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

Episode #180

LISTENING IN THE BACKGROUND

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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'll be talking about passive listening, or in other words, listening in the background.
- Later on, we'll practice conversation skills with the powerful Question & Answer technique.

Ok, let's get started!

In the language industry, there's an approach called **passive listening**. This means playing some English in the background while performing other tasks. In theory, you're learning because the brain is always learning, no matter how.

Interesting, huh? You just need to play some English while you're cleaning, jogging, surfing the Internet, etc.

Well, although this approach may be appealing to many of you, here's the bad news: **It doesn't work as a whole system for developing a complete fluency in English.**

The main drawback is that when we need to learn new content, our brain needs to pay attention, to be active.

So, in an ideal world, we would be 100% focused all the time while listening: We'd pay attention to every tiny detail: vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, etc.

However, as you may already know, idyllic things are sometimes hard to achieve. If you need perfect conditions every time you listen: for example, feeling rested, motivated, in a quiet place, then you will never start listening.

What you need is a compromise. It's ok to lose concentration from time to time.

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Here's my suggestion: For **new content**, try to **maintain your concentration as much as possible**.

However, **when you're repeating the same content, you don't need to focus 100% of your attention** anymore because, in this case, you're just remembering and consolidating.

Another aspect to keep in mind: in this case quantity is more important than quality. It means that when you listen for two hours, and you only focus on 70% of your attention, it's still more efficient than when you're listening for only 20 minutes, and you succeed to focus 100%.

The accumulation of hours and hours of listening it's what truly helps you to become fluent.

Just think about children. They're not always focused when they listen, but they always learn.

My takeaway for today is: Try to listen as much as you can. Being focused is essential when you're learning new content, but when you're already familiar with the material, what matters the most, it's the amount of time you spend listening.

Ok, let's move on to the next section.

Mini-Story

(Improve your speaking)

Here, I'll use the Question & Answer technique. This is the perfect lesson for automating your spoken English. This is how it works:

- I'll give you some information. (A phrase or two).
- I'll ask simple questions.
- After each question, there will be some seconds of silence: it's your turn to answer the

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question! Just try to give an easy and short answer, not a complex one.

- After you answer, I'll give you a correct answer.

This process will continue, and little by little, I'll be telling a story using questions and answers.

In this story, I will be using the verb "to commute." It means using public transport. You'll also practice the past with was/were, etc.

Ok, let's get started!

Sarah was learning English on her own.

Was Sarah learning Spanish on her own?
No. She wasn't learning Spanish on her own.
She was learning English on her own.

Was Sarah learning English at a language school?

No, no. She wasn't learning at a language school. She was learning on her own.

Who was learning English?

Sarah. Sarah was learning English.

What language was she learning?

English. Sarah was learning English.

Sarah was very busy, and she almost didn't have any free time.

Was Sarah very busy?

Yes. She was very busy. She almost didn't have any free time.

Did Sarah have free time?

No, no. She didn't have any free time. She was very busy.

What didn't she have?

Free time. She didn't have any free time.

How was Sarah at that moment?

She was busy. She was busy at that moment.

Did she have plenty of free time?

No, she didn't. She almost didn't have any free time.

When Sarah was commuting, she met Michael. He was also an English student.

Was Sarah sitting on a bench when she met someone?

No, no. She was commuting. In other words, she was using public transport.

What was she doing when she met Michael?

She was commuting. When she met Michael, she was commuting.

Whom did Sarah meet?

Michel. She met Michael, an English student.

Did Sarah meet John, a Spanish student?

No, no. She didn't meet John. She met Michael, an English student.

Were Sarah and Michael students?

Yes, they were students. They were English students.

What were they?

Students. They were students.

When they were together, they were listening to English content.

Were they listening to English content when they weren't together?

No, no. They were listening when they were together, not when they weren't.

Were they listening to English content?

Yes, they were listening to English content.

Who was listening to English content?

Michael and Sarah. They were listening to English content when they were together.

What were they doing when they were together?

Listening to English content. They were listening to English content when they were together.

They were happy because their English improved significantly.

Were they happy because their favorite soccer team won?

No, no. They were happy because their English improved significantly.

Was Sarah happy?

Yes, she was happy.

Was Michel happy?

Yes. He was happy too. They were both happy.

Why were they happy?

Because their English improved significantly, that's the reason why they were happy.

Very good! It's the end of this mini-story. Some of the questions may seem a bit too easy, but remember, **it's all about automating your English**. The idea is to be able to answer without hesitation, without thinking and, of course, without translating from your mother tongue.

This is one of the techniques that I use in my courses. I recommend you to take a look at:

[SpeakEnglishpodcast.com/courses](https://speakenglishpodcast.com/courses)

Ok! It's the end of this episode. Remember to listen to it several times. It will help you with your English.

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Georgiana

founder of
SpeakEnglishPodcast.com

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