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The **Podcast** That Will Help You **Speak** English Fluently.

With No Grammar and No Textbooks!

Episode #096

Obsolete Communication
Devices and Gadgets

Hello, everybody! I am Georgiana your English teacher and founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com. My mission is to help you speak English fluently. Speaking English is easier than it seems! You just have to use the right material and techniques.

Today we are going to be a bit nostalgic, and talk about some communication devices and gadgets that still exist nowadays, but are obsolete.

Let's start!

Fax machine

How did we share documents and letters before the email existed?

Although many people sent a **telegram or a letter**, there was another device that we used, particularly in the professional field. Yes. I'm talking about the **fax machine**.

While some companies still use fax machines, no one has one of those machines at home. I guess we prefer to use an email because it's faster, takes up no space and it's free.

Nowadays, you can still send a fax without a fax machine. You only need to use your computer or a smartphone, because there are websites that offer this service.

Telegram

And by the way, you'll be surprised to know that people still send **telegrams**.

No. I'm not referring to the **Telegram** Messenger app.

You can send a telegram the old fashioned way or even online.

Landlines

How about **landline phones**? Do you still have one of those at home?

I can't even remember when was the last time I had one of those. It was definitely a long time ago.

The **landlines** had no high-definition color display, no **camera**, and no **Internet** connection. They had a long cord so people could move it

around the house. But that was inconvenient. I remember my landline phone was wireless and had a small black and white screen. I was happy to move around the house without a cord, but it was a bulky phone, and the battery didn't last long.

I just know that I'm grateful to have a smartphone now. :)

Phone Books

Have you ever used a phone book? I remember using one a few decades ago.

People used the white pages to find personal phone numbers. And the yellow pages were phone numbers for businesses and services.

Before the Internet, if you wanted to call someone on their landline, you could look for their number in a phone book. But thanks to the Internet, printed phone books are no longer useful.

Dial-up connection

Now some of you might be surprised to know that the internet wasn't always fast or easy to access.

It turns out that some decades ago, if you wanted to connect to the Internet, you were required a phone line. You had to plug that phone line into your computer. Then your computer would attempt to "call" the Internet.

And guess what? You couldn't make a phone-call while you were using the internet. Can you even imagine that?

The landline phone and the internet were connected to the point that when someone picked up the phone, the internet connection would get interrupted. How annoying is that?

Many young people today have never even heard of the dial-up connection.

However, not all areas have high-speed Internet access, and in some locations, people still use a dial-up connection.

Pager

Have you ever used a **pager** or a **beeper**?

I've always preferred to use a cell phone, but sometimes I wish I could use a pager instead. Why? Well, it's smaller than a cell phone, so I could fit in a pocket.

I would only have to charge it every week or two. And let's face it. Our smartphones consume more battery than a pager.

But how does it work?

A **beeper** is actually a small personal radio receiver that you can carry around.

Each beeper comes with a personal code number or phone number. When someone sends a message, our **pager** beeps and displays the message with the date and time.

Did you know that about 85% of hospitals in the States still rely on **paggers** for communication?

The first pagers were introduced to physicians in New York City in 1950. Apparently, doctors were among the first users of paging technology, and they will probably be the last to abandon it.

Ok. Let's continue with a mini-story.

Mini-Story

(practice your speaking)

Great! Now, you can practice with a mini-story. You will be able to go over this vocabulary we saw in the first section.

A mini-story is very simple. I give you information using phrases, and then I ask you questions. Sometimes I call it a **conversation simulator** because you practice your English like in a **real conversation**.

I recommend that you listen several times until it's easy to answer.

Let's start!

In 2099, a museum guard will witness a fax machine printing a word.

Will a coast guard witness something?

No. A cost guard won't witness anything. A museum guard will witness a fax machine.

When will a museum guard witness a fax machine? In 2019?

No. No. A museum guard won't witness a fax machine in 2019. He'll witness it in 2099.

What will a museum guard witness, a word or a sentence?

Not a sentence. A museum guard will witness a word.

He'll soon notice another word coming from an old telegram machine.

When will he notice something?

Soon. He'll soon notice something.

What would he notice? A mouse?

No. No. He won't notice a mouse. He'll notice a word.

Where will the word come from? From a telegram?

Yes. The word will come from a telegram.

Later that night, he'll listen to another word coming from a landline phone.

When will he listen to something? In the morning?

No. No. He'll listen to something later that night.

Will he listen to a song?

No. He won't listen to a song. He'll listen to a word.

Will the word come from a phone?

Yes. The word will come from a landline phone.

The situation won't make any sense, and he'll become more and more afraid.

What won't make any sense?

The situation. The situation won't make any sense.

Will he become braver?

No. No. He won't become braver. He'll become more afraid.

Who will become more afraid?

The museum guard. He'll become more afraid.

One hour later, the guard will observe a new word coming from a pager.

Will the guard observe anything?

Yes. He'll observe something. He'll observe a new word.

Where will a new word come from? From a cellphone?

No. No. The word won't come from a cellphone. It will come from a pager.

When will the guard observe a new word? Two hours later?

No. The guard won't observe a new word two hours later. He'll observe the new word one hour later.

Finally, he'll read a complete sentence written in an old phone book. Saying, "Relax, it's just a joke."

Will he listen to a whole sentence?

No. He won't listen to a complete sentence. He'll read a whole sentence.

Where will he read an entire sentence? On a tablet?

No. No. He won't read a whole sentence on a tablet. He'll read a sentence on an old phone book.

Will the sentence say: "Run for your life?"

No. The sentence won't say that. It will say, "Relax, it's just a joke."

Poor guard, he was so worried, but it turns out it was just a joke his co-workers made.

I guess he thought there were ghosts in the museum. It must be challenging to work in a museum at night.

Perfect! It's the end of this mini-story. Today we traveled in time and used the future tense. As you can see, through questions and answers, you can practice and improve your speech just like in a **real conversation**.

If you want to get hours of audio with mini-stories and point of view lessons, I'd like to recommend to you my **Fluency Course**.

You can get it at Fluency.SpeakEnglishPod.com

Well, that's it for today!

Please help me spread the word about the podcast. Tell your friends about the show and leave a comment on **iTunes** when you have a minute. That would make me very happy!

I'll be back next week!

Take care! Bye! Bye!

