.

“Dr. Litton,” I say, “holds four advanced degrees.” An “advanced degree” would be something like a master’s degree or a doctoral level degree (a doctorate), any academic degree – any academic level of achievement that is higher than your bachelor’s degree. So you go to college, you study four years, you get an undergraduate degree: your bachelor’s of arts or bachelor’s of science. After that if you get an additional degree, that would be an advanced degree, one that is higher than the undergraduate degree. A master’s of science, a master’s of art, a master’s of fine arts, a master’s of business administration, a doctor of philosophy, a medical doctor, a doctor of law (a juris doctor), all of these are advanced degrees. Well, Dr. Litton has four, and one of them is obviously a Ph.D., an MD, or some other doctorate. She also has an honorary doctorate from Harvard University. Harvard University is kind of like Harvard University; the biggest difference is the “w” in the middle of the word. “Honorary” is when you go to a university, typically at the end of the year ceremony called the commencement ceremony, when everyone who is graduating from the university will receive their degree – their piece of paper that says that they have graduated, they have completed their work. When you go to these commencement exercises, as they’re called, these commencement ceremonies, they often have someone who is famous or who has done something great and they want to honor that person. They want that person to receive some recognition and so they give them an honorary doctorate, universities do this. So that person technically is now a doctor, although that’s not really true, but it is a way of honoring that person.



ESL Podcast 612 – Introducing a Speaker

“In her much-anticipated speech today,” I continue, “she will address what she sees as the future of our field.” Something that is “much anticipated” – “much-anticipated” in this case – is something that people have been waiting for and looking forward to a long time. In this speech – this time where she is going to stand up and tell you what she thinks, she will address what she sees as the future of our field. “To address” here means to speak about a particular topic, to discuss a particular issue. There are other meanings of this word; you can find those in our Learning Guide.

Finally I say, “Without further ado.” “Without further (or additional) ado.” This is a formal phrase meaning that you are going to do something right away; you’re not going to continue, in this case, your introduction; you are ending your introduction. “Without further ado (ado), please join me in welcoming Dr. Edwina Litton.” “To join (someone) in welcoming (someone else)” means that typically you begin to clap your hands so the person feels welcome as the person comes up from their chair to talk to you. “Join me in welcoming our guest today,” and every one will clap, and the person will feel welcome; they will feel like people want him or her to be there. That’s the idea.

And so without further ado, let’s listen to the dialogue at a normal rate of speech.

[start of dialogue]

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[end of dialogue]

Our script was written by someone who needs no introduction, Dr. Lucy Tse.



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ESL Podcast 612 – Introducing a Speaker

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. I definitely need an introduction! Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on ESL Podcast.

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