

GOSSIP AT THE OFFICE.- Session 1.- Who's that chick?

Situation

Read the text and listen to the situation.



Script

We are almost at the end of the FCT **internship** and the girls can't stop thinking about their adventure **coming to an end**. For them, these nine months have been the best in their lives and no doubt, this experience has helped them not only to **improve** their English and learn a real job, but also, to **develop** their personalities and **grow up** as adults.



It's Sunday evening and like every week, **Lourdes**, **Susana** and **Kate** are having a delicious **pint** of beer at The Moon, their favourite pub in Leicester Square.

Susana: Umm, delicious! I'm gonna miss having a delicious **lager** with you guys when we're back in Spain!

Kate: Oh, please don't say that! I can't believe the internship is almost over and you have to go back to your country, that's awful!

Lourdes: I know... But don't worry, we'll definitely be in touch and you have to come and visit!

Kate: Yes, but it won't be the same! I'm gonna miss you guys!

Susana: Come on **Kate**, cheer up! We'll definitely have a good time this summer when we change this delicious Lager for some 'pescaito frito' at the beach!

Kate: Oh yes! I wanna try that 'pescaito' and 'tortilla' **Yummy!!!**

Lourdes and Susana: He, he, he ... y olé.



Now it's your turn

It's a fact that we don't talk to our boss in the same way as we do to our friends. That's why register is so important when learning a foreign language. English speech is full of slang words, especially among young people. Take a look at the expressions below, can you guess their meaning? Use the **urban dictionary** to help you. Have fun!
"That sucks!", "Dude", "That's fricking awesome!", " **chick**", "Holy cow!"



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[Aviso Legal](#)

1.- What to say: A little bit of gossip.

Quotation

"Gossip is a sort of smoke that comes from the dirty tobacco-pipes of those who diffuse it; it proves nothing but the bad taste of the smoker".

George Eliot

Situation

The girls continue at The Moon. They are having a really good time remembering those funny situations they have had to face in London when suddenly, someone **enters** the pub.

Lourdes: ...and **Susana** replies: sorry, but this is mine!

Susana, Lourdes and Kate: he, he, he, he... (they laugh and laugh).

Kate: he, he, he. You're so funny girls! (she says laughing).

Susana: Oh my God! Don't look behind you! **Mr. Parker** is here!!! (**Susana** whispers excitedly)

Lourdes and Kate: Where?

Susana: Right there, by the door! (she whispers) Ooh, he's so cute!! I think I'm in love...

Lourdes: He, he. Again **Susana**? I think it's twice this week, she says ironically.

Susana: No, no, this time is different, I think he is the hottest guy in the ... oh no!!! (she interrupts what she's saying) Who's that chick????

Kate: Oh, that lady? The one in red? It's **Mrs. Parker**, his wife!

Susana: What??? His wife?? Oh no, I can't believe it!! No, no, no... How can I have such bad luck! she says kind of disappointed.

Kate: I'm so sorry **Susana** (she says sadly) I thought you knew it!

Susana: How long have they been married for? Where did they meet? Did they go to college together? Where does she work? What's her name? Is she nice? (she keeps asking questions).

Kate: Hey, stop it! I don't know! You're **driving me nuts!** (she answers kind of desperate).

Susana: (about to cry) Sorry...

Lourdes and Kate laugh endlessly.



Think about it

How gossip are you?

- ✔ Do you like keeping updated about other people's personal life?
- ✔ When you see someone in good company, do you like telling the others what you saw?

A step ahead

Click on the link below and take a quiz to find out if you are a gossip. Have fun!

[Are you a gossip? Take the gossip quiz.](#)



1.1.- Office Gossip.

It starts out innocently with someone at the canteen saying, "Isn't it a shame about Mary?" **Clueless**, you reply, "What about Mary?" "Haven't you heard about her husband?" When you answer in the negative, your colleague **seizes the moment** to fill you with all the details about Mary's husband having an **affair** with none other than your boss's wife, and poor Mary is now in **rehab** because she started drinking to **drown** her misery. Of course, since your boss's wife is also involved, you are curious to find out if he knows about his wife's infidelity. And before you've finished drinking your coffee, you've entered the vicious cycle of gossip that too often contaminates a workplace.



The consequences of participating in office gossip always affect at least two or more people. First, consider the person who is the **gossip spreader**. Why is this person presenting the information? Can any good come from it? Will the information benefit you or the office in which you work? What's in it for the gossip?

If the answers to these questions are **fuzzy**, you can probably assume the news **bearer** is **revealing** something others don't yet know. Such "news," whether **accurate** or not, provides a momentary feeling of superiority and control that the gossip probably **lacks** otherwise. If this person's work performance isn't good enough for recognition, then the next best option is to be the person with the latest inside **dirt**.

Unfortunately, a gossip isn't satisfied just possessing the information, since knowledge that isn't shared is **wasted**. This is where others get implicated without necessarily being willing participants. Even the "innocent" are drawn in to the gossip's web by merely listening. For a few minutes, this person has everyone's undivided attention, and this is "reward" enough.

While gossips themselves might not immediately suffer for their **loose** tongues, eventually they will be found out. The consequences may include poor performance reviews, no pay raises, **reprimands** from supervisors, or possibly **dismissal** because of their involvement in destroying office morale and team work.

Gossips are usually willing to share their wealth of information, so others have little trouble knowing who they are. Smart co-workers will learn to avoid them any way they can, even though this is not always easy or possible. Even if you yourself don't initiate gossip, just listening to it carries consequences. If several people are present when a gossip is revealed, you may be credited as the source at some later point just because you were present. People's memories aren't always accurate.

Of course, the one who suffers most is the person everyone is talking about. Even if the rumour proves to be just that, the damage has been done. Those who have heard the gossip will be unable to completely **erase** it from their minds. The consequences for this person might be devastating.

Since no one benefits from gossip, why do we get involve in it? Just remember, if you don't gossip, you don't have to worry about someone **betraying** your confidence and telling other people what you said. And remember: distance yourself from gossips since **you are known by the company you keep**.



Now it's your turn

Read the previous article again and answer these questions: Gossip people usually spread rumours because ...

- they love being the centre of attention.
- they enjoy telling bad things about their colleagues.
- they love talking about things others don't know.

How in the long run do gossip people suffer the consequences of their actions?

- With time, no one trusts them and they may end up alone.
- They usually develop a bad reputation in the office and sometimes, they may even get fired.
- As time goes by, bosses get to know them better and they are usually offered promotions.

What's the author's opinion about gossip?

- Gossip isn't good or bad, it's just gossip.
- Gossip is nothing but lies and we should walk away from it.
- Gossip isn't that bad, but we should ignore it.

Think about it

There are three different words or expressions in the text used to talk about the person who talks about the others. One is gossip, what are the other two ones?

1.2.- To gossip or not to gossip?

As we read in the previous section, gossip usually starts by a somehow "innocent comment" and from there it spreads by word of mouth **triggering** the weirdest situations. Here you have some of the most common ways in which gossip starts, **watch out** and **mind** the way you start conversations or you may achieve a bad reputation.



Ways of starting a gossip conversation

Ways of starting a gossip conversation	Modos de comenzar una conversación cotilla
Have you heard about Jane?	¿Te has enterado lo que le ha pasado a Jane?
Have you heard the latest gossip?	¿Has escuchado el último cotilleo?
I've got the juiciest bit of gossip ever!	¡Tengo el cotillo más jugoso que te puedas imaginar!
Do you want to hear some gossip?	¿Quieres escuchar un cotilleo?
Guess what?	¿Adivina qué?
You'll never believe what I've just heard!	¡No te vas a creer de lo que me acabo de enterar!

In addition, once we have **raised the topic**, Gossip conversations are usually followed by telling the other person not to tell anyone plus what he or she shouldn't tell followed by a **whisper**. Here are some of the most common ways to say so:

Keep it secret!

Keep it secret!	¡Mantenlo en secreto!
Listen, don't tell anyone but James and Susan are having an affair!	Escucha, no se lo digas a nadie pero ¡James y Susan tienen un lío!
Obviously, you didn't hear this from me but Susan is getting divorced!	Ni que decir tiene que yo no he dicho nada pero ¡Susan se va a divorciar!
Don't tell anyone but James and Susan's marriage is over!	No se lo digas a nadie pero ¡el matrimonio de James y Susan se ha terminado!
Of course, I didn't tell you this but Mary is having plastic surgery!	Por supuesto yo no te he dicho nada pero ¡Mary se va a hacer una operación estética!

A step ahead

Listen to a real gossip conversation by clicking on the link below, have fun!

[How to Gossip.](#)

If you have any problems understanding, read the script while listening.

[Listening script.](#) (0.01 MB)

1.3.- Now you put it into practice (I).



Now it's your turn

Read the following paragraph, and fill in the gaps with the correct words from the table. There are more words than you need. Good luck!

guess → gossip → heard → feel → tell → believe.

Listen, don't anybody else, OK? because if word gets out people will know it's me who told you, but the thing is, have you about Joseph? Well, wait till I tell you. You'll never what I saw last week. I was coming out of the building and they were having a huge kiss! Can you it?

A step ahead

What is the latest gossip you have heard? Surf the pages below or any other sensationalistic magazine and choose the the juiciest gossip ever.

[Hello magazine.](#)

[The Mirror.](#)

[Surf the net for the juiciest gossip ever.](#)

Think about it

As a good gossip spreader, you need to tell your colleagues what you just found out, write down what you would say to them. Remember to use the sentences in section 1.1. When you are done, enter the forum and record your voice, then, send the file to your tutor. Try to be natural and have fun!



2.- How to say it: Reported Speech (I).

Think about it

Read the following sentences carefully. What is the difference between them?

Mary: "I will answer his email as soon as possible".

Mary said that she would answer his email as soon as possible.

Translation

[Click here to read the Spanish version.](#)

As we observed above, Reported Speech is frequently used in daily life conversations to tell someone about what a third person said before. However, when Reporting, the sentence usually undergoes some changes:

- ✓ **The Verb goes a step backwards in time.** For example:
Mary: "I'm going next week" (present continuous) to *Mary said that she was going the following week* (past continuous).
- ✓ **The subject also changes: "I" is changed by "she".**
- ✓ **Time expressions:** "next week" changes to "the following week" or "the week after."

When dealing with Reported Speech there are three types of sentences: Statements, Questions and Commands: however, in this section, we will concentrate on the first two ones.



Translation

[Click here to read the Spanish translation.](#)

2.1.- Reporting Statements.

When reporting a statement in English there is usually a **backshift** of tenses.

- ✓ Example: *Susan: "I worked in an office"*. Susan said that she worked in an office. Here you have a table with the most common changes.



Backshift of tenses

From (Direct Speech)	To (Reported Speech)
Simple Present.	Simple Past.
Simple Past.	Past Perfect.
Present Perfect.	
Past Perfect.	
Will.	Would.
Progressive Forms	
Am / are / is.	Was / were.
Was / were.	Had been.
Has been.	
Had been.	

If the sentence contains an expression of time, you must change it as well:

- ✓ *Peter: "I worked in the project yesterday"*.
- ✓ *Peter said that he had worked in the project the day before.*

Shifting of expressions of time

From (Direct Speech)	To (Reported Speech)
This (morning, evening, month...).	That (morning, evening, month...).
Today / this day.	That day.
These (days, months ...).	Those (days, months ...).
Now.	Then.
(a week, month...) ago.	(a week, month ...) before.
Last weekend.	The weekend before/ the previous weekend.
Here.	There.
Next (week, month...).	The following (week, month...).
Tomorrow.	The next / following day.

A step ahead

If you need further information on Reported Speech check the link below.

[Reported Speech Theory.](#)

2.2.- Now you put it into practice (II).



Now it's your turn

Choose the correct Reported Speech version of each statement:



Tom said, "I want to visit my friends this weekend".

- Tom said he wants to visit his friends that weekend.
- Tom said he wanted to visit his friends that weekend.
- Tom said he wanted to visit his friends this weekend.

Jerry said, "I'm studying English a lot at the moment".

- Jerry said he was studying English a lot at that moment.
- Jerry said he was studying English a lot at the moment.
- Jerry said I was studying English a lot at that moment.

They said, "We've lived here for a long time".

- They said they have lived there for a long time.
- They said they lived here for a long time.
- They said they had lived there for a long time.

He asked me, "Have you finished reading the newspaper?"

- He asked me if had I finished reading the newspaper.
- He asked me if I had finished reading the newspaper.
- He asked me if I finished reading the newspaper.

"I get up every morning at seven o'clock". Peter said.

- Peter said he got up every morning at seven o'clock.
- Peter said I got up every morning at seven o'clock.
- Peter said he had got up every morning at seven o'clock.



Now it's your turn

Read the following sentences and put them in Reported Speech.

✓ She said, "I want an ice-cream". → She said that she wanted an ice-cream.

1. He said, "I am writing the report tomorrow."

→ _____ He _____ said _____

2. You said, "I will do this for him."

→ You said that _____.

3. She said, "I am not hungry now."

→ She said that _____.

4. They said, "We have never been here before."

→ They said that _____.

5. They said, "We were in London last week."

← _____ →

→ They said that

Submit

< >

A step ahead

If you need further practice on the topic watch the following videos. They will be very helpful!

Keep going, you're doing great!



3.- Words you need: Tricks to get cheaper online tickets.

It's time for Lourdes and Susana to start looking for their plane tickets back home. As usual, they haven't got much money left and therefore they read an article to learn how to get cheaper ones.

The prices of [airline](#) tickets vary and change in as little as an hour or a day. The cheap ticket or the discount seat you are looking for, might be gone by the time you call. Of course, there is a chance that tickets for the flight you want are cheaper when you call later. But experience had taught us that the first possibility is more [likely](#). However, there are ways, or tricks to increase your chances of finding a good deal, but remember: Keep the prices of your airline tickets to yourself because your plane neighbour is likely to murder you if he finds out that you only paid half of the amount he did!

First of all, whether you intend to use the internet or travel agency, start your search early. By early, I don't mean a week or an hour before. A month before your desired date is ideal to find better prices of airline tickets. But watch out! Don't buy just yet, first search. It'll give you an idea of how much and when the rates are likely to fluctuate or inflate at later dates.

To start with, do not give definite dates when you call the airline. Simply, ask for the lowest rates for your destination and say that your travel date and time are flexible. This is especially good if airfare price is more important than your dates like if you're only considering a vacation or personal trip. It is easier to change travel dates than to pay for expensive airline tickets. To [clue you in](#), winter is the cheapest season to fly except for the days before the Christmas holidays. If you can [afford](#) it, arrange for vacation trips during the winter. Another trick to save a lot on tickets is to adjust your [flight schedules](#). Ask the airline for the late flights rather than [peak hours](#). The two a.m. flights are generally half-priced compared to morning and mid-morning flights.

Don't get too excited about discounts; most come with restrictions so research and ask before you purchase your airline tickets. Discounts only work for you if you purchase tickets within the restriction rules. These rules are easy like advance purchase or Saturday night reservation. Advance purchase requires you to buy your tickets a week or three in advance. This guarantees that you have discount seats. Stays or trips that include a Saturday night fall under excursion trips which are cheaper than business trips. Learn about discounts and restrictions so you can use them to your advantage. Also, get round trip tickets instead of using another airline for your return - they are priced the same.

Lastly, buy airline tickets and use them at the appointed time. Cancellation of flights and rescheduling often have [stiff penalties](#). The 100 pounds you saved from your discounted ticket may not be enough to cover penalties.

Enjoy your trip, after all, the cheap airline tickets you have are not really good deals if you don't enjoy them.



Now it's your turn

Read the text again and answer these questions. What does experience say when trying to get those cheap tickets you were looking for?

- The tickets you were looking for are cheaper than you expected.
- The tickets are sold out when you decide to buy them.
- The tickets are cheaper if you wait and call later.

When buying the tickets from the airline ...

- You should give them the exact dates so that you get the tickets you are looking for.
- You should tell them your travel date is flexible.
- You shouldn't say your date is flexible or they will think you are desperate.

A good way of saving money when buying online tickets is:

- Buying your tickets for winter, except for Christmas holidays.
- Buying off-peak tickets.
- Buying your tickets on week-days.

According to the text, If you can't use your ticket for the appointed time...

- ... you will have to get a new one if you want to get to your destination.
- ... don't worry, get another one.
- ... you might have to spend some extra money to cover penalties.

3.1.- Buying your plane ticket online.

As we read in the previous section, buying plane tickets online is usually cheaper than buying them in a travel agency. Here you have some useful vocabulary to take into account.



Buying plane tickets online

Useful vocabulary	Translation
Airport code.	Código de aeropuerto.
Anytime.	A cualquier hora.
Book.	Reservar.
Business class.	Primera clase.
Card holder's name.	Nombre que aparece en la tarjeta de crédito.
Card Verification number.	Código de seguridad de la tarjeta de crédito.
Credit card billing address.	Dirección a la que enviar la factura de la compra.
Credit card number.	Número de la tarjeta de crédito.
Date of birth.	Fecha de nacimiento.
Direct flights / Non-stop.	Vuelos directos, sin paradas.
Economy class / Low cost.	Bajo coste.
Expiration date.	Fecha de caducidad de la tarjeta.
Fees and Taxes.	Impuestos.
First class.	Primera clase.
First name.	Nombre.
Flexible dates.	Fechas flexibles.
Fly from.	Salida desde. / salida.
Fly to.	Llegada a. / Destino.
Gender.	Sexo.
Infants on lap.	Niños / niñas que viajan en brazos de sus padres.
Infants on seat.	Niños / niñas que ocupan asiento.
Last name.	Apellido.
Multiple cities.	Destinos múltiples, más de una ciudad.
One way.	Vuelo de ida.
Payment information.	Información de pago.
Return flight.	Vuelo de vuelta.
Round trip.	Vuelo de ida y vuelta.
Search.	Búsqueda.
Seniors.	Jubilados, jubiladas.
Title: Mr. Mrs. etc.	Título: Señor, señora etcétera.
To Transfer.	Cambiar de vuelo o lugar.
Traveller details.	Datos del pasajero.

Useful vocabulary	Translation
Unaccompanied minor.	Menor que viaja solo.

3.2.- Now you put it into practice (III).



Now it's your turn

Match the words in A to their definition in B. Have fun!

Matching exercise

A	Match	B
1. Card holder's name.	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Date in which something comes to an end or stops being in use.
2. Senior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. A ticket valid to travel to a place and back again.
3. Flexible date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. The cheapest and least comfortable type of seats on an aircraft.
4. Expiration date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Day and month in which a person was born.
5. Round trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Name which appears on a card, usually an ID or credit card.
6. Date of birth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. The physical and/or social condition of being male or female.
7. Gender.	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Able to change or be changed easily according to the situation.
8. Economy tickets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	h. People over 60 years old.

Submit



Now it's your turn

Complete the sentences in A by matching them to the words in B. Be careful, there are two extra words you don't need to use!

Matching exercise

A	Match	B
1. You will need to _____ to a different plane in Edinburgh.	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Destination.
2. Be sure to be at the gate, at least 30 minutes before _____.	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Card holder's name.
3. Are there any _____ available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Credit card details.
4. What is your _____ on this trip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Round trip.
5. Fill in all your _____ before clicking on "Book".	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Transfer.
		f. Departure.
		g. First class seats.

Submit

Make it real!










Imagine you live in Los Angeles (California) and you need to travel to New York City. Check the website below for the cheapest fare for two adults, a 6 month-baby and a 7 year-old child. You can make up the dates. When you are done, copy the page and paste it in a word document, finally send it to your tutor. Have fun!

[Book your own plane ticket.](#)



Appendix.- Licenses of resources.

Licenses of resources used in session 1. "Who's that chick?"

Resource (1)	Resource information (1)	Resource (2)	
	By: Lydiashiningbrightly. License: CC by 2.0. From: http://www.flickr.com/photos/lydiashiningbrightly/5353251398/		By: Stevend License: CC From: http://www.fl
	By: John the Geologist. License: CC by-nc-sa 2.0. From: http://www.flickr.com/photos/jtadams/173872109/		By: Amyvdh License: CC From: http://
	By: aaipodpics. License: CC by-nc-sa 2.0. From: http://www.flickr.com/photos/aaipodpics/6334255733/		By: Docpop. License: CC From: http://www.fl
	By: Sara Sosiak. License: CC by-nc 2.0. From: http://www.flickr.com/photos/secret_canadian/65404968		By: Martin K License: CC From: http://www.fl
	By: Dan 4th. License: CC by 2.0. From: http://www.flickr.com/photos/dan4th/144369022		