



## All Ears English Episode 205:

### How to Fix a Translation Mistake

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**Gabby:** This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 205: “How to Fix a Translation Mistake.”

[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:** In today’s episode, you’ll learn about a big mistake you’re making when you translate from your native language into English and you’ll get a quick fix to make it correct.

[Instrumental]

**Lindsay:** Hey, guys. Remember your English is a Porsche and if you wanna (want to) keep tuning up your Porsche, if you wanna (want to) know all of the TOP 15 FIXES today, go straight to [AllEarsEnglish.com/TOP15](http://AllEarsEnglish.com/TOP15). And you can get that in a free e-book right away.

[Instrumental]



**Gabby:** Hey, Lindsay. What's up?

**Lindsay:** Hey, Gabby. I'm doing excellent today and you?

**Gabby:** Awesome. So today is Number 5 in our TOP 15 FIXES for your English. It's time to...

**Lindsay:** It is – we tune up that Porsche baby. Yeah, we've been shining it up and tuning it up for the past ten Tuesdays and now we've got five left. So let's go, let's do it.

**Gabby:** Yeah. Awesome. So we have a basic point to share today. Whe-when we tell you what today's fix is you're gonna (going to) say, "Oh, duh. I knew that."

**Lindsay:** Duh.

**Gabby:** But the thing is, (you know), if it was so basic, why, why are we still making that mistake. I-if it were so basic, it would be something that no one would mess up, right.

**Lindsay:** Yeah.

**Gabby:** But the thing is, we noticed that English learners make this mistake all the time. And it's, it's so frustrating, especially, (you know), to-to us because we know that you know the right way. But maybe...

**Lindsay:** Right and we all... (Uh-hm), go ahead. Sorry.

**Gabby:** Sorry. Yeah. No, maybe it's just a problem or an issue of direct translation or bad habits. I don't know.

**Lindsay:** Yeah. That's... I think that's really what it is because if you think about it, I know in Spanish when you say 'this' in Spanish, it's singular.

**Gabby:** (Uhn).

**Lindsay:** And what about Portuguese, Gabby. Do you know in Portuguese if you say 'people' would it be singular or plural?



**Gabby:** Yeah. So, it's (um), so we might as well just say the phrase, 'cause (because) otherwise, it's gonna (going to)...

**Lindsay:** Right.

**Gabby:** ...be difficult to...

**Lindsay:** (Uh-huh).

**Gabby:** ...know what we're talking about. So, the mistake is saying – well, you know what, I don't wanna (want to) say the mistake. Why don't we say it both ways and let you think about it for a second. So version 1, (um), "People is good."

**Lindsay:** (Hm).

**Gabby:** Okay. Version 2 – Lindsay go ahead.

**Lindsay:** So, "People are good." So raise your hand if you think Version 1 is right.

**Gabby:** Okay, well...

**Lindsay:** Maybe you're on the subway.

**Gabby:** ...I don't see anyone raising their hands. So, (uh)...

**Lindsay:** Oh, I can't see anyone either.

**Gabby:** Then you guys are all right. Oh my gosh. Version 2... ding, ding, ding.

**Lindsay:** You [crosstalk].

**Gabby:** "People are good." Okay. So the problem – we were talking about direct translation from Spanish or Portuguese. It could be direct translation, maybe you're thinking, (you know), directly, "People is..." but that's not the way it works in English. So, a person is singular. You could say, "This person is good," or whatever, (I mean). You, a person is singular, but people is the plural, right?



**Lindsay:** Yeah. Absolutely. And so, yeah. So, I think it's better to learn this in a chunk. And actually one of our listeners, awesome listener Marcos, suggested that we keep in mind a song.

**Gabby:** Yeah. [crosstalk]

**Lindsay:** ...when we wanna (want to) remember that. What song is that Gabby?

**Gabby:** Well, there's a great song from the 80s. If you like 80's dance music and you like Depeche Mode, you'll love "People are People." It (kind of) goes like {sings} "People are people. So something, something..." I don't know all the lyrics.

**Lindsay:** Well, what does, what does that mean Gabby when we say, "People are people?"

**Gabby:** Oh.

**Lindsay:** What does that, (like), what are they saying in that song?

**Gabby:** People are people is like we're all the same, we're all human.

**Lindsay:** We're human, that's what I think it is.

**Gabby:** Yeah.

**Lindsay:** Like people are people, humans are humans. We'll do silly things that humans do.

**Gabby:** Yeah. Or like, (you know), we shouldn't be, (uh), (you know), against a certain kind of people because we're all human, we're (a-), we all have something in common. That's what I think of. People are people.

**Lindsay:** Ah, I see. I see.

**Gabby:** Maybe if it...

**Lindsay:** Yeah, so...

**Gabby:** ...it has different meanings for different people. I don't know. But...



**Lindsay:** Sure, sure.

**Gabby:** Yeah.

**Lindsay:** So just remember the lyrics if you need to. (You know), we've talked a lot in this podcast about creating little devices, little mnemonic devices, little tricks and ways to help yourself remember certain things.

**Gabby:** Yeah.

**Lindsay:** (Um), this would be a great way.

**Gabby:** And I would recommend actually listening to the real song because I'm not a trained singer. I don't know. Maybe you couldn't tell. Maybe you think I am a trained singer, but I'm not. (Um), so you should... yeah, go on YouTube or iTunes or whatever you use and look up Depeche Mode, "People are People." I think you'll love this song. You'll probably start to dance a little bit. It's very catchy. So another word that's similar to this is 'children'. (I mean) we talk a lot more about people so I think we notice, (you know), 'people is', 'people are'; we notice that mistake more often. But 'children' has the same issue. (You know), "Children are..."

**Lindsay:** (Um).

**Gabby:** "...good."

**Lindsay:** It's plural.

**Gabby:** Like for example.

**Lindsay:** Right.

**Gabby:** Right, right, right. So, 'children' is the plural of 'a child'. Right.

**Lindsay:** Right. Right. I've, I've heard people make the mistake of saying, (uh), the plural – trying to make child plural as child's.

**Gabby:** Ooh.

**Lindsay:** Right, that's very strange.



**Gabby:** Ooh, yeah, that's really weird.

**Lindsay:** Ooh, {mrn, mrn}.

**Gabby:** Yeah, so. Like we said, this is a simple fix. This is not difficult, (uh), to understand. But I think where the difficulty comes in is changing your habits. So...

**Lindsay:** (Uh-huh).

**Gabby:** ...I wanna (want to) ask you, if you truly want to improve – and I, I know you do – I want to ask you to just be aware of your language and the way you're saying, (um), 'people' when you talk about people. Just be aware – try to catch yourself if you make this mistake and, and fix it. Just correct yourself.

**Lindsay:** And habits can be built very quickly.

**Gabby:** Right.

**Lindsay:** (Um), and that's why I think in addition to correcting yourself, you should take an active role in trying to use this phrase...

**Gabby:** Yes.

**Lindsay:** ...when you are speaking with natives in the next two weeks.

**Gabby:** Totally.

**Lindsay:** Try to use it ten times, so that it starts to get engrained in your mind so you can overwrite what you've got as the...

**Gabby:** Well...

**Lindsay:** ...current habit.

**Gabby:** I think that's a great idea. Maybe we could think of, (you know), ten quick examples how we would use people and then, (you know), of course I encourage you to make your own sentences and go out there and use them. But I think of...



**Lindsay:** Okay.

**Gabby:** ...(you know), when we talk about people it's kind of a generalization. (I mean), we're talking about people as a group, so the purpose is to generalize. So...

**Lindsay:** Right.

**Gabby:** ...I might say, for example, let me think of a great generalization. (Um)...

**Lindsay:** I have an example.

**Gabby:** You do.

**Lindsay:** I can, I can throw it out. Yeah.

**Gabby:** Okay. Great, great.

**Lindsay:** I could say, "So I live here in Cambridge, Massachusetts, right." That's the location of Harvard and MIT.

**Gabby:** Yeah.

**Lindsay:** Two of those famous colleges that everyone thinks are so amazing.

**Gabby:** (Um), yeah, yeah.

**Lindsay:** And so, I could say, "People in Cambridge are geniuses." (Right).

**Gabby:** Ooh.

**Lindsay:** Obviously is probably not true for everyone.

**Gabby:** It's a generalization, right.

**Lindsay:** It's a generalization, yeah.

**Gabby:** Okay.

**Lindsay:** That's an example.



**Gabby:** (Um), I could say, "People in Tokyo, (um), wear a lot of black clothing." I've just noticed...

**Lindsay:** Is that true?

**Gabby:** Yeah, I've noticed a lot of black. Maybe it's a city thing. I feel like people in New York also wear a lot of black.

**Lindsay:** I don't think so.

**Gabby:** Really?

**Lindsay:** I think people who visit New York from the outside wear black, but I think locals don't wear too much black.

**Gabby:** Maybe that's my perception. So strange.

**Lindsay:** Yeah.

**Gabby:** So...

**Lindsay:** So I think... yeah. Anyways.

**Gabby:** People... yeah. So 'people are' – I was supposed to maybe use the verb 'are'. Sorry. I'm, I'm not a very good student here. (Um), how about "People are quiet on the trains in Japan."

**Lindsay:** Okay. I like that.

**Gabby:** Yeah.

**Lindsay:** And I could say – here in Boston, we have long winters. "So in winter in Boston, people are not super friendly."

**Gabby:** (Um). Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Lindsay:** They don't wave at you on the street. They kinda (kind of) look down and they walk fast with their shoulders all bunched up and people are just not that friendly in the winter time.

**Gabby:** (Um), but in the summer, people are more friendly, right?



**Lindsay:** I would say so.

**Gabby:** I think so too.

**Lindsay:** People are more, (uh), people are often in better spirits, (right)...

**Gabby:** Yeah.

**Lindsay:** ...in the, in the summer. (Uh-hm).

**Gabby:** Yeah.

**Lindsay:** (Uh-hm).

**Gabby:** Another generalization I just thought of because, (um), (you know), it's almost, I think it's football season, American football. So Americans are really into football. American football.

**Lindsay:** (Uh-hm), (uh-hm). Yeah. Yeah. I'm not. How 'bout (about) you?

**Gabby:** (Um), not a lot. Not really, but, (you know), I would watch a game occasionally, (you know), just for fun.

**Lindsay:** Yeah, maybe the Super Bowl for the commercials.

**Gabby:** Yeah, yeah. So...

**Lindsay:** (Um)...

**Gabby:** ...I know people are really excited about the Super Bowl in general. (Um)...

**Lindsay:** Yeah.

**Gabby:** What else? Let's see... (Um), "Brazilians are into soccer, which you – I think in Portuguese, it's football. So sometimes people are confused about, "Are you talking about American football, or you're talking about 'football soccer'?"

**Lindsay:** I wonder if people who listen to the All Ears English podcast are confused right now.



**Gabby:** No. I think our listeners are loving these examples, these amazing examples that we're giving.

**Lindsay:** They're just fantastic.

**Gabby:** I have one more. I think our listeners are awesome. All Ears English listeners – are using the word 'awesome' more often. I've noticed that...

**Lindsay:** Oh, my god.

**Gabby:** ...because we always say 'awesome'.

**Lindsay:** Well, not just 'awesome', but also super cool. I've heard, I've sat down with a couple of our listeners and I've heard them use 'super cool', which is super cool because...

**Gabby:** Oh, people are funny.

**Lindsay:** Yeah, people are funny. But we love you guys.

**Gabby:** Yeah.

**Lindsay:** Thanks for listening to our show, again. And if you wanna (want to) learn more about these TOP 15 FIXES, you can go to [AllEarsEnglish.com/TOP 15](http://AllEarsEnglish.com/TOP15) to get a free e-book.

**Gabby:** Yeah, see you there.

**[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.

