



All Ears English Episode 169:

Speak, Talk, Tell and Say: How to Use Them Right!

Lindsay: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 169: “Speak, Talk, Tell and Say: How to Use Them Right!”

[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: All right, guys. The World Cup finished up, but now it’s time for the World Cup of leaving reviews for All Ears English on iTunes. We noticed that in June we had a lot of new reviews with Spain in the lead as the winner with eight reviews and Japan with seven, US- seven, China- six, and then some other countries left several reviews. But you guys, we wanna (want to) have a competition in August to see which country can leave the most reviews.

Lindsay: This is gonna (going to) be so cool. So we’re gonna (going to) be looking for Germany, Thailand, Brazil, Turkey, Russia, Italy, France, Mexico, Argentina, and Korea. Let us see your reviews guys.



Gabby: Step it up and let's see which country can really win for...

Lindsay: Come on!

Gabby: ...reviews in August. We'll let you know the results at the end of August.

Lindsay: Excellent.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: In today's episode, you're going to hear an explanation and tons of examples so that you will know how to use 'speak', 'talk', 'tell', and 'say' in your next English conversation.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Hey, Gabby.

Gabby: Hey Lindsay. Did you say, did you say we were recording?

Lindsay: Oh my God, we are recording cause the, the, the button is, is, red so...

Gabby: Oh!

Lindsay: Oh!

Gabby: Oh, you said we're recording.

Lindsay: I told...

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: ...you we were recording...

Gabby: Oh, you told me.

Lindsay: ...a few minutes ago and you're ignoring me so.

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

Lindsay: It's going pretty well.

Gabby: Great.



Lindsay: And I was hoping we could talk today a little bit.

Gabby: Talk about what?

Lindsay: Well, I'd like to talk about the differences between...

Gabby: Between 'talk' and 'speak'?

Lindsay: ...yeah and 'tell' an-an-and, 'say', right?

Gabby: That sounds like a great episode because I know there's a lot of confusion about these four verbs that all have to do with a similar meaning, but they're not the same.

Lindsay: Yeah, and today is our second Tuesday where we're gonna (going to) address the 15 FIXES to tune up your Porsche.

Gabby: AKA...

Both: ...your English...

Lindsay: ...English skills.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: And this is Number 14.

Gabby: That's right.

Lindsay: So we gotta (got to), we gotta (got to) get into it.

Gabby: Number 14 and last Tuesday, (uh), we, we spoke about 'listen' or 'hear', so go back to last Tuesday to *hear* that or to listen to that.

Lindsay: Ooh.

Gabby: (You know), it could be interchangeable there. That's the thing that makes some of these verbs confusing is you can use them interchangeably, but what we want to do in this episode is to really focus on the differences because if we talk about how they're used interchangeably it could be a little confusing.



Lindsay: It's too confusing.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: So quickly in, (you know), less than ten minutes today we're gonna (going to) highlight the key differences.

Gabby: Yeah. Perfect.

Lindsay: And then it's up to you guys to go and practice and learn more.

Gabby: Yeah. So let's talk about some key differences. 'Speak' is the most formal out of all four of these.

Lindsay: How many languages do you speak Gabby?

Gabby: I speak, I think four, five...

Lindsay: Wow!

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: That's awesome.

Gabby: Which languages do you speak?

Lindsay: Which languages do I speak fluently? Only one, Spanish, well English...

Gabby: And English...

Lindsay: ...I suppose.

Gabby: ...you're pretty good at English.

Lindsay: But I have *tried* to speak Japanese.

Gabby: Oh nice.

Lindsay: I've tried to speak French.

Gabby: (Um-hm).



Lindsay: I've tried to learn Latin, but that doesn't count 'cause (because) that's not a spoken language.

Gabby: Ah. That's right.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Great. (Um), can you, (you know), speak to me about your knowledge of the game of tennis?

Lindsay: I-I can definitely. I can *tell* you a lot about the game of tennis.

Gabby: Nice.

Lindsay: I can tell you all about how it works...

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: ...the score keeping system if you want, but do you really wanna (want to) know? I didn't think...

Gabby: Well...

Lindsay: ...you were interested in tennis.

Gabby: I-I am interested because, (you know), it's, it's an interesting sport. I really like, (um), some of the players, (you know)...

Lindsay: Sorry, what did you say?

Gabby: Oh, I said I think tennis is an interesting sport.

Lindsay: It is.

Gabby: Maybe we can talk about it later though.

Lindsay: Okay. All right.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Yeah.



Gabby: Okay. So let's talk about the verb to...

Both: ...'talk'.

Gabby: Yeah. So we use 'talk' in a more informal way, (uh), to speak about conversation. Sorry to mix the verbs up there but 'talk' is more informal and it refers to conversation.

Lindsay: Definitely.

Gabby: "Talk to me Lindsay."

Lindsay: "Talk to me. C'mon (come on), let's have some, let's have some chatter."

Gabby: "Come talk to me."

Lindsay: "Talk."

Gabby: "Yeah."

Lindsay: "Let's talk. Let's engage."

Gabby: "Give me a call, I wanna (want to) talk later."

Lindsay: Yeah, exactly that's it.

Gabby: Or if you're, if you're, in a relationship and your partner says, "We need to talk."

Lindsay: Oh.

Gabby: That could be a warning sign.

Lindsay: That could be a break-up coming.

Gabby: Uh-oh, watch out!

Lindsay: We all know how that feels. Ouch.

Gabby: Okay, the next verb is to 'tell'. So to tell is mainly to do what?

Lindsay: Yeah to tell a story right. So here...



Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...on this show, on the All Ears English podcast we try to tell stories.

Gabby: Yeah, tell our stories...

Lindsay: [crosstalk] ...experiences abroad, about silly mistakes we made when we were abroad.

Gabby: Yeah exactly and, (um), it's to inform right. "Tell me the answer."

Lindsay: (Um-hm).

Gabby: Or, "Tell me what you think." 'Tell' can also be used to command...

Lindsay: (Um-hm).

Gabby: ...like, "I *told* you to call me."

Lindsay: Right, right.

Gabby: "But you didn't."

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Sounds like I'm a little angry.

Lindsay: Or we could say – and you can also approach this by learning it, this in chunks, (right), in phrases.

Gabby: (Um).

Lindsay: For example say, "Tell the truth."

Gabby: Ooh, I like that.

Lindsay: "Tell the truth."

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Or, "Tell it like it is."

Gabby: Or "Speak your mind."



Lindsay: Ooh.

Gabby: Or, "Speak up."

Lindsay: Okay. Maybe that's a different episode actually...

Gabby: Ooh, I like that.

Lindsay: ...learning those phrases.

Gabby: But learning in phrases or chunks is going to improve your speaking much faster.

Lindsay: Absolutely.

Gabby: Great.

Lindsay: And then.

Gabby: The last verb is 'to say'.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: (Uh), 'to say' is usually to say something, to say a word, to say a sentence. We use this verb a lot in, (um), reported speech, like to quote someone. Like, (um), oh gosh, I'm trying to think...

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: ...of a quote now right off, right off the bat...

Lindsay: Like what did Obama say he would do...

Gabby: Ah.

Lindsay: ...when, when he was elected? What did he say he would do, (right).

Gabby: Yeah, (I mean)...

Lindsay: He said he would change a lot of things.

Gabby: That's right.



Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: Yeah. Okay so just a recap, 'speak' is formal, 'speak' is with a language; (uh), 'talk' is conversation, it's more informal; 'tell' a story, 'tell' to inform someone, 'tell' a command; 'say' is to quote. All right.

Lindsay: Well said.

Gabby: Oh. Why thank you, tell me more.

Lindsay: Ah. Love it, love it.

Gabby: I want to talk to you all day long, if you keep complimenting me.

Lindsay: So guys, this is great. So you've got the basic overview of these four verbs and now what we want you to do is go out and practice.

Gabby: (Mm). Yes. Well, thanks for listening and we hope that these episodes give you a lot of good ideas so that you can talk to English speaking friends.

Lindsay: And speak as much as possible.

Gabby: All right we have to stop this. Tell me this episode is over.

Lindsay: Oh my God! Wait. Yes we can say that it is.

Gabby: Bye guys.

Lindsay: Bye guys.

[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.

