

Simplified Speech #8 – Our favourite news sources

Episode Description

What's your favourite source of news? That's the topic of conversation in this Simplified Speech episode. Join Andrew and Suzanne as they talk about how they use the Internet, podcasts, and social media to stay up to date and informed.

Sample Dialogue

- Suzanne: I'm not proud of my statement that I get news from Facebook, but it is helpful. And if I'm on Facebook that long, at least I'm reading something that has to be a current event.
- Andrew: Yeah. It's interesting because I end up reading news stories that I never would usually because of this Facebook News bar on the sides of my page.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: Like, the other day I was reading about the best-dressed celebrities at an awards show in Europe, which is totally not interesting to me ...
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: But I clicked it for some reason, and then wasted about 10 minutes looking at pictures of celebrities.
- Suzanne: Yeah. And this is my problem too, and it's called **clickbait**.

Expressions Included in the Learning Materials

- Back episodes
- The gist
- To take up space
- To toss on something
- Clickbait
- To keep someone in the loop
- Fantasy football
- To be all over the map



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Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript.

Transcript

Andrew: Hello everybody. I'm Andrew.

Suzanne: And I'm Suzanne.

Andrew: And we are back with another Culips episode.

Before we start today, I want to remind you to visit our website at Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com. Our website is the place where you can listen to all of our **back episodes**, and it's the place where you can sign up to become a Culips member.

Suzanne: And remember to visit us on Facebook and Twitter, and follow us there because you will be kept up to date on all the latest episodes and all the latest happenings at Culips.

Andrew: You betcha. OK, Suzanne, I think we should start today's episode. Today, we're gonna do a Simplified Speech episode, and this is aimed at beginning learners, intermediate learners, and maybe also advanced learners. I think there's something for everyone. We have a natural conversation, but we speak at a slower pace than we regularly would. And today, our topic is the news.

Suzanne: That's right. How do you get your news?

Andrew: You know, I don't watch the news that often anymore. I usually read my news on the Internet.

Suzanne: OK.

Andrew: Yeah. I don't actually watch the news on TV. Maybe it's because I don't have a TV.

Suzanne: That could be why.

Andrew: Um, how do you get your news?

Suzanne: Also on the Internet and also through podcasts. I listen to podcasts that are daily podcasts. I like one in particular. It's taped out of New York City.

- Andrew: OK.
- Suzanne: Called, um, *The Gist*.
- Andrew: *The Gist*. Interesting.
- Suzanne: And the gentleman who does it has a very big personality and very funny.
- Andrew: OK.
- Suzanne: And he's very witty.
- Andrew: OK.
- Suzanne: And he always compares current events to past events, and he covers the presidential election going on in the US with a lot of humour and clarity and unbiased information.
- Andrew: OK. That's how you get your news?
- Suzanne: A good ... Yeah, I would say, and the Internet, uh, like Facebook posts, and *Yahoo News* or *Google News*.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. That reminds me. I also am subscribed to a news podcast. It's the *BBC News* ...
- Suzanne: Yes.
- Andrew: And it comes out once or maybe even twice a day. But the problem is I forget to listen every day, and I just have all these episodes **taking up space** on my phone, but they're old news. You know? They're literally old news.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: There's no sense in listening to news from a week ago.
- Suzanne: No.
- Andrew: So ...
- Suzanne: It maybe has changed. Maybe they've come up with an answer for whatever question they had.
- Andrew: Right. One other way I get my news is from the radio.
- Suzanne: Oh.

- Andrew: When I'm doing the dishes or I'm cooking in the kitchen, I **toss on** the radio, and I often hear the news this way.
- Suzanne: OK.
- Andrew: Mmhmm. I think, uh, it's great—an old-fashioned technology still in use today.
- Suzanne: Yeah, I love the radio. I listen to sports radio, so I get my sports updates from my teams back in the US that I like. And, um, I like it because the radio, like you said, is very up to date.
- Andrew: Sure. Now, you mentioned Facebook a second ago.
- Suzanne: Yes.
- Andrew: And embarrassingly, a lot of the news I see these days is from the "Trending" section on Facebook.
- Suzanne: Yeah. I know. I'm not ... I'm not proud of my statement that I get news from Facebook, but it is helpful. And if I'm on Facebook that long, at least I'm reading something that has to be a current event.
- Andrew: Yeah. It's interesting because I end up reading news stories that I never would usually because of this Facebook News bar on the side of my page.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: Like, the other day I was reading about the best-dressed celebrities at an awards show in Europe, which is totally not interesting to me ...
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: But I clicked it for some reason, and then wasted about 10 minutes looking at pictures of celebrities.
- Suzanne: Yeah. And this is my problem too, and it's called **clickbait**.
- Andrew: Yeah, **clickbait**. You're right.
- Suzanne: **Clickbait**. So they put a picture of something that maybe the algorithm of Facebook or Google has picked up. And sometimes they put that picture, and it won't even be in the article. So you fall for the bait, and you click on it. And then you consume this stuff, and it consumes your time, which is my current issue as well.

- Andrew: Yeah, it's true. Recently, actually, a recent change I've made is to follow certain news organizations on Facebook, and then set the priority settings so that I see whenever they post an article.
- Suzanne: OK.
- Andrew: So it will go to the top of my "News Feed"; it will say ... Two organizations that I follow—one is *Vice News* and one is *Quartz*, which I think their website is qz.com—post interesting articles, breaking news stories, stories about science and technology.
- Suzanne: Huh.
- Andrew: But I like it because it goes right to the top of my "News Feed," so I see it right away. Before my friends' status updates, I see the news stories. So that kind of **keeps me in the loop** a little bit.
- Suzanne: That's good, yeah.
- Andrew: Yeah.
- Suzanne: I think this is a good feature. You can kind of choose your own, um, wall, or you can choose your feed. And that's very helpful.
- Andrew: And I would recommend that all you Culips listeners out there set this setting on your Facebook so that you see the Culips updates right at the top of your page. I think that would be a great idea.
- Suzanne: Me too. They're pretty fun, those updates.
- Andrew: Hey, they're not bad, yeah.
- Suzanne: Another thing I listen to is called *Frontline*.
- Andrew: *Frontline*.
- Suzanne: *Frontline* is the audiocast of the PBS, uh, Public Broadcasting System's ...
- Andrew: Oh yeah.
- Suzanne: *Frontline* TV show where ...
- Andrew: Ted ... What's the guy ... What's the host's name?
- Suzanne: Yeah. He has a very ... He has a very deep voice, like this.
- Andrew: Yeah.

Suzanne: It's very ... like a ...

Andrew: Yeah. Deep.

Suzanne: Well, it's very deep and very, like, I don't know ... um, familiar.

Andrew: Yeah.

Suzanne: Like, it's very serious.

Andrew: Yes.

Suzanne: Very serious.

Andrew: Yes.

Suzanne: And I like this because I find I don't have time to watch TV. That's why I don't get my news from a visual source as much. I'm usually listening to the news while I'm doing something else more productive.

Andrew: Sure.

Suzanne: Like laundry, or cleaning, or dishes, like you mentioned.

Andrew: Sure. Yup.

Suzanne: And *Frontline* is interesting because it's a very well-produced audiocast. But, um, it's not late-breaking news, so it's not extremely current. But it's an exposé, so it's exposing something about a story that I would not know otherwise.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: Like, so they did something on terrorism. They did something on the truth behind **fantasy football** and sports.

Andrew: OK.

Suzanne: So things I wouldn't normally go to research, but in this format, it's very fascinating and truthful, and real news.

Andrew: Interesting.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: OK, I should check this podcast out.

Suzanne: I think you'd like this a lot.

- Andrew: Yeah. OK, well, I think that's all we have time for today, Suzanne. We talked about different ways we consume news, and it seems **to be all over the map** really. We have Facebook, the radio, podcasts. Interestingly, we didn't mention newspapers.
- Suzanne: No, I don't read newspapers.
- Andrew: Me neither.
- Suzanne: I used to when I lived in New York, but not here.
- Andrew: Yeah, I don't do it.
- Suzanne: Do you get the small *Metro News* in the morning?
- Andrew: Hmm, I like to read it ... Yeah, I like to read it on the metro. But again, it's always silly news stories ...
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: About celebrities or movies, entertainment, or sometimes it's about news relating to Montreal.
- Suzanne: Yeah.
- Andrew: It's a good way to practise my French.
- Suzanne: That's true. Me too.
- Andrew: So yeah, that's cool. But yeah, no newspapers really.
- Suzanne: No.
- Andrew: OK, so I hope that you enjoyed this conversation about the news. We're curious. How do you consume the news? Send us an email, or leave us a message on our Facebook page, and tell us about your news habits. That's it for now everybody. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk to you next time.
- Suzanne: Thanks. Bye!

Detailed Explanations

Back episodes

In this episode, Andrew mentions that all of the Culips **back episodes** can be found on the Culips website. The expression **back episodes** refers to earlier releases of audiocasts, podcasts, and TV shows. When Andrew says that the Culips website is the place where you can listen to all the Culips **back episodes**, he means you can listen to all of the older Culips podcast episodes at Culips.com.

You might also encounter the variations **back issues** and **back editions**, when talking about earlier releases of newspapers or magazines.

The expression **back catalogue** means a list or database of all of the podcast episodes, magazine issues, or albums that have already been released.

Here are a couple more examples; one with **back episodes** and the other with **back issues**:

Gerry: I just learned about a great new podcast.

Rachel: Cool. What's it called?

Gerry: It's called *Quirks and Quarks*, and it's all about science and technology.

Rachel: Very nice.

Gerry: The best thing is they have hundreds of **back episodes** that I haven't heard yet.

Rachel: Sounds like you have a lot of listening to do!

Fran: I'm writing a history essay for school, but I'm having a hard time with my research.

Peter: You should go to the library and read **back issues** of newspapers. They can be great sources when researching something.

Fran: Great idea! Thanks for the suggestion.

The gist

In this episode, Suzanne talks about listening to a podcast called **The Gist**. This is not only the name of the podcast, but also an interesting English expression.

The gist is the main information, without all the details. We can imagine that the podcast **The Gist** keeps listeners up to date about current events, without getting into very detailed explanations.

When someone tells you the main message or the most important piece of information about a topic, but doesn't tell you all the details, that person is telling you **the gist** of that topic.

Here are a couple more examples with **the gist**:

Sara:	When I was 20, I lived in Sweden for a year.
Harvey:	Cool. Did you learn Swedish?
Sara:	I'm not fluent, but when people speak to me, I get the gist of what they're saying.
Harvey:	Nice!

Elliot:	How'd the meeting with management go?
Vanessa:	It was very interesting, but I can't share too much.
Elliot:	Can you at least tell me the gist ?
Vanessa:	There are going to be some very exciting changes in the future, and we may be opening an office in Tokyo.
Elliot:	Amazing!

To take up space

When something **takes up space**, it occupies room, storage, or capacity. The expression **to take up space** can be used to talk about people or things. In this episode, Andrew complains that the news podcasts **take up too much space** on his phone. In other words, the podcasts fill up his phone's hard drive so that he doesn't have enough free space left.

We often use the expression **to take up space** when we talk about how much room is used on a hard drive or another electronic device.

Here are a couple more examples with **to take up space**:

Jacob: I'm giving away a TV. Do you want it?

Abbie: Sure! That would be awesome. Why are you giving it away?

Jacob: It **takes up too much space** in my living room, and I don't really use it.

Abbie: Your loss is my gain. Thanks!

Richard: Do you have any plans for the weekend?

Olivia: I'm going to organize the files on my computer.

Richard: What an annoying but necessary chore.

Olivia: Tell me about it. I have a bunch of old files that are just **taking up space** on my hard drive. I need to decide what to back up and what to delete.

Richard: Have fun!

To toss on something

In this episode, Andrew says that he **tosses on** the radio when he does the dishes. **To toss on** a radio, TV, CD, or movie means to turn it on. Andrew likes to turn on the radio and listen to the news while he does the dishes.

The expression **to toss on** can also be use when referring to anything that you put on, like clothing.

When talking about things that you turn on, you can use **to toss on** and **to turn on** interchangeably. However, **to turn on** is more commonly used than **to toss on**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to toss on something**:

Kim:	I have an emergency errand I need to run. Can you watch my kids for a few hours when they get back from school?
Cory:	Sure. But what should I do with them?
Kim:	Just toss on a movie and make them a snack. I'll be back before dinner.
Cory:	OK.

Taki:	I'm bored. Could you toss on the car radio or something?
Liam:	OK. Talk, sports, or music?
Taki:	Music, please.

Clickbait

Links that are sensational, controversial, or eye-catching and are designed to get you to click on them are called **clickbait**. **Clickbait** links are a kind of false advertising. Usually, the article or image they link to is different from what you expect to see. The goal of **clickbait** links is to generate advertising money by getting lots of people to click on the link.

Here's an example of what a **clickbait** link might look like:

[25 Amazing Instagrams That Will Change Your Life](#)

In this episode, Andrew mentions that he clicked on a **clickbait** link about what celebrities wore to a European awards show. **Clickbait** is a kind of link seen on social media that uses sensational or shocking headlines to get the most clicks possible, or generate a lot of traffic.

Here are a couple more examples with **clickbait**:

Dave: Hey, I'm going to email you this link I just found. It talks about 15 ways to become rich.

Esther: Don't bother sending it. That sounds like **clickbait** to me.

Yan: I'm officially deleting my Facebook account.

Nikki: Why?

Yan: My "News Feed" is filled with ridiculous stories and **clickbait**. I have better things to do than waste my time on a site like that.

Nikki: Fair enough. Good for you!

To keep someone in the loop

The expression **to keep someone in the loop** means to tell someone about any new information or developments. In this episode, Andrew talks about reading news stories on social media. He says that Facebook helps **to keep him in the loop**. In other words, Andrew can stay up to date with the news by checking Facebook for any developments in the news.

When someone wants you **to keep them in the loop**, it means they want you to keep them informed about a certain issue or topic. When you **keep someone in the loop**, you share with that person any new information, so they know what's going on.

Here are a couple more examples with **to keep someone in the loop**:

Juan: Do you know when next week's meeting will be?

Hannah: I still need to talk to Brenda and Malcolm to see when they're available.

Juan: OK, that's fine. Just **keep me in the loop**.

Hannah: Will do.

Maggie: I'm going to London next week for my vacation.

Jack: I'm so jealous! I hope you have a great time.

Maggie: Thanks! I'll check my email every day, so if anything major happens at the office, please **keep me in the loop**.

Jack: Sure, no problem.

Fantasy football

In this episode, Suzanne says that she listened to a news story about **fantasy football**. **Fantasy football** is a popular game where players (called team managers) create a virtual football team composed of real-world football players. After each real-world football game, the team managers gain points based on the performance of the athletes included in their virtual team. At the end of the season, the team manager who has the most points is the winner.

Fantasy leagues exist for many sports, such as hockey, basketball, and baseball.

Sometimes groups of friends create a fantasy league together. Another option is to join a fantasy league on the Internet and compete against strangers.

Some fantasy sports leagues are just for fun. Others are more competitive and involve players placing bets.

A fantasy sports team is a virtual team. The team is made up of real-world athletes, and the team manager gains points based on the performance of the athletes in actual sporting events.

Here are a couple more examples with **fantasy football**:

Eva: What did you do last weekend?

Ivan: I hung out with the guys from my **fantasy football** league. We watched all the games on Sunday together.

Eva: Very cool.

Ivan: Yeah. I had a good time.

Alex: Do you want to join my **fantasy football** league this year? We need one more person to join.

Gail: Sorry, I hate football. I don't think I'd have fun.

Alex: That's OK. We'll find someone else.

To be all over the map

When something is **all over the map**, it is varied and unspecific. In this episode, Andrew mentions that the way he and Suzanne get their news is **all over the map**. They use a variety of sources, including the Internet, podcasts, audiocasts, radio, and social media. In other words, they don't get their news from one specific place, but instead use multiple sources to stay up to date with the news.

When something is **all over the map**, it is unfocused, unspecific, or all over the place. You can also say that someone is **all over the map**. When someone is **all over the map**, it means they do not stay on topic during conversations. Their thoughts wander in many different directions.

Here are a couple more examples with ***to be all over the map***:

May: How did your job interview go?

Sam: I think it went well.

May: What questions did they ask you?

Sam: The questions were **all over the map**. They asked me about my hobbies, previous job experience, and plans for the future.

May: Well, I hope you get the job.

Sam: Me too. Thanks!

Lois: What type of music do you like?

Thomas: My taste in music is **all over the map**. Jazz, rock, classical—I like everything really.

Lois: Just like me!

Quiz

Multiple Choice

1. **What is clickbait?**
 - a) a podcast
 - b) a website
 - c) a type of fishing lure
 - d) a link designed to generate traffic

2. **What is the gist of a topic?**
 - a) its specifics
 - b) its details
 - c) its main message
 - d) its evidence

3. **What does it mean to be all over the map?**
 - a) to be specific
 - b) to be motivated
 - c) to be well travelled
 - d) to be unfocused

4. **In this episode, Andrew says that social media keeps him in the loop. What does this mean?**
 - a) Social media keeps Andrew ignorant.
 - b) Social media keeps Andrew informed.
 - c) Social media keeps Andrew impressed.
 - d) Social media keeps Andrew inspired.

5. **Which of the following can be a synonym for the expression *to toss on*?**
 - a) to turn on
 - b) to take off
 - c) to switch off
 - d) to twist on

Comprehension

1. **Why doesn't Andrew watch the news on TV?**
2. **When does Andrew listen to the news on the radio?**
3. **Which social media site do Andrew and Suzanne use to stay up to date with the news?**
4. **Why does Suzanne listen to news podcasts instead of watching the news on TV?**
5. **Do Andrew and Suzanne read newspapers?**

Quiz Answers

Multiple Choice:

1.d 2.c 3.a 4.b 5.a

Comprehension:

1. Andrew doesn't watch the news on TV because he doesn't own a TV.
2. Andrew listens to the news on the radio when he washes dishes.
3. Andrew and Suzanne use Facebook to stay up to date with the news.
4. Suzanne listens to news podcasts because she doesn't have time to watch TV.
5. Neither Andrew nor Suzanne reads newspapers.

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