



## Sèrie 1

### I. Listening comprehension (3 points)

#### The Rise of Pregnant Stand-Up

In this radio programme you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

*stand-up* – monòleg – monólogo

*pregnant* – embarassada - embarazada

*stretch mark* - estria – estría

*booker* – agent - agente

*lactation* – lactància - lactancia

Ready? Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme. [Now listen to the interview.]

**Interviewer:** Men have dominated stand-up comedy for a long time. But as women have come to the stage more often, one kind of performance has been hard not to notice: pregnant comedians popping up on high-profile comedy specials, late-night shows, and in clubs. Udane Castle, a pregnant comedian based in Boston, is with us today to talk about this phenomenon. Hi, Udane! Let's start from the beginning: what is it like to be a stand-up comedian?

**Udane:** Good evening! I am thrilled to be here. Being a comedian is the most fun and depressing lifestyle that I could possibly imagine.

I get to perform in front of hundreds of people and work with some of the funniest people in the world. It's the biggest rush that I've ever felt, and at times it is totally crazy to think about what I do and who I do it with.

But comedy also isolates you from a lot of people. You spend all day looking at the world to find out what's funny or weird about it rather than just living in the moment and enjoying social experiences. A couple of years ago, for example, I stopped going to clubs or bars with my friends, because all I could think about was how silly it was that everyone considered going out like that to be the highlight of their week.

**Interviewer:** What about when you're on stage? What does it feel like?

**Udane:** Everything has to be perfect. Your tone, your rhythm, your cadence, and especially your timing. You have to be charming and charismatic even though you don't know any of the people in front of you. You have to connect with that room full of



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strangers. All while those spotlights are cooking you. You have no idea how much they make you sweat.

**Interviewer:** You are pregnant now. Do you use your pregnancy as a topic for your stand-ups?

**Udane:** I do! In comedy, pregnancy is no longer seen as something that gets in the way of the act and the microphone stand. In fact, a baby on the way is now a rich source of stand-up material: stretch marks, placentas and all!

**Interviewer:** Tell us about your models—the people you look up to. Where have you found inspiration so far?

**Udane:** I love Ali Wong's monologues—she has done two Netflix specials while pregnant. She is hilarious when she talks about lactation consultants and diapers. I also really like Kara Klenk, a stand-up comedian in Los Angeles.

**Interviewer:** Is this something new? What was it like before?

**Udane:** It is. Let me tell you just a couple of examples. When Joan Rivers, who is considered a pioneer of women in comedy by many critics, appeared on “The Ed Sullivan Show” in 1967 she was carrying her daughter, Melissa. She was not allowed to say she was pregnant and was asked to wear a really uncomfortable dress to hide it. Also, just four years ago, Ophira Eisenberg, a comedian and the host of the comedy show “Ask Me Another”, said that some bookers had warned her that she might alienate her audience by talking about her pregnancy on stage.

**Interviewer:** What do you think has changed?

**Udane:** There is no comprehensive account of women in comedy, but comedians, club owners and bookers say there are more of them working today, even though they remain vastly outnumbered by men. And with women starting families later than they used to, female comics are now more likely to have established careers by the time they start having babies.

**Interviewer:** For women who have difficult pregnancies, I guess the travel often required for stand-up can be a real challenge. Do you know of any bad experiences so far?

**Udane:** Sadly, I do. Amy Schumer, a well-known comedian from New York, announced that she had to cancel the remainder of her tour last February. She had a pregnancy complication and was no longer allowed to fly. She wanted to push through and do her shows, but she had to prioritize her health and the baby's.

**Interviewer:** Do you think this tendency will last?



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**Udane:** I am not sure. As fun as it can be to play with expectations about maternal behavior and delicate pregnant ladies, many comics, including myself, look forward to the day that an expectant mom on stage is not unusual at all.

Adapted from the following sources:

"Amy Schumer, Ali Wong and the Rise of Pregnant Stand-Up", *The New York Times*, April 19, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/arts/pregnant-comedians-amy-schumer-ali-wong.html>

"What does it feel like to be a stand-up comedian?", *Quora*, <https://www.quora.com/What-does-it-feel-like-to-be-a-stand-up-comedian>



### Clau de respostes

1. How does Udane feel about being a comedian?

She can tell it has both advantages and disadvantages.

2. Why does Udane not go to clubs or bars anymore?

Because she thinks there are more meaningful ways to pass the time.

3. What is Udane's problem with the lights on stage?

They make her feel too hot.

4. Which of the following is **NOT** true about Udane?

She lives in Los Angeles, like Kara Klenk.

5. What happened to Joan Rivers in 1967?

She was asked to keep her pregnancy a secret.

6. According to Udane, female comics

are more frequent today than they used to be.

7. Which of the following best summarizes Amy Schumer's experience?

She had to cancel some shows because of a medical condition.

8. What does Udane think about using pregnancy on stage?

She hopes that people will normalize the image of a pregnant woman on stage.



### III. Reading comprehension

1. In this text, the word **immersion** (and **immersive**) refers to  
leisure experiences where people can interact with series or movies scenes.
2. In the second paragraph, the author of the text  
wonders why immersion experiences are popular now.
3. Netflix  
has incorporated new ways of making profits.
4. Which of the following is NOT TRUE about the Stranger Things experience?  
Only the show's actors take part in it.
5. The Queen's Ball  
attracts female Bridgerton fans of several ages.
6. Elizabeth Cohen thinks that  
the fans' contact with the fictional world has become normal.
7. Why does there seem to be a double standard for pop culture?  
Because immersion tends to be criticised more often than sports fandom.
8. Immersion experiences  
give people the chance to escape from real difficulties.