



## **WE 014: Native speaker - a blessing or a curse?**

Hi there. How are you? How are things with you? I hope you're perfectly all right, and you're ready to listen to the new episode, the new episode of the World of English podcast. It is episode 14 and this episode is going to be a little bit different. Different in the matter that I'd like to share a little bit of private information with you. But this information is not going to be private in the matter that I'd like to talk about my private life but it is going to answer the question why? I mean why it has all happened, why spikkeo, why the podcast, why English, why teaching?

You know me, right, you have known me for a couple of episodes. So, you know that passion propels all reactions. And this is the reason why I teach the language and this is the reason why I started to record podcasts. I love the language. I love teaching. I love sharing good knowledge, I hope, with my listeners and I love to tell people how to learn the language and I love to change the attitude, the way of thinking about English and I love showing that English is a wonderful language, that you can learn with no trouble and you can be very proud.

I'm very glad because I get feedback from my listeners. I love it. I'd like to thank you for it. So thank you very much my listeners. I know that you listen to my episodes, to the podcast, that you learn from it, that you use transcripts, that makes me super happy. And of course with each podcast I love to grow, I would like to be better so as not to disappoint you, the listeners, and I hope it is this way, so thank you for your support, thank you for being with me dear listeners.

On the basis of this podcast some of you have decided to have a free lesson with me at spikkeo.com. And again that makes me super happy, super proud because it shows that what I do makes sense and it shows that there are a lot of people who value good English, who value good quality and that is why they are with us, and that is why they are with me. So once again a big thank to you all.

There is a lot of experience as my background. And the reason why spikkeo came into being is because I decided to create something on my own. So, use my



experience, experience that comes from various sources, from different schools, courses. When I say schools, of course I mean teaching at different institutions, different people, different ages, different levels and the experience that I offer, the experience that is the basis for my lessons, for the podcast, for speaking English, for teaching you, this experience is based on a lot of teaching, on many years, on meeting a lot of people, great students, great teachers also because I have been this lucky person, I am just lucky person who has met wonderful teachers and that's why I'm here right now with you working, sharing my knowledge, speaking English.

I get a lot of **inquiries** about learning English. I mean how to do it the proper way. What kind of steps to take, the proper steps and although English is so popular, although it has been with us as students, as teachers for so many years now, I still can see that there are problems, that people attend different courses, schools, but they are not satisfied with the result because they don't know how to learn a language, that's one thing. So on the one hand, they don't know how to learn the language, but they also are taught in a wrong way. So they are taught without context, without examples, without explanation. And this teaching and the knowledge is based only on grammar, mostly on tenses, and let me just say it once again, English is not tenses, right. It's not the only knowledge that we can have about the language because English is this beautiful language with a lot of vocabulary, a lot of expressions, a lot of idioms, and this is something that you need to know in order to feel free, in order to fly, so to say with the language or in the language, depending on the context, depending on what you want to say and how you see it.

Today with this episode I would like a little bit to **dispel the myth**, this very vivid myth, especially today and something that I encounter very often and this myth says that a native speaker is the best teacher.

Of course a native speaker is great. I mean native speakers if you have this opportunity, this chance to meet them and to work with them, they are great because they help you gain confidence, they can help you work on your accent,



they can help you develop your speaking skills or rather communication skills, but, what you have to remember and what you always have to bear in mind is that most native speakers that teach are not trained teachers. So they do not have this professional background, this professional experience. And this is something that makes this huge difference.

So if you want to learn the language, you need to choose the best option for you, but you have to remember, you have to be aware of it that if you want to be satisfied with the result, the person, the people, the method, whatever you choose, but you have to be in good hands. I mean you have to be in the hands of somebody who is trained, somebody who has this professional background, somebody who knows what they are doing.

Just to build this picture, just to tell you we are native speakers of Polish, I'm a native speaker of Polish myself, and I'm not a good teacher of Polish. It does not mean that I can teach people my mother tongue because well, of course, I speak the language fluently. I speak the language very well, but I am not very often, and this is something I have to say, I'm not aware of certain structures, of certain expressions because I did not learn them, I acquired them and this is the expression, this is the word I used very often in this podcast or I have used because I hope to keep on using it later on and if you acquire something, if you acquire some knowledge, if you acquire language, it means that you do not do it consciously, you do it, sort of, **subconsciously** and the knowledge is not based on some facts, on some structures, on some real knowledge. It is gained rather through experience. There is nothing bad about this, but you just have to be aware of it, right. So when choosing a native speaker, you just have to be aware of it.

You will definitely be able to, when working with a native speaker, to get better at communication. But there comes this moment, this level, where in my opinion, and this is something that my experience tells me, you will never climb higher. So if you are looking for the solution that will help you shine, when it comes to the language, you would, in my opinion, need a trained teacher rather than a native speaker.



And an ideal solution, an ideal situation would be to work with a native speaker that is a teacher at the same time. It happens, but it does not happen often. So if you decide to have classes with a native speaker, please ask the question, please check if they have this professional background, if they are trained, if they know something more than just the language because knowing the language, and this is another thing you have to remember, knowing the language is not enough.

What a good teacher has to know and has to do, they have to know how to teach. We as teachers use special techniques. There are a lot of them. There is this psychology, there are different exercises, activities and it is all there to help you, right. It serves your purpose, but we know it, right, because we're trained, we know where we want to get, we know what we're doing.

This is a **milestone**, the milestone I mean, what I mean here is choosing the proper school and the proper teacher. There are many students, many people who come to me, who talk to me, who learn with me, and they come here because they are dissatisfied with what they have experienced when it comes to studying the language because very often, and this is the worst situation, and when I see that I'm truly sad and I try to avoid it, because the situation may happen, it may so happen, it can be this way that you have this great motivation, you are ready, yes, you know you want the language, you want to learn it and then you end up with a bad method or you end up with a bad teacher, and the result, the end result, is very this satisfying for you and this choice of the proper school, of the proper teacher, of the proper method, of something that suits you is, as I called it, as I have just called it, is a milestone because it may so happen that with this bad method and with this bad teacher you will simply give up English and you will never come back to it.

And this is absolutely the worst situation because, in my opinion, with a lot of hard work and with a lot of motivation and **commitment** anyone can actually learn the language. Of course, at the different levels because we have different talents, we are different people. But I have shown my students, and this is what I



hear from them, and this is something that I absolutely love, absolutely **adore**, and I'd like to thank you for this, I have shown them that they are **capable** of learning the language and this confidence that we have managed to build, and this feeling that I'm not that poor at languages actually because this is the feeling they came to me with, they said *well I've been learning English for so many years and I still can't speak it*, after a relatively short period of time they start speaking the language and they realize that it's possible for them, and this new confidence that is built in them, it allows them, it helps them to start learning languages. Because they know that they can do it, that they have this ability.

But when we look at it from a different perspective, it can so happen that this incorrect choice of the method, of the teacher, of the school, it can actually break the career because if you give up English, if you say okay, I'm not, in no position, I mean I will not be able to do it, then you never come back to it. And this is, in a way this broken career as I called it because we know it and it is no secret that with a good language and a good language, what I mean here, when I say a good language, I mean, this language that shines, that makes you stand out. So, you speak it, the moment you open your mouth, the moment you reach your audience, your interlocutors, the people around you and when you have this good ability, this proper ability of speaking English, you can really make a great impression on other people.

So, once again, let me just tell you never to give up, keep looking for the proper way, for the proper methods and the methods, the one that suits your needs, that is to your taste, can change your life. And I know this again from experience, this is what I've seen with my students that language, that English can change their lives. There just has to be this moment, sometimes you meet the proper person. You meet, you see, you choose the proper method and then your life changes just **instantly**. Some of my students started studying abroad and this as I said changed their lives completely because the job offers that they received after studying in Britain is infinite, so to say, so because of this their careers developed greatly or they have just started traveling or they have developed as people and because of this they feel proud of themselves. They feel better because



they no longer experience this barrier, linguistic barrier, language barrier that is there. A fantastic thing really.

A good teacher can be your mentor, right, can be somebody you will follow, can be somebody who will affect your life, influence your life, influence your actions, but a bad teacher can do exactly the same. And they can influence your life in this negative way, the way that I've just mentioned that you will give up studying all together and you will never come back to it. And perhaps it is not a good choice because you are good at it, really. The context, the good method, it can show you that you're actually capable of doing, of speaking English.

So please do not feel **discouraged**, although there are many people who come to us who are discouraged and it is actually a very hard thing to do because I not only have to teach them the language but I also have to show them that they were wrong. I mean this **discouragement** is something that they shouldn't be feeling because when working, and working in the improper way, first of all, they did not get the result they wanted, they were dissatisfied with the result. But also they have learnt the expressions or the phrases or some elements of the language that are incorrect, that are working in the incorrect way or they have developed some bad habits and my job here is to, kind of, reverse the situation, right, so to show them yes, you are capable. Yes, you can do it, but you just need to develop these good habits, and we know there is a phrase, there is a saying in English that old habits die hard and this kind of task is more difficult because we have to work double as hard. So we not only learn the language, but first of all, we just have to get rid of the bad habits.

What I usually stress and what I pay this great attention to is the context. I have used this expression in my podcast, in my episodes on many occasions. I have used this expression here. Without context, without sentence examples, without understanding where the expression comes from, this language will always be passive. That's another problem. People coming here, coming to me, complain a lot that, well, we understand the films, we understand songs, but we are not able to produce the language. The reason? Well, because the language is passive and it



does not make sense to have that kind of skill, to have that kind of ability, I mean, to be able to use the language in the passive way because if you use it in the passive way, you don't use it at all actually because a language is something that has to be active. The language is something that has to work. The language is something that has to be used, produced, written, spoken, expressed.

So, when you just possess this passive knowledge, it will always leave you, right in, so to say, in the second league because you will never be able to use it. I mean never unless you start working the proper way and when you start working the proper way miracles will happen, you will see that it is not that difficult, that you can actually do it.

My students are great. This is something I know for sure. I get a lot of energy from them. They are these fantastic people with good energy. I admire them, they have families, children, they run companies, they do sports, they learn the language for their own development but also for their companies. And the greatest thing I can get in return is when I hear that they use the language for the first time or they use the language successfully for the first time when dealing with foreign clients or when they tell me that they did away, that they got rid of their own **inhibitions, constraints** that they disappear, that they speak English and they do not feel stressed for the first time, that they feel that they are learning something because there is correction, like correction my part. I mean this is the crucial thing, you can learn from the mistakes, but you have to know that you are making them and if there is this person who is not correcting you and this is also what I've been told, and this is also what happens when working with native speakers. I mean they are great partners for conversation, but if you want them to be your teachers, to be the proper teachers, you always have to ask them to correct your mistakes. Otherwise that doesn't make sense because you have to be aware of the mistakes and in this way you will be able to correct them. You will be able to get rid of the mistakes that you're making.

If you are dissatisfied with the results, dissatisfied with what is going on when it comes to your language, when it comes to English, to studying English, it is



perhaps the first sign that something is not working. Because after a year, after two or three years the results should be there. Please don't feel discouraged. Please revise your methods, revise what you've been doing so far and please check if what you have, if the method that has been offered to you is something that works for you.

There are various methods of learning and that's another thing. Don't get the feeling that there is only one proper way. There is never one proper way. And if you look for the proper way, it has to be something that suits your needs and usually it is a collection of different things. What we've got here on offer, on the menu, so to say, there are of course books, there are films, there are various recordings. There are podcasts, a fantastic thing for studying the language but also for developing personally, for growing, for **gathering** knowledge. There are also grammar exercises. There are different schools. There is online teaching and the online teaching which I do is perfect for various reasons, but just to be honest with you, and just to understand you, I guess it is not for everybody, because there are some people who need to feel this contact with a real person, so they would need this teacher to be with them in the same room and I can totally understand that. So when I say choose the best method, you have to choose something that suits your needs.

But for those of you who find it effective, I mean who have no trouble with working online and online is gaining popularity, is getting super popular with various subjects and various options. So studying online offers you this very productive learning because it produces the effects very fast or much faster than the usual approach because you are focused 100% on the teacher and the teacher is focused on you. There is only you working, you come to class with very specific problems, very specific inquiries, questions. We solve them in class. And the feeling that you discuss certain areas of the language, of the grammar is that it happens very first because each class can be actually devoted to something else and you don't need to spend a lot of time to see the results.



So guys. I hope you are satisfied with what you've got, I mean with with English. If not, please ask yourselves a question whether everything is working for you and when choosing the proper method, the proper teacher always check all the details and if something is not working, if you are not satisfied, I guess it is the first sign that you should think about a change. Thank you.

## GLOSSARY

**inquiry/ enquiry** - zapytanie

**(to) dispel the myth** - obalić mit

**subconsciously** - podświadomie

**milestone** - kamień milowy

**commitment** - oddanie/ poświęcenie

**(to) adore** - uwielbiać

**(to) be capable of** - potrafić coś zrobić

**instantly** - natychmiast

**discouraged** - zniechęcony

**discouragement** - zniechęcenie

**inhibition** - zahamowanie

**constraint** - ograniczenie/ skrupowanie

**(to) gather knowledge** - zdobywać wiedzę