



All Ears English Episode 136:

Lisa from English Fluency Now Talks About Pacific Northwest Culture

Gabby: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 136: “Lisa from English Fluency Now Talks About Pacific Northwest Culture.”

[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]

Lindsay: So, Gabby, how can our listeners become insiders with All Ears English?

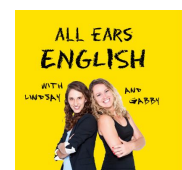
Gabby: Go to www.AllEarsEnglish.com/100. It’s 1-0-0.

Lindsay: What can they get there?

Gabby: That’s where you get on our email list, our insider list, where we have conversations with you on email and even sometimes on Skype.

Lindsay: But it’s not just getting on the list, there’s something even more awesome, there, that they can get, right?

Gabby: That’s right, because 100 means “100 Most Common Phrases in the English Language,” an e-book that we made just for you.



Lindsay: Super useful and up till (until) today, (uh), 900 people have downloaded this e-book so it's awesome.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: In today's episode, you'll hear from Lisa about the culture of Seattle and the birthplace of Starbucks.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Hey, Gabby. How are you feeling today?

Gabby: Hey, Lindsay. I'm good. How are you?

Lindsay: Excellent, excellent. I'm excited. We have a great guest today. We have Lisa Biskup on the show from English Fluency Now and Lisa's based in Washington State. And, so Washington State is in a region called the Pacific Northwest.

Gabby: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: So where do we find the Pacific Northwest, just in case our listeners are wondering. So, it's above California...

Lisa: Right.

Lindsay: ...and below Canada.

Lisa: Right.

Lindsay: So over on the West Coast.

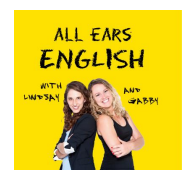
Gabby: (Mm-hm).

Lindsay: Okay, so the upper left-hand corner of the United States.

Lisa: Right.

Lindsay: All right. Great. So, Lisa, thanks for joining us.

Lisa: All right. (Uh), you're welcome. Thank you for having me.



Lindsay: Excellent, excellent. So Lisa we love to talk about regional cultures, (uh), on this podcast. (Like), what makes different regions different and unique from others? Can you tell us three things about your region, the Pacific Northwest, that are different from, for example, New England?

Gabby: (Um).

Lisa: Okay. Well, (um) I haven't spent very much time in New England, but I can definitely tell you that here in the Pacific Northwest and especially in Washington State, one of the things that I think, (uh), makes us (kind of) different from the rest of the, (uh), United States is that we're really focused on the environment and we spend a lot of time outdoors. We really appreciate the mountains, the, the water waves, the Pacific Ocean, the Puget Sound, and we just really like being outside.

(You know), it, it rains a lot, especially (like) in areas like Seattle, but even when it's raining, people like to go outside and then of course when it's not raining, when it's the spring or summertime, it's beautiful. (Uh), it's not too hot, it's just perfect weather. And so a lot of people go hiking, they go kayaking, boating, that type of thing. So sailing...

Gabby: That is wonderful.

Lisa: ...of course. Yeah.

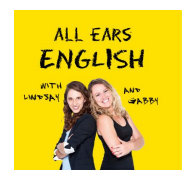
Lindsay: Yeah, I like that. So people – is it because of the rain that people are taking advantage of the outdoors more?

Lisa: Yeah, maybe.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: Yeah, (I think) certainly, (uh), (you know), it doesn't really – we don't have the extremes of weather as some other places in the United States have, so in the winter, even though it might be raining, and it might be cool weather, it never is – really freezing with a lot of snow and ice.

Lindsay: Okay.



Lisa: It's a, it's a mild temperature so it can – it's easy to be outside, (you know).

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: So you – yeah. So then of course in the summer, it's sunny, and it's warm, but you're not dying like in Arizona or something.

Gabby: (Mm).

Lindsay: Yeah.

Lisa: (You know), it's pleasant.

Gabby: Nice mild and...

Lisa: Yeah.

Lindsay: I really like that.

Lisa: It is great. (You know), there's a lot of greenery and so it's just pleasant to be outside, and so I think a lot of people just really appreciate, (uh), an outdoor lifestyle.

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: Yeah, I like that idea. I like the idea of living in a place where people like to get outside, they value the outdoors.

Gabby: Yeah. So there's, there's a term I just thought of. Do you think, (um), people in Seattle would consider the culture (sort of) crunchy?

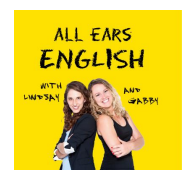
Lisa: Yeah, probably.

Gabby: Okay.

Lisa: (Uh), they might consider it or other people might, (uh), call it that.

Gabby: Crunchy, it means (kind of), (like), people who like the outdoors. Or, (you know), I think it comes from the food we eat for breakfast, called Granola.

Lindsay: Right.



Gabby: Right. [crosstalk] And that has a nice crunch to it...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...(uh)...

Lisa: Yeah.

Gabby: ...the crunch-like...

Lisa: So...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: Yeah, that's true and that's another thing that is different about (uh) this area, especially if you, if you live in Washington or the Pacific Northwest, even including parts of, (uh), Oregon, (you know), Northern California...

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: ...and you even try to travel to other parts of the United States, one of the things that can be difficult is finding good, (uh), local, organic food.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: So that's what a lot of people value here.

Lindsay: (Mm).

Lisa: (Uh), we support local farms, we support organic farming, (you know), raising animals in, (uh), humane ways, like grass feed beef

Gabby: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: Yes.

Lisa: ...(uh), (you know), chickens that get to wander around.

Lindsay: (Um).



Lisa: That's really popular here, too, people...

Lindsay: Very cool.

Lisa: ...using, (you know), using their hard earned dollars to buy, (uh), these types of products, which are, (you know), often times more expensive, but it's a value. People [crosstalk]...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Absolutely.

Lindsay: I'm guessing you have a lot of Farmers Markets as well, I would imagine. Yeah.

Lisa: Absolutely.

Gabby: Oh, that's wonderful.

Lisa: Absolutely, yeah. Farmers Markets in, in most of the towns around Washington...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: ...a lot of, (uh), vendors are organic farmers. If you go to Seattle, and you go to Pike's Place Market, (you know), a lot of, (uh), farmers come around, from around different parts of Washington. The farmers come and they get to sell their stuff at the Pike's Place Market, and other markets, (um), around Seattle as (wear), well. So...

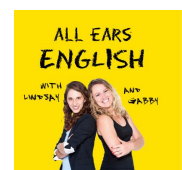
Lindsay: (Um), I like that.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: And speaking of organic food and maybe organic drinks, did you mention something about the coffee culture in...

Lisa: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...(Se-), in Washington, the Pacific Northwest?



Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: Yeah, absolutely. (Uh), I notice when people come, (uh), to Washington, they're always surprised about how important coffee is to people here and so of course Starbucks, (you know), this is where Starbucks...

Lindsay: Right.

Lisa: ...started.

Gabby: Right.

Lisa: (Um)...

Lindsay: Oh, yeah. That's a big deal.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: Yeah, it's a really big deal. So, (um), Starbucks has brought this (kind of) coffee, or café culture to many places throughout the United States and the world, but even, (um), in Washington, there are even other local, (uh), coffee shops and cafes, (um), local roasters, local coffee roasters. And so each, (you know), a lot of the towns -- I don't know if every town -- but a lot of towns, and especially even in Seattle still, there are lots of individually, no independent coffee roasters and they roast their own blends, and they have their own followers, and so a lot of people, they just have to have a good cup of coffee. So they're...

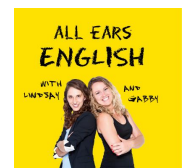
Lindsay: Yeah.

Lisa: ... they're pretty picky...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Lisa: ...about their coffee.

Lindsay: Yeah. I remember being pleasantly surprised when I went out to visit a friend, (like), five years ago -- I was living in New York at the time and I went to Seattle to visit her -- and I was stunned by that. I was able to (like) bounce from café to café all day just by...



Lisa: Oh yeah.

Lindsay: ...myself reading a book and...

Gabby: Wow!

Lindsay: ...enjoying the coffee culture. I really -- it's different from here in Boston.

Gabby: (Hm).

Lisa: (Hm).

Lindsay: Yeah. That's a...

Gabby: Wonderful.

Lindsay: ...really cool aspect of that, of that area. I like that.

Gabby: Wow. Nice.

Lisa: Yeah, definitely. (I mean), the coffee culture, (you know), it's one of the things if you go to Seattle -- of course, you'll find a Starbucks, maybe a Pete's or something, but you'll find lots of local, smaller, (uh), local coffee shops and it's a really great way for people to meet other people, (you know). So especially if you have your listeners -- maybe if they're coming to visit the United States...

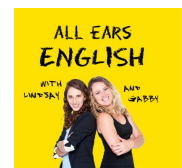
Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: ...and they want to go and, (you know), talk to some native people, (you know)...

Gabby: Right.

Lisa: ...people from Seattle or from Washington and practice their English or something -- going to a café -- especially if you go to the (ca-), same café, (like), every day for a couple of days...

Gabby: Yeah.



Lisa: ...you're going to see all the locals, all the people who just -- they basically camp out there, (you know).

Gabby: Wow! Yeah.

Lisa: They come in, get their coffee, set up their laptop and they'll be there for a couple of hours.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: What a great tip.

Lindsay: And again...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...like the birthplace of Starbucks, how cool. So the original Starbucks was there, was in Seattle, (right), near Park Place? Is that where that was?

Lisa: Pike's ... Yeah, Pike's Market.

Lindsay: Pike's Market. Okay. Pike's Market. Great.

Lisa: Pike's Place Market.

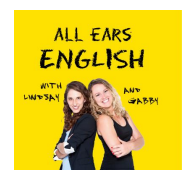
Lindsay: So that might be a cool place for people to visit if they were visiting Seattle.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: Oh, yeah, absolutely. If you're gonna (going to) go to Seattle, that's definitely, (uh), (uh), destination, a place where you want to, (uh), visit. There's lots of cool stuff happening there. It's really lively -- street performers, lots of, (uh) café's, different types of restaurants. And it's not too far away from the Seattle Center, which people are probably familiar with. Seattle Center is the place that has the, the Space Needle. You guys...

Lindsay: Ah!

Lisa: ..remember the Space Needle? You guys know about that?



Lindsay: Yeah. Yeah, I think I went there when I was a kid once. Very cool.

Lisa: Yeah.

Lindsay: Very cool. So...

Lisa: Yeah, so that's where there's also a lot of stuff happening. So, (uh), it's (kind of) like the downtown area of Seattle.

Lindsay: Got it and is there one more thing that makes the Pacific Northwest a little bit different, a little bit unique?

Lisa: Well, it (kind of), (um) stems from, (you know), being outside, caring about nature. So I would say it would be the, the kind of progressive or, or liberal politics of this area. It's not to say that, of course, everybody's a progressive or a liberal or a Democrat or something, but a lot of people do value things like, (um), the environment...

Gabby: (Uh-hm).

Lisa: ...(you know), gay, gay marriage has passed, they legalized marijuana for, (uh), medical use, that type of thing. So a lot of social issues, environmental issues, (um), are supported in this area -- some issues that maybe in some other states of the United States would be, (uh), not very well supported.

Gabby: Yeah, that's interesting.

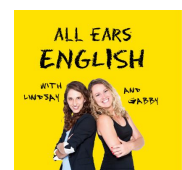
Lindsay: Right. That's the interesting thing about the US, we have a huge -- we have lots of differences in politics, (right), between the Pacific Northwest...

Lisa: Absolutely.

Lindsay: ...you go to the South, it's different.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: And what's the change that they've recently made to the minimum wage?



Lisa: Oh yeah. And so, just recently the City of Seattle, they passed (uh) a, a new law that's going to change the minimum wage from a little bit over \$9 an hour, which it is right now, to eventually after a couple of years to \$15...

Lindsay: Wow!

Gabby: Wow!

Lisa: ...an hour.

Lindsay: That's a huge jump.

Lisa: So that's the idea of a living wage. (You know), somebody could actually live, (you know), not in a wealthy, (you know), part of town necessarily...

Lindsay: Right.

Lisa: ...but they can just afford to live even if they're just getting minimum wage.

Gabby: Yeah. (I mean), just to give our listeners some perspective. If you're not really familiar with, (you know), how much money it takes to live in the US, having a minimum wage of \$9 an hour really doesn't allow you to live comfortably. Fifteen dollars an hour you could get by, meaning you could...

Lisa: Yeah.

Gabby: ...(you know), have a place to live...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh), (uh-huh).

Gabby: ...and buy food to eat...

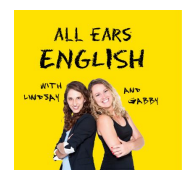
Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...and that kind of thing. Yeah.

Lisa: Definitely.

Lindsay: It also depends a lot on where you're living, right.

Gabby: Of course.



Lindsay: So in Boston...

Lisa: Sure.

Lindsay: ...definitely \$9 would be hard. In some parts of the South, like Alabama, maybe that would be easier, I would...

Gabby: Maybe.

Lindsay: ...I would think, right?

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: But yeah, in general \$9 is a tough life.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Nine dollars an hour.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lisa: Yeah, so it's just the idea that, (you know), we want to have our people who live here, (you know), the people who are residents of Washington be able to live a decent life. (You know), it's not trying to make everybody rich, obviously...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: (Um).

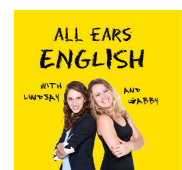
Lisa: ...but at least you can, (you know), have a place to live, pay for your basic needs, maybe you have to own a car or something like that, but (um)...

Gabby: Right, right.

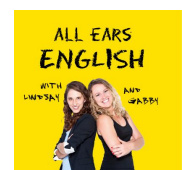
Lindsay: But how is that going over for entrepreneurs and business owners?

Lisa: Well, of course every, (you know), good idea has some drawbacks for somebody.

Gabby: Yeah.



- Lisa:** So it, it might be tough on, (uh), small businesses who need to pay their employees a lot more than they're used to, but I'm, I'm not familiar completely with the way the law was written. So I have been reading some things that it's going to be implemented over time and that there are some, (uh), different ways that it will be implemented, depending on how large of a business you work for. So if you're a business...
- Gabby:** Right.
- Lisa:** ...that has 500 employees versus a business that has 20 employees, that type of thing.
- Lindsay:** Okay.
- Lisa:** So I'm sure they're going to be working with business owners because the intent is certainly not to put a bunch of people out of business.
- Gabby:** Right.
- Lindsay:** Exactly. Okay, perfect. Yeah, that's...
- Lisa:** That wouldn't really help.
- Lindsay:** No, no. We can't do that, we can't do that. So, awesome. So I feel like I've learned a lot about the Pacific Northwest today.
- Gabby:** Yeah.
- Lindsay:** (You know), we, we talked about how, (you know), the people are outdoorsy, they like to get out, enjoy nature and the, the (uh), how people like organic food...
- Gabby:** (Uh-huh).
- Lisa:** ...and really (kind of) favor that local farms, coffee culture, and also just progressive politics and policies.
- Gabby:** Great.
- Lindsay:** Awesome. Well, that's...



Lisa: And I forgot to mention -- maybe I should mention this, although -- some of your listeners might be interested. (Uh), the Seattle Seahawks did win the Super Bowl, so...

Gabby: Ooh!

Lindsay: Oh, okay. Should've known that.

Gabby: That's good to know. Yeah.

Lindsay: Should've remembered that important fact.

Lisa: Oh, yeah. And it's also a state that has professional, (uh), sports, like the Seattle Seahawks...

Gabby: Right.

Lisa: ...(uh), which is football, the Seattle Mariners, the Seattle Sounders, which is soccer. So...

Lindsay: (Mm-hm).

Gabby: Wow!

Lisa: ...that's also a draw for people to come to this state and enjoy, (you know), sports, too.

Gabby: Oh, that's super cool.

Lindsay: So visit the Pacific Northwest. Check it...

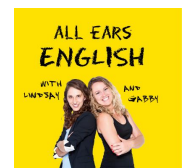
Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...out guys.

Gabby: Yeah. Hopefully, we can come to Seattle and, (uh), have a cup of coffee with you someday Lisa.

Lindsay: Yeah, you can show us the best café in town.

Lisa: Yeah, that'll be great.



Lindsay: All right, cool. Well, thanks so much for joining us and you can -- can you let our listeners know where to find you online?

Lisa: Yeah. My website is, (uh), EnglishFluencyNow.com

Lindsay: Okay, perfect.

Gabby: Awesome.

Lindsay: Thank you so much for your time today, Lisa.

Gabby: Great talking with you Lisa.

Lisa: You're welcome. Thank you.

Gabby: Bye.

Lindsay: Take care.

Gabby: Bye.

Lisa: Okay. Bye.

[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.

