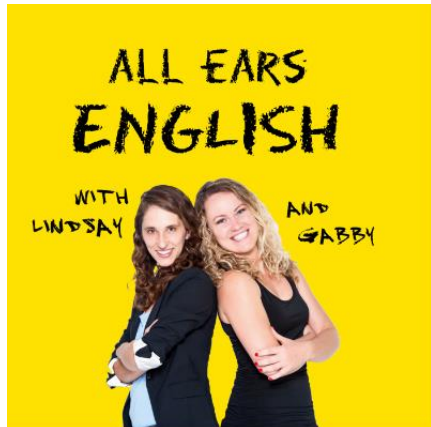




All Ears English Episode 94:

Do I Need a Native English Teacher?

Lindsay: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 94: “Do I Need a Native English Teacher?”

[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 this episode, you’ll get nine things to consider before you decide whether or not to hire a native English teacher or a non-native teacher.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Hey Lindsay.

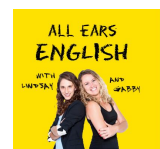
Lindsay: Hey Gabby. Good afternoon.

Gabby: Hey. How’s it going?

Lindsay: I’m doing pretty well.

Gabby: Great.

Lindsay: You?



Gabby: I'm doing great. Thanks.

Lindsay: Okay.

Gabby: Yeah. Well we got an interesting question from one of our listeners and he was asking if he needs a native English-speaking teacher. So we want to share our opinion with you about this because you might be wondering if you really need a native speaker. Our listener asked about this because in his country, Russia, (uh) the native English-speaking teachers charge more money for tutoring services. So he was looking for a tutor specifically. So he was wondering what we would advise. (You know) go with the more expensive native speaker or go with the less expensive (uh) non-native English speaker.

Lindsay: Yeah. So we're just gonna (going to) talk about the benefits of both of both side. (I mean) it's, there's not a hard and fast rule, right.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: I think it just depends on you. It depends on your goals and it depends on where you're trying to get with your English.

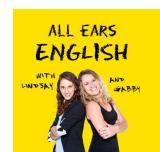
Gabby: Great. 'Cause (because) I would, I would assume a lot of people think that the native speaker would always be better, but that's not necessarily true.

Lindsay: (Uh-huh). Definitely.

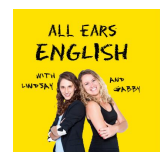
Gabby: But let's start there. (I mean) why would you want to have a native English- speaking tutor? Why is it worth the extra money?

Lindsay: Yeah. Well I think first of all think about your level. So if you're intermediate, upper intermediate or advanced and you wanna (want to) be challenged and also inspired in some ways, it's a good idea to work with a native teacher. (Um) they can really challenge you. They'll be able to -- if they see that you're a little bit bored with the content they're introducing, they'll be able to challenge you to say a particular phrase in five other ways.

Gabby: Right.



- Lindsay:** That might not be possible. It might be possible with a – yeah, it depends on the level of English of the non-native teacher.
- Gabby:** Yeah, it's difficult. I remember once when I was teaching Spanish and I got a student to tutor who wanted to learn (uh) Spanish from Argentina. Actually he told me after we started working together that he's married to an Argentine woman and at that time my Spanish was mostly from the Dominican Republic and I was wondering why was he asking me to help him with Argentine Spanish, why didn't he just ask his wife.
- Lindsay:** That's a good question.
- Gabby:** And he was pretty advanced, (like), pretty fluent in Spanish, so I wasn't sure that was the best match.
- Lindsay:** (Uh-huh), (uh-huh).
- Gabby:** Yeah.
- Lindsay:** Yeah. And another advantage of working with a native teacher is of course, (you know), one of the things that we talk about is that you can't learn a language alone, you need to learn it along with culture and...
- Gabby:** Yeah.
- Lindsay:** ...a lot of the things that we talk about on this podcast, we're not just talking about baseball or, (you know), superficial aspects of American culture, we're talking about communication styles of Americans and why do we sometimes use "sometimes" at the end of a question, which is something we talked about this week.
- Gabby:** Yeah.
- Lindsay:** So those really nuanced aspects of the language, if you're planning to visit the US or visit England, for example, to live, you wanna (want to) get into some of those things.
- Gabby:** Yeah. Exactly. And it kinda (kind of) goes back to – I think last week we were talking about the 80/20 rule. Just to bring this up again. If you do



know those cultural norms and (you know) our, our ways of communicating (like) commonly used phrases, you're gonna (going to) get much more out of a few phrases than you would if you're, (you know), learning a lot of different vocabulary that really doesn't fit culturally.

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: If that makes sense.

Lindsay: (Uh-huh), (uh-huh). The next reason that you would want to work with a native is to learn real natural phrases. (I mean)...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...I know when I was in Japan, a lot of people learned "see you" as a way to say to say good-bye.

Gabby: Oh man.

Lindsay: And when I got there, I was really surprised. I was like why is everyone saying "See you"...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...when they say good-bye because we don't say that here.

Gabby: We don't really use that. Not as much as in Japan. It's pretty rare.

Lindsay: No, so a native teacher wouldn't teach you...

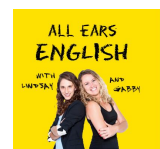
Gabby: No.

Lindsay: ... "See you."

Gabby: No.

Lindsay: They would say "Ah see ya (you) later" or "Take care" or "Good-bye."

Gabby: Right.



Lindsay: Okay. And the last thing is pronunciation. Now this is tricky because it's not guaranteed that a native teacher would be able to teach you the pronunciation better.

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: But they would be able to recognize the correct pronunciation.

Gabby: And model the correct pronunciation.

Lindsay: And model the correct pronunciation. (Ah) it's a tricky one.

Gabby: Hopefully. Hopefully. Yeah.

Lindsay: And there's also a variety different styles of pronunciation even within the US, right. We have Texan and southern pronunciation. And so...

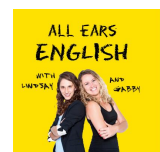
Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...so those are just (um) three or four points, reasons that you might want to work with a native – if you're a high level student, if you wanna (want to) learn about culture, if you wanna (want to) learn natural phrases and if you wanna hear real pronunciation.

Gabby: Right. Okay, but on the other hand, if you are a beginner or lower-intermediate English learner, a non-native English speaking teacher, might be better for you because he or she can explain grammar in your own language. Okay when I was learning beginning Japanese, I bought a textbook that was completely in Japanese and my teacher was trying to explain grammar completely in Japanese and I did not understand it. I needed an English speaker (um) or (you know) an, an American who knew good Japanese to explain that to me.

Lindsay: Oh that sounds really tough.

Gabby: Yeah. (Um) also (you know), if you find someone (uh) let's say a Russian teacher. If you're Russian, (you know), she's teaching you English, she could explain culture in a way that makes sense to you, (sort of)



connecting what you know from Russian culture to American culture or, or wherever you're from.

Lindsay: That's interesting.

Gabby: Yeah. So last (um) the third reason why you might want to work with a non-native English speaker at first (um) is because they would understand how you learn English in school and what you're – (sort of) your cultural learning style is. For example, in some countries, teachers tend to lecture more and students need to memorize. Now in the US, we tend to have more conversational classes or interactive classes. So that's a different way of learning.

Lindsay: Yeah, but on the other hand, if the teacher knows that, for example, I'm imagining in, in Japan for example. I know it's very common, the, the lecture style is...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...the way the students have learned English growing up. But that hasn't worked.

Gabby: Right, right, right.

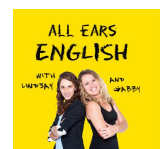
Lindsay: So if you're gonna be with a teacher in Japan who's doing the same, following that same style...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...maybe you would need a teacher in Japan who recognizes that that doesn't work and that they're gonna (going to) get you up and having conversation.

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: So if someone's just following this style that hasn't worked for you your whole life, you actually need to get out of that.



Gabby: Yeah. No, I agree. Absolutely. So (I mean), I think when it comes down to it, you, you have to look for a few things for a non-native tutor or a native tutor.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: So obviously, you want someone who is professional. You want someone who is educated and has a certificate or a degree, an advanced degree in English.

Lindsay: And who takes it seriously. Who just -- takes it as a profession, not as a hobby.

Gabby: Right. Right. (Um) Lindsay, you mentioned before we were recording that it's important to work with someone who has at least lived in an English speaking country. I agree. I agree completely.

Lindsay: 'Cause (because) they'll have another level of understanding that goes beyond books.

Both: Right.

Gabby: Right.

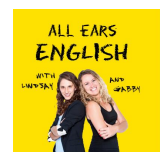
Lindsay: And it's also great to work with someone who's (who has) learned another language.

Gabby: (Uh-hm). Yeah. Someone who's (who has) learned another language and taught another language (um) or, or had experience teaching English before.

Lindsay: Yeah, yeah.

Gabby: Right. So those are three points that are true no matter who you're hiring to be your tutor. All right.

Lindsay: All right.



Gabby: So a lot of things to consider but we wish you happy studies and just think about what's right for you based on your level, based on your budget, based on what you wanna (want to) get out of your tutoring.

Lindsay: Good luck with your studies.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you 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.

