

## Simplified Speech #208 – Kassy’s a mom! (ad free)

### Episode description

In this episode of Simplified Speech, Andrew talks with new-mom, Kassy! She recently gave birth to a healthy baby boy, and she tells us all about her pregnancy, childbirth, and the early days of caring for a newborn. Listen to hear about her daily routine, the unexpected challenges she faced, and the cultural differences that shape her new life as a parent.

### Fun fact

In Korea, babies often don’t have a formal name until their 100th day, when a ceremony is held. The 100th-day milestone holds special cultural significance as it marks the baby’s survival through the vulnerable early months. Families celebrate this achievement with a gathering of friends and relatives, offering gifts and food to honor the baby’s health and longevity.

### Expressions included in the study guide

- To drop a hint
- To walk on eggshells
- To catch (up on) some Z’s
- To come out of left field
- To (not) go into [something]
- A given



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## Transcript

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Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

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**Andrew:** Simplified Speech episode 208. "Kassy's a mom!" Featuring Andrew and Kassy.

Joining me now as my co-host, long time no see, is Kassy. Kassy, welcome back to Simplified Speech. How's it going?

**Kassy:** Hey, Andrew. It's going really well and I'm excited to be back.

**Andrew:** Kassy, it's been about three months, four months, something like that. How long has it been since we talked to you last time?

**Kassy:** Yeah, it's been a little over three months.

**Andrew:** A little over three months. OK. Well, that was actually a faster maternity leave than I was expecting. I thought, oh, maybe Kassy will be taking some time off for six months or nine months, but only three months, you're already back and joining us. So, I'm so happy about that. And I think our listeners will be as well. But here, Kassy, what I thought we could talk about today is just all of the big changes that have happened in your life since we last talked to you. Because as I just said, that expression, maternity leave, that's what you take when you just have a baby. And yeah, about three and a half months ago you had a baby, right? So, congratulations on that, by the way, from me and from all of our listeners as well. But let's get into it, Kassy. We want to know all of the details. I think last time when you made the announcement here on Culips, if we could go back to then. You were telling us about having a diabetes scare and that you had to change your diet. So, I'm wondering how did that play out in the later stages of your pregnancy? Did that get more intense, or did it calm down a little bit?

**Kassy:** It was pretty much the same until the end. I was really strict with my sugars and carbohydrates. It kind of sucked, but... but my baby was born super healthy, and he was not a giant baby. He was actually pretty small. He was like 2.8 kilograms or something, which is, you know, below average.

**Andrew:** Wow. OK. So pretty tiny. Do you think maybe that was because of the restricted eating? Like if you were just eating lots of, I don't know, high carb foods and fatty foods all the time, maybe he would have plumped up a little bit?

**Kassy:** Yeah, it might've been that. I don't know if it's genetics too. My mom said that both me and my sister were also quite small when we were born. So, there could have been lots of factors, but I was so excited to eat sugar and rice and bread again.

**Andrew:** Did you have any pregnancy cravings? I know that some women get these cravings when they're pregnant. I believe my mom told me that she craved pickles when she was pregnant with me. Did you have anything like that? Some food that you just really wanted to eat during that time?

**Kassy:** Not too many. At the beginning of my pregnancy, I really craved blueberries. So, I think my baby was half blueberry for a while.

**Andrew:** Half blueberry. So, you kind of **dropped a hint** about the baby. You said "he," so it's a boy.

**Kassy:** It is a boy.

**Andrew:** We'll save his privacy. We won't share his name and everything, all of the details online. But why don't we talk about, you said he was small. You said like three kilograms?

**Kassy:** About 2.8. Yeah.

**Andrew:** Yeah. So, wow. That's actually quite small. I imagine maybe from your perspective, that was a good thing. Like probably easier to deliver a small baby. Not like I know anything about it at all, but just from, just from guessing a small baby might be easier to deliver than one of those big boys.

**Kassy:** That's what my doctor said. However, I had to have a C-section because he was flipped the entire time. His head was up, and his feet were down. So, it didn't really matter in... in my case. It all went really well. I was a little nervous because my husband couldn't be in the room with me and I didn't have any family members there, but you know, it went really well. I was asleep for the whole thing. I woke up and he was there.

**Andrew:** All right. Now I'm interested about that. You said your husband couldn't be in the room with you. I know in a North American context, it's actually pretty common for the dad to be there, to get in the room. And we can see this in many movies and TV shows too, right? Often like the dad is trying to coach the mom and the mom's like, "Shut up! Stop bothering me." Or the dad is more stressed out than the mom. Sometimes they faint or pass out. So, it's kind of common in a North American context for the dad to be in the delivery room. But is this the same in Korea? I'm not actually sure. I have a feeling like maybe it's cultural and that dads aren't in the delivery room in Korea. Is that the case?

**Kassy:** Yeah, I think it really depends on where you are and when it was. So, for example, if you give birth in Seoul, where there's a lot more foreigners and it's a lot more, I guess, modern, they do have places where your husband can be there and you can do what they call skin to skin after the baby's born, where they put him on you right away and you can try breastfeeding or something. However, because of COVID, even though it's been a while since COVID, they still have a lot of those policies. So, a lot of times husbands aren't allowed in the room. I don't know if that was traditionally how it was or because of COVID. Also, the hardest part for us was because of COVID, my husband couldn't touch our baby for the entire time we were in the hospital. And this is different than North America. In Korea, if you have a C-section, you're typically in the hospital for seven

days, while in the U.S., maybe three, four maximum. So, it was a long time for us to be there, and my husband could only stare at his son through a glass window a few times a day.

**Andrew:** Wow, that must have been difficult.

**Kassy:** Yes, it was hard for me too. I couldn't go see him whenever I wanted. I could only be with him when I was breastfeeding him.

**Andrew:** Yeah, that must be tough. And I know in North America, it's not even rare for a couple to check into the hospital in the morning, maybe have the baby in the afternoon or evening, and then go home the same day. Like, I've heard of that before. So, in Korea, I know it's very different in that, yeah, sometimes you do stay in the hospital for several days. Did you go to one of these special birthing centers that they have in Korea? And maybe you could tell our listeners about them. I can't remember the name of them. Are they called *Joriwon*? Is that what they're called? Or am I...?

**Kassy:** Yes, they're called *Joriwon*, yeah. We were going to go to *Joriwon*. My husband was allowed to come with me. We had it booked, and a *Joriwon*, for listeners who don't know, is an aftercare birthing center where moms go to relax and kind of get some training and a jump start into motherhood with help. So usually, the nurses will take the babies at night so that you can get plenty of rest, but then during the day, you can spend time with your baby and go to classes to learn how to give them massages or baths, change their diapers, all that kind of stuff.

**Andrew:** On-the-job training.

**Kassy:** Exactly. And then there's massages for the mom and saunas and all sorts of nice stuff. And we were, we were going to go, but like I told you, because I had a C-section, we were in the hospital for seven days in which, you know, we couldn't interact with our son

as much as we wanted to. So, we made a last-minute decision to... to leave early and just go home. So, I did not experience the *Joriwon*.

**Andrew:** Great. OK. So, you had the baby, everything was OK. You were hospitalized for a little bit longer than I'm sure you guys wanted, but after a week, you got home. And so, what were those first few weeks like? I'm sure it was a total, huge adjustment getting used to everything.

**Kassy:** Yeah. I think the hardest part is just, they're so tiny and you're afraid that anything you do, you're going to break them.

**Andrew:** I can imagine. Yeah.

**Kassy:** Yeah. It was a lot of **walking on eggshells**, you know, carrying him so daintily and making sure he was breathing in his sleep. Even now, like four months later, pretty much what we do every day is just stare at him. It's just so fun. You can just stare at him for hours.

**Andrew:** And my wife has a question that she wanted me to ask you. She wants to know if the baby looks more Caucasian or more Korean, or is it like a perfect mix? I always find this really interesting because probably Kassy, you, and I both, we have a lot of friends who are mixed couples, right? One Westerner partner and one Korean partner. And it's really, really different. Every couple, if they have a baby, some of them look very Korean and some of them look very Western. So, my wife was wondering about this.

**Kassy:** You know, I think he must be pretty mixed because everybody on my husband's side, so family members and friends say that he looks just like me. But everybody on my side, family and friends say he looks just like my husband.

**Andrew:** OK.

**Kassy:** So, I feel like it must be so mixed that I can't really tell. I can see my dad in him a little bit, which, you know, is my features, but in a male form. So, I guess that makes sense. But he definitely has my husband's brown eyes and darker hair.

**Andrew:** Was he born with a lot of hair?

**Kassy:** He was born with more hair than he has now. He lost it all.

**Andrew:** Oh, really?

**Kassy:** Yeah. I learned that's typical for newborns. I had no idea.

**Andrew:** He's going bald early.

**Kassy:** Yeah.

**Andrew:** OK, interesting. So, a real 50-50 split. That's cool. Now, what about getting into like a new routine? I've heard that newborn babies sleep a lot. Is that true? Is he sleeping a lot?

**Kassy:** Yeah, he was. He he slept so much. We were like, yeah, we got the baby jackpot. He sleeps all the time, and he still has good days. But recently, he's been waking up a lot in the night, which has been a little stressful for us. We are very lucky, though, that we live with my parents in law. So, you know, sometimes if we're feeling really tired and they're home from work, they're just like, give us the baby, go take a nap. And that's really great for for both of us to, you know, **catch up on some Z's** that we miss during the night.

**Andrew:** Nice. Has there been anything unexpected that **came out of left field** and you were like, wow, I didn't think this would be a part of parenting, but it is.

**Kassy:** Nothing I was super surprised by. This I knew was going to happen, but it was still a little bit of a shock. I grew up in a very girl centered family. I have all sisters and my mom is very girly, girly. But I have a son and I knew that when I changed his diaper that, you know, he might shoot at me. Just the first few times he did it was just hysterical. His little torpedo of pee coming to attack.

**Andrew:** A pee attack.

**Kassy:** Yeah, I never got any on my face or anything, but it was hilarious. He doesn't really do it anymore, though. So, it must be only a newborn thing.

**Andrew:** A joke that only a mother could love, getting peed on by their son. Yes.

**Kassy:** Oh, to segue into that. I read some messages on the Discord and I just want to say thank you to all of our listeners that congratulated me for my son. And I know that a lot of you were curious about my... my cloth diapering journey.

**Andrew:** Right, right.

**Kassy:** And yeah, I want to tell you that it has been a success.

**Andrew:** Nice.

**Kassy:** We have had to, you know, tweak the routine a bit and we've moved to disposable diapers at night hoping that maybe he'll sleep more if he's drier feeling. But during the day, we use cloth diapers exclusively and it's really not bad. At first, we only had a small amount of newborn size diapers. So, we were doing laundry literally every single day. And now we can do it maybe every three or four days, which has really taken the pressure off. Honestly, it wasn't so bad in the newborn phase because everything is so new and chaotic you... you don't really notice one extra step in your routine. But now that we're more relaxed, I guess, in our schedule, it's nice not having to do laundry so much.



**Andrew:** And how about you and your husband in terms of divvying up the labor? Like who does what? Do you have clearly defined rules that you each take care of? Where like maybe one of you wakes up in the night to take care of the baby if he cries, or is it just sort of like you're freestyling it as you go, making it up as you go?

**Kassy:** We were kind of freestyling it, but I feel like we've gotten into our own little routines. I've been working really hard to try to breastfeed him. That's a struggle, Andrew. I **won't go into it here**. But for all the mom listeners who have done it, I clap for you. It is not easy.

**Andrew:** OK.

**Kassy:** So that's been one of my biggest jobs. I have to wake up for that in the middle of the night and everything that goes into that. But my husband is so supportive in terms of like washing dishes or preparing foods or washing the cloth diapers a lot of the time. So sweet. And we both take turns taking care of our son. We love playing with him. I think the biggest struggle we both have is neither of us are morning people. But our son likes to wake up usually between 6 and 7 a.m., and every morning we're like rock, paper, scissors, who's going to wake up and have to go out into the living room and play with him that early?

**Andrew:** So how do you play with him? Because I imagine just several months old, he's obviously not walking or not crawling. Does he make any vocalizations or is he just sort of following you with his eyes and laughing? Or what kind of games are you playing together?

**Kassy:** Yeah, he's still a bit of a potato. So, he doesn't have a lot of movement yet.

**Andrew:** OK.

**Kassy:** He's starting to be able to grab things now. We have rattles for him to shake around and he has a cute little mobile with a mirror that he can hit with his hand and stare at, which is pretty cute. I've started playing patty cake with him. He can't clap, of course, but I'll clap and then I'll do the patty cake and he giggles a lot when we get to the like, roll it, pat it.

**Andrew:** Nice.

**Kassy:** What else? He loves walks. We've started using our baby carrier. So, I love feeling like a kangaroo. He's right there in front of me and he can stare out at the trees and the people passing by. It's pretty fun.

**Andrew:** I wanted to ask you about the significance of the first 100 days in Korean culture. You messaged me not too long ago and you just said, "Oh, our son's 100th day birthday just passed." And I thought that's a funny expression because a birthday is one year, but 100 days is not a year, but I guess that's...

**Kassy:** Did I write that? I didn't even realize.

**Andrew:** I know it's a significant thing, but I would love for you to give me some more details about that. What is the significance of those first 100 days?

**Kassy:** Well, in Korea, you know, not that long ago, a few decades ago, Korea was very poor, and they didn't have a lot of food or resources. So, a lot of babies didn't make it to 100 days. The infant mortality rate was quite high. So, families in the past would have a big celebration when their baby made it past 100 days because they felt like that was a sign that they'd probably keep living.

**Andrew:** Right. Like the most vulnerable period had passed.

**Kassy:** Exactly. So, I think in the past they would have parties or have family and friends get together with presents and food. We didn't do anything too big for our son's 100 days, but we still invited his aunt and uncle, and we had cake, and it was really nice.

**Andrew:** Awesome. It's a big milestone. And I'd be curious about our listeners too in different cultures around the world if there's anything similar. Kassy, I have to ask you one more question here before we wrap up. And that's just about the language you're using with your baby. Because, you know, I'm a language geek and I think our listeners are as well. So obviously your child is going to be bilingual. I think that's probably **a given**. But how are you speaking to your baby? Are you speaking to him in English and your husband speaking to him in Korean? Or are you both using English at home? What are you trying to do? Because he's like right where we are right now. He's learning English just like all of our listeners are at the moment. So, what's your strategy there?

**Kassy:** I think it'll be different when we move into our own place next year. But as I said, we're currently with my in-laws who do not speak English. So, I speak English to my son, but he's almost completely surrounded by Korean most of the time, which is OK. I'm guessing that he will probably start going to an American international school quite early, maybe three or four years old. And from there, he'll be learning exclusively in English. So, you know, if he's using Korean more the first few years of his life, I don't think it's a big deal.

**Andrew:** It'll be depressing when he passes our skill level, Kassy, in just a few years.

**Kassy:** Exactly.

**Andrew:** We've been struggling learning the language for years and years and years, and he'll get better than us in just three or four years, probably.

**Kassy:** Maybe I'll improve. My aunt in Sweden, when her kids started going to school and doing their schoolwork in Swedish, her level escalated because she had to help them with their homework. So maybe that'll be me.

**Andrew:** Yeah, I think so. And also, just like daily verbs and daily activities that sometimes you don't use as an adult, but are really, really needed for fluent speaking. I think you use with kids all the time, you know, like pick this up, bring this over here, spin around, bend down, all of these things that like we don't just use when we're at the coffee shop talking to our friends, but then when you're in like a daily life situation and you actually need it, all of this language is super, super important.

**Kassy:** It's true. One of my favorite hobbies these days to do with my husband is we'll like test each other on our new baby lingo that we've learned. I'll be like, "What's this in English?" And he'll go, "What's this in Korean?" It's a pretty fun game to play. Our favorite word is binky. I don't know what they call it in Canada. You know, a pacifier, the thing that babies suck on. Do you call it pacifier, binky?

**Andrew:** We call it a pacifier.

**Kassy:** Yeah, the slang term in America is binky.

**Andrew:** OK.

**Kassy:** I heard in Australia, it's dummy.

**Andrew:** A dummy!

**Kassy:** And yeah, in Korea, it's *Jjokjjogi*.

**Andrew:** Interesting. OK. So, you're improving your language skills alongside your son at the same time.

**Kassy:** Yes.

**Andrew:** All right. Well, Kassy, thanks for the update and congratulations once again. I'm so excited to hear that everything's going well for you and your young family, and we'll continue to get you back onto Culips to give us some stories. I'm sure you're going to have so many funny stories and adventures to let us in on as your son gets bigger.

**Kassy:** Yes, I can't wait.

**Andrew:** That brings us to the end of this lesson. Talk to you next time. Bye!

## Detailed Explanations

### To drop a hint

Phrase, informal

In this episode, Andrew says, "So, you kind of **dropped a hint** about the baby. You said 'he,' so it's a boy." Here, Andrew is saying that Kassy suggested something without saying it directly. She didn't say outright that the baby was a boy, but by saying "he," she gave a small clue, or "hint," about the baby's gender.

To **drop a hint** means to give a small, indirect clue or suggestion about something, without directly saying it. When you **drop a hint**, you are giving someone a piece of information or making them think about something, but you aren't saying it clearly or openly.

You can use "**drop a hint**" when you want to suggest something subtly, without giving it away completely. For example, if you want a friend to know that you like a particular gift without saying it directly, you might **drop a hint** by saying, "I love when people give me things with my favorite color." You're not directly asking for that gift, but you're giving a clue.

When you "**drop a hint**," it's like you're dropping something small or discreet into a conversation or situation. To help remember this, imagine throwing or dropping a small stone into a pond and waiting to see the ripples it creates.

Similar expressions include "give a clue" and "hint at." Both can mean to provide subtle information without saying something directly and openly.

Here are a couple more examples with **to drop a hint**:

**Sophia:** I've been trying to figure out if I have a chance at the promotion.

**Ted:** Well, your manager **dropped a hint** in the meeting last week. She mentioned that you're doing a great job and might be ready for more responsibilities.

**Sophia:** Oh, I didn't catch that. I guess it's time to prepare for the next step!

**Kristy:** So, have you decided on your major yet? I think your parents mentioned something about your cousin being a lawyer and said it could be a great future for you too.

**Ben:** Oh, my parents have been **dropping hints** about that, but I'm not sure. I haven't made my decision yet.

## To walk on eggshells

Idiom

In the episode, Kassy mentions that after her baby was born, she was "**walking on eggshells**" when handling him, especially because he was so tiny. She describes carrying him very carefully and making sure he was breathing while sleeping. In this case, Kassy is using this expression to describe how cautious and gentle she had to be with her newborn, showing the delicate nature of caring for him in those early days.

"**To walk on eggshells**" means to be extremely careful in a situation to avoid making mistakes, causing trouble, or upsetting someone. This is usually used when you need to be sensitive or cautious, especially in delicate or tense situations. For example, you might **walk on eggshells** around someone who is easily angered or upset, trying not to say or do anything that could make them angry.

The phrase likely comes from the idea that eggshells are fragile and would break easily if you stepped on them. This image helps you understand that **walking on eggshells** involves being as careful as possible to avoid causing harm or creating conflict.

A similar expression is "to tiptoe around," which also means to be very careful or cautious about what you say or do in order to avoid upsetting someone or causing trouble.

Here are a couple more examples with **to walk on eggshells**:

**Marianna:** That last customer was really upset. How did you handle it?

**Rick:** Honestly, I was **walking on eggshells** the entire time. I tried to stay calm and agree with everything they said, just to avoid further complaints.

**Marianna:** Good job handling it, though. It's hard to know what to say in those situations.

**Rick:** It really is.

**Zach:** How's your mom doing after the surgery?

**Sasha:** She's recovering, but I have to **walk on eggshells** around her right now. She's a little emotional and sensitive after everything that happened.

**Zach:** I understand. It must be tough for both of you. Let me know if you need any help with anything.

**Sasha:** Thank you, I appreciate that.

## To catch (up on) some Z's Slang

"**To catch some Z's**" is a casual and playful way of saying you're going to sleep or rest. This informal phrase is used in situations when you're tired and need to rest, often after being sleep-deprived or busy.

In the episode, Kassy mentions that she and her husband take turns with their baby and sometimes ask their parents-in-law to help so they can "**catch up on some Z's**." The addition of "up on" to the original expression "**to catch some Z's**" gives the phrase a slightly different meaning. It suggests that Kassy hasn't been getting enough sleep and now needs to recover or make up for lost sleep. So, when Kassy says she wants to "**catch up on some Z's**," it means she's trying to sleep more than usual because she hasn't had enough sleep lately.

For example, if someone has been working long hours and hasn't had much time to sleep, they might say, "I need to **catch up on some Z's** this weekend." This means they plan to sleep extra in order to recover from a lack of sleep.

The expression "**to catch some Z's**" comes from the idea that the letter "Z" represents snoring or the sound of sleep (when you hear someone snoring, it sounds like "Zzz.") To help remember this expression, think of how the letter "Z" is associated with sleep in cartoons or comics, where characters often show sleep with the symbol "Zzz" above their heads. This can help remind you that "**catching some Z's**" simply means getting some sleep.

Here are a couple more examples with **to catch (up on) some Z's**:

**Julie:** How was your day off?

**Pete:** It was great! I took a long nap and **caught up on some Z's**. I needed it after a busy month.

**Julie:** That's good to hear. You deserve it!

**Fred:** It's 3AM! I can't believe you're still up working.

**Pam:** You're right. It's getting late, I should probably head to bed. I'm exhausted!

**Fred:** You've been up all night. Just **go catch some Z's**. You'll feel much better in the morning.



## To come out of left field

### Idiom

In this episode, Andrew asks Kassy if there's anything unexpected in parenting that "**came out of left field**." He's referring to situations or moments that surprised her. Kassy responds that while she expected some surprises, one moment still surprised her – when her baby shot pee at her during diaper changes. Although she knew it could happen, the experience still surprised her, making it an unexpected event that "**came out of left field**."

"**To come out of left field**" is an expression used to describe something that is unexpected, surprising, or out of place. It often refers to a situation or comment that catches you off guard or seems unrelated to what was happening before. For example, if someone asks an unusual or unrelated question during a meeting, you could say, "That question **came out of left field**!"

The phrase comes from baseball, where a ball hit to "left field" might be unexpected and surprising to players who are not ready for it. In everyday use, it describes anything that seems out of nowhere or surprising, just like an unexpected baseball hit.

To remember the expression, think of a baseball game where you're focused on one area, and suddenly, a ball comes flying from an unexpected direction (left field). This is how you might feel when something surprising happens that you weren't prepared for.

Similar expressions include "to catch off guard", "come as a surprise", and "to come as a shock."

Here are a couple more examples with **to come out of left field**:

**Esther:** I thought the meeting was going well, but suddenly, our manager announced a complete change in the project direction.

**Seth:** That really **came out of left field**. We were all expecting to discuss the timeline, not a major shift in strategy!

**Esther:** I hope we can cope with these unexpected changes and finish by the deadline...

**Mark:** So, my brother says he's thinking of moving abroad.

**Aria:** Wow, that **came out of left field**. He's never talked about leaving the country before!

**Mark:** I know. Hearing that news was a shock for all of us.

## To (not) go into [something]

### Phrasal verb

When talking about the struggles of breastfeeding, Kassy says, "I **won't go into it here**". She's saying that she won't talk about the topic in detail because it's a personal matter, or because it might take too long to explain.

"**To go into [something]**" is a phrasal verb that means to start discussing or explaining something in detail. For example, if you're talking about a project and you want to give all the details, you might say, "I'll **go into the details** later." On the other hand, when you don't want to discuss something in detail, you can use the expression "**not go into**" to indicate that you'll only mention the topic briefly or avoid talking about it completely.

The phrase "**to not go into [something]**" is helpful in situations where you don't want to provide a lot of details about something sensitive. It's a great way of saying that you'll avoid or limit how much you say about a certain topic.

You might add "here" (like Kassy did in the episode) or "now" to this expression to show that you're willing to discuss it later. For instance, you might say something like, "It's a bit complicated, and I don't want **to go into it** right now, but I'll explain when I can."

To remember the expression, think about "going into" a room. If you "go into" a room, you're entering it to explore or explain what's inside. Similarly, when you "go into" a subject or topic, you're explaining it in details.

Here are a couple more examples with **to (not) go into [something]**:

**Dennis:** I heard your family is going through some changes. Is everything OK?

**Sarah:** Yeah, there's a lot happening, but I'm **not going to go into it**. It's a bit personal right now.

**Dennis:** I understand. If you ever want to talk about it, I'm here for you.

**Sarah:** Thank you, Dennis.

**Linda:** Can you explain why the system is down? Is it a hardware issue?

**Nial:** I could **go into the technical details** of the problem, but it's a bit complex. I'll just say that the server is having some trouble.

**Linda:** Ahh, I see.

## A given

Noun

When Andrew says, "I think that's probably **a given**" in reference to Kassy's child being bilingual, he's suggesting that it's almost certain or obvious that the child will grow up speaking both English and Korean, considering that Kassy and her husband speak different languages.

The expression "**a given**" refers to something that is so obvious or certain that it doesn't need to be discussed or proven. It's used to talk about things that everyone agrees on or expects, like a fact or a rule. For example, if someone says, "It's **a given** that we need to finish the project by Friday," they are stating that finishing the project by Friday is something everyone already knows and agrees is important.

The origin of the expression comes from the idea that something is "given" or assumed, like a fact that doesn't need to be questioned. When you say something is **a given**, you are emphasizing that it's an established or agreed-upon fact, not something that needs further explanation.

Be careful when using "**a given**." It should be used for things that are clearly accepted or understood by everyone. Don't use it for things that are still uncertain or up for discussion. For example, you wouldn't say "It's **a given** that the team will win the championship" if there's a pretty good chance that they might lose.

Here are a couple more examples with **a given**:

**Vincent:** Are we cooking a big meal for Thanksgiving this year again?

**Maria:** Of course, it's **a given** in our family! We always have a big dinner together.

**Vincent:** I don't know, I was hoping we could get a takeaway or something. Well, big dinner it is, then!

**Cam:** Do you think we'll need to hire a photographer for the wedding? I mean, it's just the two of us, so I'm not sure if we need that.

**Isa:** Absolutely! It's **a given**. We're going to want those memories captured!

**Cam:** You're right. It'll be nice to have professional photos to look back on.

**Isa:** Exactly!

## Expressions Quiz

**1. What does the phrase "to drop a hint" mean?**

- a) To openly tell someone something.
- b) To make a suggestion in a subtle or indirect way.
- c) To drop something by accident.
- d) To tell a secret loudly.

**2. If someone says they are "walking on eggshells," what are they likely doing?**

- a) Being extremely careful to avoid upsetting someone.
- b) Enjoying a fun, relaxing moment.
- c) Walking through an egg factory.
- d) Making a loud noise on purpose.

**3. What does "catching up on some Z's" mean?**

- a) Cleaning your house.
- b) Setting your alarm.
- c) Going to sleep to rest and recover from sleep deprivation.
- d) Watching a late-night movie.

**4. If you do NOT want to explain something in great detail, which of the following would be correct?**

- a) "I'll go into it."
- b) "I won't go into it."
- c) "That comes out of left field."
- d) "I'll catch up on some Z's."

**5. Which of the following is the best synonym for "a given"?**

- a) Something uncertain.
- b) Something surprising.
- c) Something that needs to be proven.
- d) Something assumed or expected.

## Listening Comprehension Quiz

6. What did Kassy crave during the early stages of her pregnancy?
7. What type of birth did Kassy have?
8. How long did Kassy stay in the hospital after the birth?
9. What did Kassy say about her baby's appearance?
10. What is Kassy's current strategy for teaching her son languages?

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## Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the biggest adjustments new parents face? If you are a parent, feel free to share your own experience. Even if you aren't a parent, how do you think your relationship with family or friends would change if you had a baby?
2. What do you think of raising a child in a bilingual or multilingual environment? Would you do that with your child? Why?
3. If you want someone to do something without directly asking, what kind of **hints** do you usually **drop**? Do you think this is effective or do you prefer being direct?
4. Think of a time when you had to **walk on eggshells** around someone, perhaps because they were upset or sensitive. What happened and how did you feel?
5. Are there any topics in your life that you prefer **not to go into** with others? Why do you avoid discussing them?

## Quiz Answers

1.b    2.a    3.c    4.b    5.d

6. Blueberries.

7. C-section.

8. Seven days.

9. Everyone has different opinions on who he looks like.

10. She speaks only English, and her husband speaks Korean.

### Episode credits

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