

#### Episode 4: Talk Segment with Professor Long

(Piano Riff) Hello everyone and welcome to the talk segment with Professor Long. My name is Christopher Long and I am a professor in the English Department here at Tohoku Gakuin University. Yes, Tohoku Gakuin University here in Sendai. The students of this university are bringing you this podcast.

Okay, so, uh, so before we begin with the topic for today, I want to give you the answer to the knock knock joke I told you last time. First, I want to thank all of you for your emails and messages. I was surprised at how many people are listening to this podcast. Many of you got the correct answer and so now I will explain it. So, in the last line of the joke the person says “Amanda fix the television.” This sounds like “A man to fix the television.” That means “A man who has come to fix the television.” So the joke is a play on the sound of the first name “Amanda” and the English phrase “A man to.”

Okay, that’s enough with the knock knock jokes. So, let’s get back to today’s topic. So, the topic of today is pets (sound of car horn). Do you have a pet? Do you like pets? Many people in Japan and the United States have pets. The most popular pets in both Japan and the United States are cats and dogs, I think. In fact, people tend to be divided between which they prefer. Some think cats are better, others prefer dogs. I personally am a dog person. That means I like dogs. I am a dog person. You can use this phrase to express a variety of likes. For example, “I am a coffee person” means “I like coffee.” “I am a motorcycle person” means “I like motorcycles.” Anyway, to get back to the topic of pets, I am a dog person and recently I read an article that gave me an interesting explanation for my love of dogs and my lack of love for cats!

So, the article explained an interesting research project that investigated whether dogs and cats could empathize with humans. Empathy is an emotion that allows us to feel what someone else feels, to share in the pain and pleasure just by watching or listening to their situation. Empathy causes people to cry during a sad movie or even to yawn when they see someone else yawn.

Anyway, according to the research, dogs have empathy, but cats do not. How did they determine this result? Well actually it was quite simple, they had cats and dogs observe their owners yawn and they measured whether the animals responded. According to the research, dogs responded, but cats did not!

Now, I don't know if the results of this one study are enough. Also, I can not say I have an objective opinion. After all, I like dogs better than cats (sound of dog barking). That's right. So, uh, but, I could not help but feel that this gave me some evidence and justification for my opinion.

Anyway, that is my take on cats and dogs. Oh look, we've got a phone call. Who could it be? It is you! Yes, well, I hope. I want you to contact us. Well, not by telephone. But, you can send us an email. Go to our webpage on the Tohoku Gakuin University website and please send us your questions or comments. What do you think about dogs are cats? Are you a dog person? A cat person?

(Piano riff) Okay folks, that's all for now. Yes, we are done.

Class is out! Thank you very much. See you next time.