



All Ears English Episode 134:

One Secret Pronunciation Rule Your English Teachers Will Never Teach You

Gabby: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 134: “One Secret Pronunciation Rule Your English Teachers Will Never Teach You.”

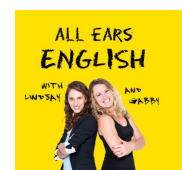
[Instrumental]

Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel,’ from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Join us, Lindsay and Gabby, for the “Key to Connecting with Americans”, a three part event that helps you go deeper into real English conversation. You guys have told us that you want to feel confident and not awkward at your next professional event in English. So we’re here to help. We’re going to help you to avoid cultural mistakes you don’t know you’re making and give you practical phrases that we use every day in professional situations. So reserve your spot now at www.AllEarsEnglish.com/Key. That’s k-e-y. Join us for the live events on June 17th, 24th, and July 1st, or register before July 1st and you can still receive the recordings of each event. See you there.

[Instrumental]



Lindsay: In this episode, you're gonna (going to) throw away your typical way of learning pronunciation because today you're going to learn a new way that's gonna (going to) change things for you.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Hey, Lindsay. How's it going?

Lindsay: Hey, Gabby.

Gabby: All right. Why didn't you ask me how I'm doing?

Lindsay: Well, I don't know. I didn't feel like it.

Gabby: Oh, oh. That's all right. I know sometimes we don't.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: I won't take it personally.

Lindsay: Yeah, sometimes we actually don't ask someone how they're doing, but you – but the person we talk to might reply with, "Doing good," "Doing well."

Gabby: Yeah, yeah.

Lindsay: It's so automatic for us.

Gabby: Right, right.

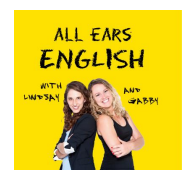
Lindsay: Okay.

Gabby: So, today, (uh), I have a little challenge for Lindsay.

Lindsay: Oh, boy.

Gabby: Yeah, we're, we're looking at tongue twisters, which are, (you know), phrases that have a lot of the same sound repeated. In this case, "shh" and "ss." And these are sounds that can be (kind of) difficult for English learners...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).



Gabby: ...especially Japanese, (um), maybe some other languages. But (um)...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...because, because right, you guys, Japanese, you have that “sh,” but you don’t have that “ss.”

Lindsay: Yeah, that’s right. Absolutely.

Gabby: So Lindsay’s going to do the first two lines as fast as possible.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: I wanna (want), I want you to finish in (like) two seconds.

Lindsay: And by the way, you guys need to come to our blog, to episode, (um), 134. So it’s AllEarsEnglish.com/134 to be able to read what this actually is.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: But here it is. I’m gonna (going to) say it really fast.

Gabby: Really fast. Ready, set, go.

Lindsay: “She sells sea shells on the seashore. The shells she sells are sea shells I’m sure.

Gabby: “For if she sells seashells on the seashore, Then I’m sure she sells seashore shells.

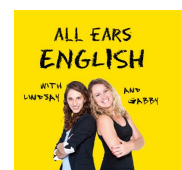
Lindsay: Oh my god. That was terrible, Gabby.

Gabby: I’m sorry, guys. I was just trying to go fast.

Lindsay: You need to work on your English.

Gabby: Well, (you know what), you know what it is -- because everyone keeps asking us, “How can I speak English faster?” And (you know what), that’s not what you really want.

Lindsay: Yes. Well, we know that what you really want is to speak fast like a native speaker...



Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: ...but that's – just because you speak fast, doesn't mean you're gonna (going to) sound like a native speaker.

Gabby: That's right, because we don't speak fast. We actually chunk words together and we use rhythm, just like a song, we use rhythm to convey meaning.

Lindsay: And that's why you love All Ears English.

Gabby: That's right. Because we, we do that in every episode naturally. We put words together that should go together and then we pause in between phrases.

Lindsay: That's why our, our words and our sentences are very clear.

Gabby: Right, right. And, and a lot of you have told us, "Oh, I love your podcasts because I can understand what you're saying." So, this is a different way of looking at a tongue twister today. We want to show you how to actually speak English clearly...

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: ...and quickly, but quickly is not the point...

Lindsay: Yeah.

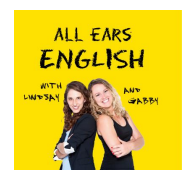
Gabby: ...being fast is not the point.

Lindsay: So, we're gonna (going to) teach you the opposite of what your average teacher would teach you...

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: ...when they use this phrase, when they use this tool of tongue twisters.

Gabby: That's right. Today, it's not about speaking fast, it's about speaking with rhythm and chunking your words together, putting together two or three words into a phrase and then pausing. And there are rules for this, but it



takes some, some practice and (uh), a lot of listening. So I would encourage you to keep listening to the podcasts. But a lot of the times we'll put together, (um), just, (uh), articles and nouns or, (um), a subject and a verb.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: (Um), so, (you know), there's, there's a lot of different things that'll go together. If you have a comma, you pause. There's a few different rules, but we're just gonna (going to) show you an example using this tongue twister. So let me show you, (right).

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: How would we, how would we chunk together this tongue twister?

Lindsay: So, maybe we should say it first without chunking and you say it with chunking. How 'bout (about) that?

Gabby: Sounds good.

Lindsay: Okay, here's the phrase without chunking. "She sells sea shells on the seashore."

Gabby: (Ugh), sounds awful.

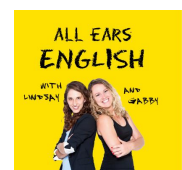
Lindsay: (Ugh).

Gabby: Okay. (Uh), here's the chunking. "She sells sea shells on the seashore."

Lindsay: Ooh.

Gabby: Okay, so I'm saying that quickly right. I didn't slow down, but I had some slight pauses. I'm gonna (going to) slow it down even more. I think that might be helpful. "She sells sea shells on the sea shore." Or you could chunk together the last four words, "on the seashore."

Lindsay: So, that was so much more clear to understand and so much easier to listen to.



Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: Let's try it again, the next line. I'm going to say it, (uh), without any rhythm or chunking and Gabby's gonna (going to) say it with the chunking.

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: "The shells she sells are sea shells I'm sure."

Gabby: (Ugh).

Lindsay: Oh.

Gabby: What did you say?

Lindsay: See no one can understand me.

Gabby: Exactly.

Lindsay: Now, I feel horrible.

Gabby: Well, and – sorry. But, that's the other point is, even if your pronunciation is not perfect, by using chunking, you're going to vastly improve the way people understand you. So this is (uh), a really good trick to know. So let me chunk that together for you. The (sou-), (ugh), sorry. "The shells she sells are sea shells I'm sure."

Lindsay: Excellent.

Gabby: Okay.

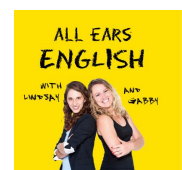
Lindsay: Excellent.

Gabby: And just a, a little, little slower. "The shells she sells are sea shells I'm sure."

Lindsay: Yeah, there's a lot of energy in your voice. There's a lot of...

Gabby: Thank you.

Lindsay: ...rhythm and there's excitement in there. It's fantastic. It's so much more interesting to listen to.



Gabby: Thank you. So I'm I'll – I'll switch with you. Let me do the last two ones...

Lindsay: Okay.

Gabby: ...as, (you know), (kind of) robotic with no pauses, no intonation. An intonation is a whole nother topic. (Um), but we're talking about pauses today. And you'll notice that we're chunking together every two to four words depending on what the words are; if they're prepositions or articles, they can (kind of) go together.

Lindsay: Okay.

Gabby: Here we go. "For if she sells sea shells on the sea shore."

Lindsay: Oh, boring. Hard to understand. I didn't get it. Come again? Here we go, here's the chunking. "For *if* she sells sea shells on the sea shore."

Gabby: Great.

Lindsay: Okay.

Gabby: Great.

Lindsay: One more time. "For *if* she sells sea shells on the sea shore..."

Gabby: Nice.

Lindsay: ...we know something else is coming.

Gabby: Yes, and I like how you really stressed "if." That's part...

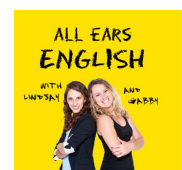
Lindsay: (Mm).

Gabby: ...of rhythm and intonation. Yeah. And (um), all right. So there's one more, one more line. I'll do it the robotic way. "Then I'm sure she sells sea shores." Wait, whoa! Hang on.

Lindsay: Oh, my gosh.

Gabby: "Then I'm sure she sells seashore shells." Whoo!

Lindsay; Whoo!



Gabby: Awful.

Lindsay: Let's see if I can do it any better. "Then I'm sure she sells seashore shells."

Gabby: Nice.

Lindsay: I know.

Gabby: That is not easy, but, (you know), you noticed, (right), it's so much...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: ...easier when we chunk the words together.

Lindsay: Yeah, so one more time. "Then I'm sure she sells seashore shells."

Gabby: Nice, nice. So it's easier for us to understand and it's easier for you to say, right?

Lindsay: Absolutely.

Gabby: It's not difficult, you guys. You just have to remember two words together. You give a slight pause to your listener and then you can look at the next two words or remember the next two words. So it's so much easier to use this trick called chunking. A chunk is just, (you know), two pieces together, two smaller pieces together. We were just eating a chocolate bar, right Lindsay.

Lindsay: A chunk of chocolate.

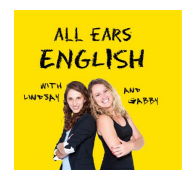
Gabby: And, yeah, we broke off, (you know), two pieces...

Lindsay: (Um-huh).

Gabby: ...four pieces.

Lindsay: It'll just make you a more dynamic speaker...

Gabby: Yeah.



Lindsay: ...it'll make you a more interesting speaker. It'll just make it easier for your -- for you to connect with people and, again, that's our goal here at All Ears English, is to connect...

Gabby: Absolutely.

Lindsay: ...with people.

Gabby: Absolutely. Absolutely, we want others to understand you. So this is a trick that you can use very easily to improve your communication and build relationships because you need to be able to talk, right. (Um), there's a lot of other tricks that we can talk about in other episodes, (you know), (uh), just things you talk about how extending syllables and intonation, and stress, but for today, the takeaway is chunk your words together; two to four words should be chunked together.

Lindsay: You got it. Thanks for the idea.

Gabby: No problem.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

