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The **Podcast** That Will Help You **Speak** English Fluently.  
With No Grammar and No Textbooks!

## **Episode #139**

How to activate your English vocabulary?

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Hi, everybody! I am Georgiana, your English teacher and founder of [SpeakEnglishPodcast.com](https://speakenglishpodcast.com). My mission is to help you speak English fluently.

In this episode:

- I'm going to talk briefly about how to **activate your English vocabulary**.
- Next, I will comment on the appearance of mysterious islands. Sometimes, on a given day, certain people have seen some structures on the horizon that have caused an element of surprise. What could it be?
- Finally, we will practice fluency with a short mini-story of questions and answers—the best exercise to speak without translating mentally.

First of all, I want to thank all of you who are writing to me. I read all the emails personally, and I also answer them myself.

One question I sometimes get is this:

### **How can I activate my English vocabulary?**

I've covered this topic before, but I think it's worth remembering. Most of the time, students **understand much more than they can talk**. That is, they have a lot of **passive vocabulary**, but **no active vocabulary** ready to be used in a conversation.

An easy way to improve, but sometimes not too obvious, is to **listen to the same audio several times**. This is one of the techniques I use in my [premium courses](#), although you can also use this podcast.

Let's say you have short audio with some **vocabulary** and **expressions** you want to **activate**. If you listen to it once, even if you understand it, **you will forget most things**, but if you listen, for example, **once a day for a week**, you will surely **activate** an essential part of the vocabulary.

Another way to **increase** the number of **repetitions** of words is to **listen** to a **specific topic**. This way, you

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are much more likely to hear many times the vocabulary that is characteristic of the topic.

Finally, you can listen to the same author, even if they speak about different subjects.

A useful resource is this **podcast**.

Ok. Let's continue with something a bit different.

I am going to comment briefly on something that I found very interesting.

Imagine the following situation: In the morning you decide to get up early and go to the beach for a walk along the shore. Half asleep, you look up at the horizon and notice something strange. You try to focus a little more and you see a kind of island. "That island wasn't there before," you think.

What I've just told you is something that has surely happened to many people.

Now I am going to explain to you what has happened here, but... What do you think it is? Is it possible that it is really a new island emerging from the depths of the earth? Is it an invasion of aliens?

I know my students are very smart, and I think they already know what it is. It's an optical effect. This effect is called Fata Morgana. It comes from Italian because this phenomenon can be observed in Sicily, Italy.

This optical effect is produced when hot air and cold air near the surface act as a refracting lens. If there is a certain object on the horizon it can be seen elongated and elevated, producing strange and mysterious shapes. This usually happens in the morning, after a cold night.

There are people who do not know what it is and even get scared. Some think it is a big structure, like a city, floating on the horizon.

If you are curious, you can search the internet for the expression "Fata Morgana".

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There are many very curious photos.

By the way, you can get the [transcript](#) of this episode and much more on my website:

[SpeakEnglishPodcast.com](http://SpeakEnglishPodcast.com)

## Mini-Story

(Improve your Fluency)

Very good. Now we move on to the **mini-story**.

Let's see how it works: I say a sentence with information.

Then I ask some questions about that information. After each question, there's a pause. It's your turn to answer! After each pause, I give the correct answer.

That's how I build the story.

Let's start!

**The swimmers witness an unusual scene on the beach.**

**Do the swimmers witness a usual scene?**

No. The swimmers do not witness a usual scene. They witness an unusual scene on the beach.

**Where do they witness that scene?**

On the beach. They witness it on the beach.

**Where are the swimmers? In a pool or on a beach?**

On the beach. The swimmers are on the beach.

**A kind of giant bridge appears on the horizon.**

**Does a giant unicorn appear?**

No. There is no giant unicorn. A giant bridge appears.

**Does a huge bridge appear on the horizon or next to the swimmers?**

On the horizon. That huge bridge appears on the horizon, not next to the swimmers.

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**What appears?**

A bridge. A giant bridge.

**Many swimmers are left with their mouths open and don't stop taking pictures.****Do many fish stay with their mouths open?**

No. No. Not fish. Many swimmers are left with their mouths open.

**Do swimmers get flies in their mouths?**

Well, we don't know. Maybe they do. The story doesn't say.

**Do swimmers stop taking pictures?**

No, they don't stop. They don't stop taking pictures of what they see on the horizon.

**What don't they stop doing?**

Pictures. They don't stop taking pictures.

**This optical effect is due to a temperature inversion.****Is this optical effect due to an aversion of temperature?**

No. No. This optical effect is due to temperature inversion. "Aversion" means rejection of something. Here we are talking about inversion.

**Why is this happening on the beach?**

Because of a temperature inversion.

**The separation between hot and cold air acts as a refracting lens.****What is separated? Hot air and...?**

Cold. Hot and cold air are separated.

**Does this air separation act as a refracting lens?**

Yes. It acts as a refracting lens. This optical illusion is called the Fata Morgana effect.

**What is "Fata Morgana"? A kind of pizza?**

No, no. Not a pizza. "Fata Morgana" means an optical illusion.

**What kind of illusion is it?**

Optical. It's an optical illusion.

All right, that's the end of this shot mini-story. I hope you liked it.

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As I said at the beginning, to **activate the vocabulary** and **patterns of the language**, you need to do **repetitions**.

This is the end of this short lesson. I really hope that you've enjoyed this story.

By the way, this is one of the techniques that I use in my [premium courses](#). I recommend you to take a look at:

[SpeakEnglishPodcast.com/courses](https://SpeakEnglishPodcast.com/courses)

Awesome! This is the end of this episode. Remember to **listen to it several times. It will help with your English.**

Take care! Bye! Bye!



*Georgiana*

founder of  
SpeakEnglishPodcast.com