



Two old friends meet up again

Activity

English has a system of tags which speakers can put at the end of what they say. For example:

You're French, *aren't you?*
He's coming tonight, *is he?*

What do you think these tags are for? Make notes and/or discuss with a partner why you think speakers use tags. Are there other types of tags apart from the two types in the examples above?

Speakers and setting

<S 01> male (40s)
<S 02> male (40s)

Two old friends who haven't seen each other for a few years are 'catching up' with each other. They are in a village pub garden on an exceptionally hot summer's evening, talking about <S 01>'s children.

Transcript

- 1 <S 01> Are you still playing er
- 2 <S 02> |Guitar
- 3 <S 01> Irish music, yeah
- 4 <S 02> No I don't play very much now, no, not at all

- 6 country at one point
- 7 <S 02> [Laughs] No, I er ... we go, we listen to it quite a lot, every time we
- 8 go to Ireland we erm, you know, seek out good musicians and er do
- 9 quite a lot of listening and of course we still buy a lot of records,
- 10 bought a lot of records over the last few years, but erm, there's not
- 11 actually anybody to play with around here, you know [<S 01> mm]
- 12 there's a there's a session every Sunday night in Cambridge in a pub
- 13 and that's erm about it ... do you still listen to Scottish music?
- 14 <S 01> Ver ... since this pair have arrived [<S 02> mm] very very little, cos
- 15 you just don't have the time, and with the new house, and with the
- 16 garden [<S 02> Mm] occasionally I take fits of putting stuff on, not as
- 17 much as before
- 18 <S 02> They do I s'pose take up a lot of time, don't they, kids?
- 19 <S 01> |They take up a lot
- 20 of, I mean, normally, you get, if you're lucky they're all tucked up in
- 21 bed by eight-thirty [<S 02> mm] ... that's if you're lucky, and then er
- 22 <S 02> Do they sleep all night without erm waking up, did they wake up last
- 23 night, they didn't [<S 01> > no] did they, no, [<S 02> > no] didn't hear
- 24 a thing
- 25 <S 01> Jamie normally, you put him in his cot and he's ... he's gone
- 26 [<S 02> mm] he sleeps he's very good at sleeping [<S 02> mm]
- 27 Thomas is a bit of a pain [<S 02> ah] all sorts of things frighten him,
- 28 you know [<S 02> yeah] wakes up with nightmares and that
- 29 [<S 02> does he] yeah some nights we change beds about three or
- 30 four times, he comes into our bed and there's not enough room and
- 31 so I go into his bed and he comes back in so to my bed and his bed
- 32 and chopping and changing
- 33 <S 02> It's extraordinary to think they have had dreams, well, I suppose they
- 34 dream of images they've seen during the day, probably dream of that
- 35 bloomin' duck or something
- 36 <S 01> Or it just might be a car, noisy car going past the window or
- 37 something, wakes them up
- 38 <S 02> Mm ... it's going to be hot tonight ... in bed, isn't it
- 39 <S 01> Mm