



Kev's English Podcast Episode 5 : How to Improve your Listening skills

Sorry for the long delay...but I had other things to do. This episode is to help you to improve your listening skills, I hope it helps. I have a bit of a cold so my voice is not perfect but I don't think it is too bad...

My links..

If you want lessons, click here <https://www.italki.com/en/teacher/1078268>

If you want to see my videos, click here <https://www.youtube.com/@TheEnglishNative>

Hello and welcome to Kev's English Podcast. Real English every week. Hello hello and welcome to Kev's English Podcast.

It's been a while for sure, you know, but I've had lots of other things to do, you know, videos on my channel on YouTube, English with Kev in the English native, and of course lots of lessons and classes on Italki, so I haven't had a lot of time. But I started a new group on Telegram, also called English with Kev, so you can see there's a kind of a theme there, and I'm taking questions from students because I was finding that I didn't always have a topic for a podcast, a topic for something to speak about. So I thought what I would do is invite questions from my members, learners, students, etc, and respond to those.

So I sent a voice message to one of the members and she said, Kev, my level is not sufficient, I can't understand it. So I thought, right, how can I, what can I say to help her and you improve your listening skills? Now, if you go to any British Council or other school websites, they will say, if you want to improve your listening skills, do more listening. Well, that's true, but there's a little bit more to it than that.

That's what we're going to talk about today. So there's a number of stages. So the first thing that I would say, and I've said this to quite a few of my students on Italki in this last week or two, you need exposure.

Exposure to different sounds and accents of English. American English, British English, Australian, Canadian, non-native speaker English, etc. So many ways you can, you can get this exposure.

Listening to music, English songs, for example, listen to the lyrics of those. Podcasts, there are many, I don't know, must be thousands of them, thousands of podcasts in English these days. You can search them on Apple, iTunes, there's a new one I was introduced to, Castbox, quite a few.

A quick search on Google will identify them. So you can download lots of podcasts, you can watch videos on YouTube. YouTube actually has lots of things like radio plays, audiobooks, etc.

So you can listen to plays, books, TED talks, podcasts, etc. Now, what I would recommend then is we need to be doing active listening. Simply listening and letting a wall of sound wash over you is not particularly effective.

So, I recommend that you download MP3 podcasts with transcripts. So, for example, there's Teacher Luke, right, Luke's English podcast, one of the most well-known ones. He's got a transcript for every episode.

If you think of the BBC learning English, Six Minute English, the English we speak, amongst others, again you can download the transcript. Now that's better, so you can listen and read at the same time and make that mental connection between form and sound, you know, so that's something that you can have a look at. Another thing is, depending on the media player that you use, now I use one called GOM.

Now why I recommend that is because it's got a speed production increase feature, so you can slow it down, right, so if you download the audio, obviously you can't do this kind of if you're streaming, but if you download the MP3, say, what you can do is when you play it back you can slow the playback speed. So, if it's a bunch of natives and they're going kind of like... and you've got no idea what they're saying, you can reduce the speed of the playback. So, if you have the transcript, you can make notes on that accordingly, slow the playback speed down, and that's going to be a major help.

So, active listening is the key way, I think, so it's just, as I say, you know, right, so all exposure is good, but if you're not doing anything with it, anything active, if it's just acting as a wall of noise, of background noise, or sound, it's not going to be very effective. So, if you download it, slow the speed down, get the transcript, that's going to be a major help. I mean, you can listen to the radio if you can, if your comprehension skills are sufficient, you can listen to BBC, Radio 4, there's many online internet stations, but with those you don't have a script and you can't reduce the speed, yeah.

So, that's the main thing that I would suggest, is make it active, have a script, and try reducing the playback speed. Okay, right, I hope that helps, and I'll see you, well, soon, I hope, we'll see. Anyway, bye for now.