



About the Author

Hilary P. is a professional psychotherapist and has practised in the United Kingdom for over 15 years. Hilary has a keen interest in language learning, with a classical language educational background. Hilary's particular interests & experience is in psychology, education & learning, especially online learning and language acquisition.

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The Best Free English Conversation Dialogues On The Internet

Summary

Today's daily English conversation dialogues is an English dialogue for students who are looking to improve their spoken English language fluency. Especially students keen to learn English conversation and practice listening to spoken British English.



Transcript

Hi there, I'm Hilary and this is the latest podcast from Adept English. We are here to help you with your English language fluency. Not just learning the vocab and grammar of the language – like you do on your college course, or like you did at school. No, we help you to get to the position of actually being able to speak the language, join in on proper conversation. And that's a much more valuable skill – though of course, you do need to know the basics before you begin with Adept English. If you want to know the sequence to use our products in, this is what I would suggest. If the podcasts are difficult, start with our 500 word course, so that you can get used to hearing and understanding the most used vocabulary. Have a look at our website for the 500 Most Common Words Course. Then try the Thursday podcasts – they're usually easier to understand than the Monday ones. They're shorter and less complicated – usually focusing just on one word or phrase. Then you can try our Course One, Activate Your Listening. This starts you off understanding real English conversation. There'll be a new Course – Course Two coming soon, with even more English conversations for you to practice with. We're also wondering whether you might like a course specifically on 'Business English' - but let us know. If enough people seem keen, we'll have a look at doing that. And also, of course, there's our free course – The Seven Rules of Adept English. This helps you with our method for learning English. If it's been taking you a long time to learn English, then the advice and suggestions in the Seven Rules Course will be really useful to you.

Every one of our podcasts is an up to date sample of real-world English conversation dialogue

Anyway, this week's subject. I like to do things which are topical – and sometimes which are strange too. I think having a variety of things to listen to is useful to you – and sometimes it's more of a commentary on 'what's going on'. And sometimes it's really language focused. And sometimes it's just for interest. Either way, you're practising your English understanding. So this week I'm going to talk about something rather strange and unpleasant, which periodically is in the news in the UK – and it's very odd and sad at the same time. You may be familiar with the various cities in the UK – obviously,



everyone knows London. But Birmingham and Manchester are the cities which tend to compete to be called 'Britain's Second City'. Manchester is an increasingly vibrant city - and well worth a visit.

However, Manchester is in the news periodically at the moment, because of a mystery which surrounds its canals. Manchester is an industrial city, and it has a network of canals, which weave through the city centre. A canal is a constructed, a man-made stretch of water - like a river, I guess, but with steep sides. Most of the canals were built for the purposes of industry - in order to be able to transport goods in the 19th and early 20th century, before transportation by road and by lorry was widespread. So in Manchester, there's the Manchester Ship Canal, the Bridgewater Canal, the Ashton Canal, Deansgate Locks and a stretch of a natural river, the River Irwell. And they all have paths alongside them, where originally for the canals, the horses towing the canal boats were led. Horses were used to pull the boats along. So nowadays people take shortcuts along the towpath - they're a network of paths through the city centre.

Listening to this podcast will be excellent learn English conversation practice

So what is the mystery surrounding these canals in Manchester? Well, it's a really strange one. Since 2007, there have been some 85 deaths, people falling into the water and drowning, often late at night in the canals. Now since 2007 - that's quite a lot of years, but the death toll of 85 people is remarkable. Birmingham, the UK's other 'second city' has perhaps even more canals in its city centre, but nothing like as many deaths. And it's been pointed out that in London, Nottingham and Birmingham, there are lots of pubs by the canals, and nothing like the number of deaths occur that have been seen in Manchester. So these statistics have given rise to the possibility of an 'urban myth' - or what is possibly an 'urban myth', at least. An 'urban myth' is something that people tell as a story, which captures the imagination, but which may or may not be true. 'Urban' means to do with a town or a city - and a 'myth' is a story, which is probably untrue. But the 'urban myth' which is going around at the moment, is that these 85 deaths are not just accidents. Some people think there may be 'foul play' involved. 'Foul play' means they think that there's someone around,

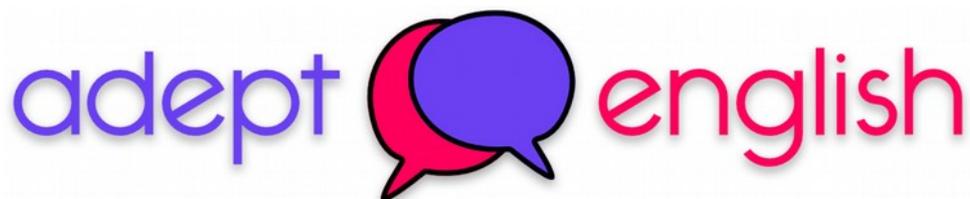


who is responsible for some of these deaths. They've been done on purpose. So fears have arisen that there is a 'Manchester Pusher'. The verb 'to push' I'm sure you know - if you push something - you put your hands on it and move it along, you propel it forwards. And the story which has arisen around the Manchester deaths is that there is someone who purposefully pushes people into the canal. A murderer, if you like.

The Manchester Police have investigated, and they say that they do not believe there's a single person behind the attacks. Many of the deaths have been recorded as accidents. If you've ever been to Manchester and you sample the local pubs and clubs, you will know that people in Manchester generally like to have an alcoholic drink or two at the weekend. The pubs are full, and a lot of alcohol can be drunk. Manchester also, like most cities has a vibrant - that means lively - nightlife. You can go clubbing in Manchester - that means to a nightclub, where you dance, and you can buy drinks, until the early hours of the morning. In a way, that's one of the things that makes cities like Manchester fun. And if you ever visit there, you may want to try that out.

I bet you did not think you would be listening to something about canals to help your spoken English conversation when you woke up today!

But most of the deaths have happened late at night. And they've happened to people who seem to have been out in the evening and may have been taking a short-cut, taking a path alongside the canal to get home late at night. Many of these will be accidents. Sometimes people who've been drinking alcohol do foolish things. And as with any canal, where the level of the water needs to change, because there is a hill, there are locks. And canal locks may have a narrow bridge over the top of them. Sometimes people fall off the narrow bridge into the water. Sometimes people take a real risk. They even walk along the top of the lock to cross over the canal. You're not supposed to do that, and it's easy to fall in. And if you fall in late at night, it's cold - Manchester is not the warmest place on earth. There is a lot of rubbish at the bottom of the canal, and the sides are very steep. So if you fall into a lock, you're not going to be able to get out, if nobody else knows that that's happened. So I'm sure it's correct that many of the deaths are accidents.



Although a 10 minute podcast may sound short, it's typically over 2000 words long, and that's not a short conversation in English

But when the court has decided on 'cause of death' - in the UK, the court which investigates unusual deaths is called 'The Coroner's Court'. It's a court of law especially to investigate deaths. And at least 28 of these death have had an 'unexplained' verdict. This means it's not clear what happened to the people who died. But, if there was somebody pushing people into the canal on purpose, to kill them, then surely there would be some survivors? People to whom this had happened, but who for whatever reason survived. And no one has come forward so far with that story. Let's not forget also - that's a lot of families who have lost their loved ones. And it's not surprising that they would like some answers. Overwhelmingly, the people who have died have been young to middle-aged men. But this probably just reflects the people who are willing to take a short-cut along the canal towpath late at night. I certainly wouldn't be doing that. Even before the stories of the Manchester Pusher, it's not the sort of place I would go alone late at night. But if you're a young man, and you've had a few drinks, it's obviously something you're more likely to do.

Anyway, please don't let that put you off going to Manchester. Manchester is a great city, different in character to London. There aren't the high prices. And it's not quite so cosmopolitan, but on the whole, the locals are more friendly. So when you visit the UK, London is not the only attraction. Cities like Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Cardiff are also well worth a visit. Just perhaps avoid walking alongside canals on your own, late at night.

Goodbye

Enough for now. Have a lovely day. Speak to you again soon. Goodbye.

PS:

So another learn English conversation practice lesson is over. I hope you enjoyed it. We have lots of short dialogues in English for you to listen to here.



This type of listening to native English speakers is excellent training for English language students.

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