



All Ears English Episode 229:

Tag! You're It. How to Get Your Facts Straight in English

Lindsay: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 229: "Tag! You're It. How to Get Your Facts Straight in English."

[Instrumental]

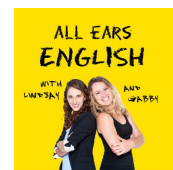
Lindsay: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, downloaded more than 5 million times. We believe in connection, not perfection. You'll finally get real Native English conversation with your American hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the 'English Adventurer' and Michelle Kaplan, the 'New York Radio Girl' coming to you from Boston and New York City, USA.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: She is a New Yorker. She's a singer. She's a songwriter, a traveler and a dog lover. She eats peanut butter and cheese sandwiches and sometimes she even dunks her popcorn in milk. She is our delightful new co-host, Michelle Kaplan and she is finally here to join us on the All Ears English podcast. Let's welcome Michelle to the show.

[Instrumental]

Michelle: Hey, guys. Have you ever learned something about somebody before you met them, maybe on Facebook and then you met them in person? Today



you're gonna (going to) learn how to confirm things that you *think* you know about someone using tag questions.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you are really serious about taking your English to the next level using All Ears English, you need to speak. So go right now to AllEarsEnglish.com/iTalki. Book your first lesson and get a gift. Get ten US dollars for free from iTalki for your next lesson. Go to AllEarsEnglish.com/i-T-a-l-k-i.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Hey, Michelle. How are you doing?

Michelle: I'm good Lindsay. How are you?

Lindsay: Good. How's the weather in New York today?

Michelle: It's a little bit chilly. Getting pretty chilly, but it's okay. How about you? How's it up there? It's probably (e-) even worse.

Lindsay: Today was gorgeous Michelle. It was beautiful in Boston today. Oh my god. It was like 60 degrees, sunny. I was walking around my neighborhood and looking at the leaves changing. Awesome day.

Michelle: Oh, that's great.

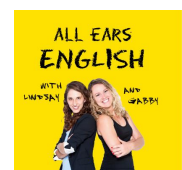
Lindsay: Yeah. Do you like the fall?

Michelle: (Um), yeah, I love the fall, but there's – I feel like there's not enough of it. (Like) I want it go for longer and then it just turns into winter.

Lindsay: Oh, I know. Why does that happen and it happens with spring too, doesn't it?

Michelle: Yeah. I don't think they're real seasons, (like), I don't think they're real.

Lindsay: Because here in the northeast, the northeastern part of the US, the winters like seven months long.



Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: So we really suffer up here don't we?

Michelle: Oh, yeah. Yep. I, I view, I can't even complain because I know you have it worse.

Lindsay: I do. No, no. I think people in Chicago have it worse.

Michelle: Yeah, that's true. They – yeah, I can't complain. I have a friend in Minnesota, so she, she also... Yeah.

Lindsay: Oh, yeah. Okay. All right. All right. That, that's bad.

Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: (You know), I've, I've, I think I was talking to somebody this weekend that I met at a party who was from the Midwest and she said that they had something like 70 days that were below zero last winter.

Michelle: Oh, my goodness. That's awful.

Lindsay: I know. It's insane.

Michelle: Yeah.

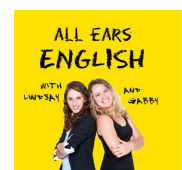
Lindsay: It's insane. So...

Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: Anyways, so let's jump into a little role play conversation here. So Michelle we met you yesterday. You are our new, permanent co-host and we're so happy to have you here. Thank you, again, for coming on the show and for taking – y-your taking Gabby's place here on the show. And we're super excited to get to know you here.

Michelle: Thank you. I'm so excited as well.

Lindsay: That's awesome. So I learned a few things about you yesterday and I wanna (want to) check in and see if they're true and I wanna (want to) get a little conversation going just to get to know you a little bit more. Okay.



Michelle: Okay. Perfect.

Lindsay: So you said you were close with your family, didn't you?

Michelle: Yeah, yeah. We're really, really close. I feel very lucky.

Lindsay: Oh, yeah. That's cool. I, I am too actually. I love to...

Michelle: Oh, good.

Lindsay: Yeah. Yeah. My parents, (uh), they a place, (um), on the south shore of Boston. So in the summer I see them every weekend. It's fantastic.

Michelle: That's wonderful.

Lindsay: Yeah, it's awesome, it's awesome. And you said, you said you're from Washington DC. Aren't you? Aren't you from Washington?

Michelle: Yep. That's right. Yep. I'm from Washington, DC originally and I moved to New York about four years ago.

Lindsay: Oh, okay. That's right. That's right. So two pretty different cities.

Michelle: Yeah. You said you lived in New York, too, didn't you?

Lindsay: I did. I lived in New York back in (2,000-) – yeah, let's see. So from 2006 until 2010.

Michelle: Oh, okay. So a while.

Lindsay: Yeah. And it was, it was fantastic. It was such a cool experience.

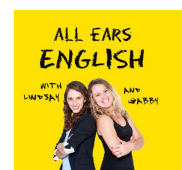
Michelle: Yes. It's real, it's really fun there. (I mean), here.

Lindsay: Here. You're in New York.

Michelle: I know. I know.

Lindsay: So you, you mentioned that you, that you loved dogs, didn't you?

Michelle: I love dogs. You're absolutely right. (Um)...



Lindsay: Ooh.

Michelle: ...I grew up with a dog, a beagle named Petey and I loved him very much. I feel like, (uh), dogs are members of the family. Don't you feel that way? Have you ever had a dog?

Lindsay: Oh, totally. I, it's funny actually. (Um), a few months ago we did an episode on All Ears English about why Americans love their pets so much.

Michelle: Oh, yeah. No, we are crazy for our pets.

Lindsay: We are crazy. I'd love – I would love to have a dog someday. My brother has a beagle and...

Michelle: Ohh.

Lindsay: ...beagles are just – yeah, beagles are so cute – their little face, their little eyes. It's like I just wanna, (want to), (you know), ooh, just squeeze them.

Michelle: I know. I know. They're my favorite dog. I hope that, (you know), maybe in – I don't know, another five years or so, I would like to get another one. They are absolutely adorable. Ah.

Lindsay: Oh, so you had that, so did you have that dog your whole childhood growing up? Was that your childhood dog?

Michelle: Yeah. Well, he was (um), my tenth birthday present.

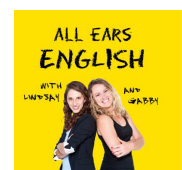
Lindsay: Oh, my god.

Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: What a dream for a ten year old.

Michelle: Oh, my gosh. Well, I begged for him. (I mean), really I, I pretty much demanded that we get a dog. And so I was dreaming about it for so long and then finally we got him. And yeah, we had him, (uh), for like 12 years or something and, (um), it was really just the best experience.

Lindsay: Aw, that's awesome, isn't it?



Michelle: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

Lindsay: Oh, I love it. I love it. I always had cats growing up.

Michelle: Oh, really?

Lindsay: Yeah. It's so funny. Everyone has an opinion, like dogs or cats. Most people like dogs, I think.

Michelle: Yeah, yeah. I think that [crosstalk]. Dog people and cat people. Well, (I mean), I think cats are really cute, but I'm – unfortunately, I'm allergic to them.

Lindsay: Oh, you are?

Michelle: So I never really had the chance to have a close bond with a cat.

Lindsay: Yeah, they have their own way, (right). Then can be mysterious, they can be sort of snobby or sort of... they're different. They're different from dogs.

Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: A little more independent I think.

Michelle: Definitely. Yeah. I really agree with that.

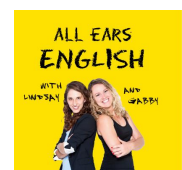
Lindsay: So just to kind of change the subject here a little bit. So your one-year-old nephew can dance, can't he?

Michelle: Yes. Yes. He is an amazing dancer. (Um)...

Lindsay: That's cool.

Michelle: ...he dances all the time and it's the cutest thing ever.

Lindsay: Oh, what kind of dancing are we talking about? What kind of dancing does he do?



Michelle: Like to pop music. He, he basically... he, he bounces up and down a lot. And it's really, really funny. I can't stop laughing whenever he, whenever he's dancing. So, you mentioned that you have a niece, didn't you?

Lindsay: I did, I did mention that. And yes, I do have a niece and she is adorable. Here name is Emery.

Michelle: Aw.

Lindsay: (Um), and she's just the sweetest thing. Oh, I had a chance to see her a couple of months ago. And when she sees people, she just gets so happy...

Michelle: Aw.

Lindsay: ...and so excited. It's adorable. Oh, god, I love that kid.

Michelle: Emery is a beautiful name.

Lindsay: It's gorgeous, isn't that? I was really impressed with my brother when he came up with it because I, I had never heard the name actually.

Michelle: Yeah, I, I, I haven't heard it either, but I really, really like it. My nephew is named Jake.

Lindsay: Oh, I like that too. That's a solid name.

Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: Jacob. Jake. Solid name.

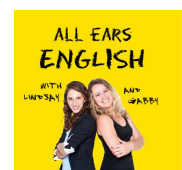
Michelle: Yeah. I think so. So, somehow, (you know), the name suits him. I don't know.

Lindsay: The name suits him. Usually they take on the name or...

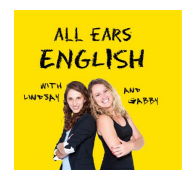
Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...or vice versa.

Michelle: Absolutely.



- Lindsay:** So one other question. I thought I heard you say that you would eat peanut butter and cheese together. Is that right? Did I hear that right?
- Michelle:** I am very proud of this fact. (Um), I eat a lot of weird food combinations and my brother actually created a peanut butter and cheese sandwich. So we love to eat peanut butter and cheese sandwiches or we even will eat like a peanut butter and turkey sandwich.
- Lindsay:** Whoa, that is way out there.
- Michelle:** I know. People really tease me for that one. And also, when I eat popcorn, I like to dip it in milk. (Um), so...
- Lindsay:** Whoa.
- Michelle:** ...I don't know where I, where I decided on that one, but (um), somehow, that became a part of my eating, (uh), my food repertoire. So, (um), but yeah, so I have some weird food habits. Do you have any weird food habits?
- Lindsay:** Do I have any weird food habits? I'm sure I do, but I can't think of any right now. But I would say that Michelle, we're gonna (going to) have to do an episode on peanut butter.
- Michelle:** Okay. That sounds perfect.
- Lindsay:** Because, (I mean), it's a funny thing, (right). I know a lot of our listeners are gonna (going to) say, "Ew! (Like) peanut butter. It's disgusting," (right). It's only – I think in the US is one of the only places that people actually eat peanut butter as a staple. (I mean), it's sort of a...
- Michelle:** Yeah.
- Lindsay:** ...staple in my diet. I eat it every day for lunch.
- Michelle:** Oh, yeah. (I mean), I think that we could do a whole thing even on (uh), comfort foods like...
- Lindsay:** Ooh, good one.



Michelle: Yeah, like peanut butter and jelly. It's like, it sounds kind of crazy, but here it's like, it reminds every one of their childhood.

Lindsay: It totally does. It's exactly what we get in our lunch.

Michelle: Yes.

Lindsay: ...as Americans when we're kids. And sometimes we keep eating it as adults. (I mean) for me I eat... for me I eat, almost every day, I eat peanut butter and banana sandwiches.

Michelle: Ah, that's – oh, I love that. I think you could, I think you would like peanut butter and cheese. I think you should give it a chance. If you like peanut butter and bananas, you can go crazy.

Lindsay: Hey. Maybe I'll give it a try.

Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: (I mean), I'm an adventurous eater. I'm the English Adventurer here.

Michelle: No, yeah, that's true.

Lindsay: ...so I've gotta (got to) be adventurous beyond just English. So maybe I'll try it.

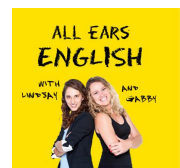
Michelle: Okay.

Lindsay: Maybe I'll try it. All right. Cool. So this has been good.

Lindsay: Hey, guys. We're gonna (going to) take just a minute here to thank our sponsors.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Today, we're talking about tag questions and we're showing you how to use tag questions in an everyday conversation with a native speaker. But if you want to solidify your learning and really use them in a real conversation with confidence, you need to practice them. And you can do



that today or this week with an English native teacher if you go to AllEarsEnglish.com/iTalki and book your first lesson. Then you'll get a free gift and this gift is very cool because it's only available for you as an All Ears English listener. You'll get ten US dollars for free to apply to your next lesson. So you could practice these tag questions with a native speaker for free. So go there now guys. Go to AllEarsEnglish.com/i-T-a-l-k-i.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Guys, let's break this down here now. So Michelle, we got a question from a couple of our listeners about how to create these things they call tag questions. But we're not worried about the lingo so much and we want to help our listeners understand how to create these questions.

Michelle: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: Right.

Michelle: Exactly.

Lindsay: Yeah. So let's just go back through – let's highlight some of the things that we said and the ways that we created these question, (right). So the first thing I said was "You're from Washington, DC, aren't you?"

Michelle: (Uh-hmm).

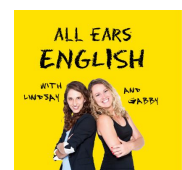
Lindsay: Right. "So you are from Washington, DC, aren't you?"

Michelle: Right. Yeah, a tag question, it's really great when you are almost positive about the fact, but you just want to make sure.

Lindsay: Perfect. Thanks for saying that. Why are we even using tag questions? Good point. So we met yesterday.

Michelle: Right.

Lindsay: And Michelle sent me a couple of interesting facts about herself, and I – but I just wanted to make sure that I was right, that I had the information right. So these are good questions to use if you're meeting a friend of a



friend and the friend has already told you something about this new person...

Michelle: (Uhn).

Lindsay: ...and you wanna (want to) confirm that information. Do you find yourself meeting friends of friends a lot Michelle?

Michelle: Oh, absolutely. I think, especially in New York because, (ugh), it's – there's so many people. (Uh), just recently I, I was at a housewarming party and I met some (uh), a, a friend of mine and I met some of her friends and we became friends ourselves. So you're always meeting friends of friends where maybe you know something about them, but you're not quite sure.

Lindsay: Right. And you don't wanna (want to) go and make a statement like, "Oh, you're from Washington, DC." That's kind of rude because you wanna (want to) just figure out if you know, if that's true, (right). It's a good way to start the conversation.

Michelle: Exactly.

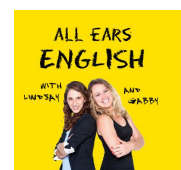
Lindsay: So you could – yeah. So you could start the (con-), "Hey, you're from Washington, DC, aren't you?" Right. And then there you go with a smooth conversation, a smooth opening. And I know that one of the things that you guys struggled with, our listeners, is starting that conversation and this is a fantastic way to do it.

Michelle: Yeah, I, I think that's a really great point. And I think that this can be really, really helpful as we said, especially if you know a little something about the person, right. So...

Lindsay: Absolutely.

Michelle: ...I think that it's really, really important, (uh), to learn. I think it sounds very, very natural as well.

Lindsay: Absolutely. And so just to, just to go back to a couple of the other questions that we asked...



Michelle: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: So I said... this is what I said to Michelle: "You said you were close with your family, didn't you?"

Michelle: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: Right. So why did I use didn't you there? Ooh, that's confusing right. Well, I used the verb 'to say', right. So...

Michelle: Exactly.

Lindsay: ..."You said you were close with your family, didn't you?" Okay.

Michelle: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: Okay. So Michelle, do you remember any of the questions that you asked me?

Michelle: (Um), I think I, I asked you, (uh), "You used to live in New York, didn't you?"

Lindsay: Ah, okay. Good. So you used 'didn't you' again, right.

Michelle: (Uh-hmm). Absolutely.

Lindsay: (Uh-hmm) because you used the verb 'used to', right, 'used to'. Okay.

Michelle: Right.

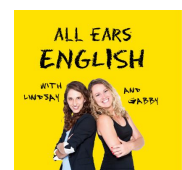
Lindsay: Ooh, nice one. Let's see what else. Here's one. I said, "Your one-year-old nephew can dance, can't he?"

Michelle: Yeah.

Lindsay: (Mm). Yes, he can.

Michelle: Yep, he definitely can. Yeah, you matched (uh), you matched the verb 'can' with ...

Lindsay: Yeah.



Michelle: ...‘can’t he’. Yeah. So you try and match, right. Match the tag question with the original statement.

Lindsay: Perfect. That’s a good way to do it. So we’re matching them here. Can and can’t. Right. Can’t he. He can dance, can’t he? I like that, I like that. Is there one more? Do you remember?

Michelle: (Um), I was supposed to ask you.

Lindsay: No, that’s okay, that’s okay.

Michelle: I’m sorry. I, I, it was covered up and I read it over earlier. Sorry.

Lindsay: That’s okay. Don’t worry.

Michelle: Okay. Should I pretend I asked you?

Lindsay: I have one. No, no. I have one. I have another one. So...

Michelle: Okay.

Lindsay: ...you mentioned – this is what I said to you Michelle, (right). I said “You mentioned you love dogs, didn’t you?”

Michelle: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: Right. So ‘didn’t you’ and, again, we’re matching – ‘mentioned’ is that – is a – just a verb, right. And so I said, “Didn’t you?”

Michelle: Exactly.

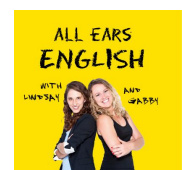
Lindsay: Exactly. Good. And then the last one I said was, “I thought I heard you say that you would eat peanut butter and cheese together. Is that right?”

Michelle: I like that. “Is that right?” I thought this...

Lindsay: Exactly.

Michelle: ...was really great. Especially because it’s kind of a – (i-), a wacky fact.

Lindsay: (Mm-hmm).



Michelle: So, it's like a little bit different, like "Is that right?"

Lindsay: "Is that right? Is that true?"

Michelle: Right.

Lindsay: "Is that for real?" Okay. Very cool. Well, this has been great. So, so we want you guys to listen to this episode a couple of times here and really try to – just listen to how we use these tag questions naturally in this conversation. Okay. And any final thing you wanna (want to) say Michelle?

Michelle: (Um), I just feel that these – again, I think that they're very important and, (um), I think that (i-), (you know), they're really easy once you get the hang of it.

Lindsay: (Uh-hmm).

Michelle: So I don't think you should be intimidated by them at all. I think it's a great way to start a conversation. Very, very natural sounding. So yeah, I, I'm excited for you all to learn.

Lindsay: Yeah, get out there and practice with natives. As we say "connection, not perfection."

Michelle: That's right.

Lindsay: Very cool. Thanks for joining us today Michelle.

Michelle: Thank you Lindsay.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you believe in connection, not perfection, *and* you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, please subscribe to our podcasts in iTunes, on your computer or on your Smartphone. And hey, if you liked today's show, please let us know with a review in iTunes. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

