EPISODE 210

Manage Your English Study Time

Full transcript · mini-story · vocabulary review

Hi, everybody! I am Georgiana, your English teacher and founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com. My mission is to help you speak English fluently.

Today, I'm going to talk about **managing** your English learning time.

Very good. Have you ever wondered how to find more time to do something? I ask myself that all the time. In fact, I think time runs away from me, and I don't have time to chase it.

The truth is time flies. And it flies for everyone. We always have something to do in today's society, and there is never time for anything. But don't despair. Even in these circumstances, you can find a good strategy to learn English.

As you know, my system is based on listening. Therefore, it is a significant advantage since you can take the lessons wherever you want on your mobile, tablet, or laptop. There is no need to sit in front of the computer and start studying.

In fact, I think very few people can do that consistently.

So, today, I'm going to give you some ideas about **managing** your English learning time.

#1 Free time during the day

We waste many minutes that we could be putting to good use throughout the day. The list is endless: driving the car; waiting in line at the bank; cleaning the house; walking the dog; ironing, etc.

If you add up all those minutes, you might be surprised how much time is wasted.

So, it's a good idea to try to make the most of all this **free time**.

One objection I sometimes get is the following:

You can't be 100% focused if you're doing something else, like driving a car.

Yes, it's true that you may not be fully focused, but let me tell you a secret. Your brain is always learning, even if you don't always pay close attention. For example, if you listen to a song without paying attention, you may later hum the melody without realizing it.

Let's say you listen for 1,000 hours during a year. 200 hours at full concentration. 500 hours at medium concentration and another 300 hours at low concentration.

You will have listened for 700 hours at high or medium concentration, which is not bad at all. And even if you're not paying much attention during those 300 hours, they're still useful.

Think of it this way: When you learned your native language, you weren't 100% focused every time you heard something—many times, you weren't paying attention.

When I learned Spanish, I spent a lot of time listening. And I wasn't always focused, but I accumulated hours and hours of listening, and I got much better over time.

#2 Small daily actions have a massive impact over time.

One day, I heard this idea. A person was complaining that he didn't have time to read. He hadn't opened a book in years. So, someone made this reasoning to him:

“Let’s say you only spend 10 minutes a day reading. Maybe 5 minutes in the morning and 5 minutes in the evening. I think that's a very modest goal. Let's do the math. If you take 1 minute to read one page, that's 10 pages a day. A month has 30 days, so you would read 300 pages. This is roughly equivalent to an average-sized book.

Reading one book per month equals 12 books per year. Over five years, that would be 60 books. So, imagine now that you go to a library and pick out 60 books. This would be what you would have learned, just by reading 10 minutes a day in 5 years."

I find the idea fascinating, as it shows in a very simple way how much time you can accumulate by devoting it to one thing consistently. I usually recommend at least an hour a day of listening, but if you can't, you can listen less. Over time, you will realize how much you are learning.

#3 It's a matter of priority

A friend of mine once told me: "You always find time for things that are a **priority** for you, and you never find time for things that are not."

Interesting reflection. If it is a priority, you will always find the time. Saying that we don't have time is something very recurrent. And it allows us to feel better when we are not doing something we are supposed to be doing.

So, one way to find the time is to reevaluate your priorities.

Now, let’s practice.

Mini-Story

Speaking Practice

Answer the questions aloud with short and quick responses. Repeat the Mini-Story several times to improve your speaking and listening.

Tom complained for years that he never had time to learn English.

Did Tom complain for years or seconds?
For years. He complained for years, not just seconds—a long time.

Did Tom complain that he didn't have time?
Yes, he complained about that. He complained that he didn't have time to learn English.

What didn't Tom have time for?
To learn English. He complained for years about that.

One day, Tom, out of curiosity, calculated the time he spent complaining.

Did Tom calculate the time he spent learning English?
No, he didn't calculate that. He calculated the time he spent complaining.

Why did Tom calculate that?
Because he was curious. He calculated it out of curiosity.

Who calculated something out of curiosity?
Tom. Tom calculated it.

It turned out that Tom complained about 37 hours and 14 minutes a week.

Did it turn out that Tom complained very little?
No. It turned out that Tom complained about an average of 37 hours and 14 minutes a week.

How many hours?
37. Thirty-seven hours.

And minutes?
14. Fourteen minutes. A total of 37 hours and 14 minutes. Not bad.

Tom decided to spend all the time he was complaining listening to English lessons.

Did Tom spend time thinking about how to complain even more?
No, no. He didn't spend the time doing that. He spent it listening to English lessons.

Did Tom learn English by complaining?
No. No. He learned English by listening to English lessons.

Eventually, Tom became fluent in English, but he started complaining in English about the time he wasted complaining.

What did Tom become?
Fluent in English. Eventually, he got fluent in English.

Did he start complaining about something?
Yes, he started complaining about something. He started complaining about the time he wasted complaining.

In what language was he complaining?
In English. Tom was complaining in English about the time he had previously wasted complaining.

Thanks for listening, and I'll see you in the next episode.

Review

Vocabulary from This Episode

Review the most useful words and expressions before listening again.

01 **time management** organizing how you use your available time.	05 **procrastinate** delay doing something that should be done.
02 **free time** time when you are not working or completing duties.	06 **routine** a regular and repeated way of doing things.
03 **priority** something considered more important than other things.	07 **schedule** a plan showing when activities will happen.
04 **daily action** a small task repeated every day.	08 **massive impact** a very large or important effect.

Continue your speaking practice

Build fluency with **guided audio lessons** and mini-stories.
Explore my Premium Courses >

Georgiana
Founder of Speak English Now Podcast
SpeakEnglishPodcast.com