

Real Talk #062 – What to say when you're misunderstood

Episode description

Andrew and Kassy teach you how to handle misunderstandings in English conversations. They focus on common situations where people might get confused, such as unclear pronunciation or vague statements. Through practical examples, you'll learn how to ask for clarification and how to correct yourself politely when you've been misunderstood.

Fun fact

Have you ever played the "Telephone game"? This classic game is a fun way to see how misunderstandings can happen when information is passed along. In this game, a message is whispered from person to person, and by the time it reaches the end, it's usually completely different from the original message!

Expressions included in the study guide

- Actually, what I mean is
- Thanks for clarifying/clearing that up
- Sorry for the confusion
- Just to make sure I understand
- By [something], do you mean [something]?
- Let me rephrase that



Transcript

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. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Real Talk Episode #62, "What to say when you're misunderstood." Featuring Andrew and Kassy. Hello everybody. Today I'm joined by my co-host Kassy. Hey Kassy, how's it going?

Kassy: Hey Andrew, I'm doing well and I'm excited for today's episode.

Andrew: Yeah, could you break it down and let us know what we are going to study for today?

Kassy: Yeah, first of all, like you said, we're doing a Real Talk, which, you know, it's been a while since we did one of those. But today we will be teaching you, listeners, what to do and say when you are misunderstood or when you might misunderstand someone else. Whether that's due to a pronunciation problem or maybe somebody said something very vague that you didn't really understand.

Andrew: Yeah, sometimes native English speakers can be excellent at pronunciation, right? They have perfect pronunciation, but maybe their communication skills aren't so great, and they say something that just actually doesn't make sense or is very vague or ambiguous. And ambiguous is a big high-level word, but ambiguous means that it's not quite clear. And it could mean this, or it could mean that. And from the context, it's not clear what the speaker intended and wanted to actually say. So, in these kinds of situations, it's good to clarify and maybe ask again or something like that. So that's what we're going to break down and explain in today's episode. OK, Kassy, let's get started. Could you break down what the plan for this episode will be?

Kassy: Of course. So today we're going to learn some practical expressions to use when you realize you've been misunderstood or when you don't understand someone else. How are we going to do that? Well, we're going to listen to two example conversations between colleagues at an office discussing their plans for work presentations. One of the conversations will focus on misunderstandings due to pronunciation and the other conversation will focus on a misunderstanding due to a vague statement. The expressions we will use in today's episode can be applied to various situations where you need to clarify or correct what you said or ask for clarification for what somebody else said.

Andrew: All right. Well said, Kassy. So, let's get started by listening to the first example conversation now. Here we go.

Coworker 1: Hey, do you have the slides ready for our presentation next week?

Coworker 2: Yeah, I do. I just finished preparing them. I think we're going to need around 15 minutes for the entire presentation.

Coworker 1: Did you say 50 minutes?

Coworker 2: No, **actually, what I mean is** the presentation should only take 15 minutes.

Coworker 1: Ah, 15. OK, got it. **Thanks for clarifying.**

Coworker 2: Yeah, no problem. And also, I think we should practice once before the meeting just to make sure that, you know, the presentation fits within those 15 minutes.

Coworker 1: Absolutely. And **sorry for the confusion** earlier.

Coworker 2: Yeah, no worries.

Andrew: OK, so let's break down this conversation and go through it one more time to learn some of the key expressions that are used when there is a misunderstanding due to

a pronunciation issue. So, in this conversation, Kassy, we hear two coworkers talking about a presentation and the confusion came because of the length of the presentation. The presentation is actually going to be quite short, only 15 minutes. But one of the coworkers misunderstood and heard 50, five, zero. 50 minutes, which is a much longer presentation. And you could imagine if you're thinking in your head, like, "I'm just going to make a short presentation." And then your coworker says, "Oh, actually, it's close to an hour." You'd be like, "Oh my God." So yeah, we heard some confusion about 15 and 50. And Kassy, I don't know about you, but I've noticed that this can be really confusing for a lot of English learners, the distinction. I know talking with students in the past, they've had some difficulty understanding the difference between these two words.

Kassy: My husband and I have had this exact kind of conversation multiple times, just for 15 and 50. It's really funny.

Andrew: How could we break it down for our listeners, the difference between these two words in terms of pronunciation? Could you say them for us just slowly, side by side, so we can hear that clearly, the difference?

Kassy: Sure. So, the longer one, five zero, is 50. And the shorter one, one five, is 15. Fifty, fifteen.

Andrew: So, I think that's an interesting distinction, is that when we are saying five zero, fifty, even though the spelling is with a T, we pronounce it as having more of a D sound, right? Fifty, fifty. But for the shorter number, one five, fifteen, then we say it with more of a T sound. Fifteen, fifteen. So, if you listen to that, that could be a nice little tip for understanding the difference between those two numbers. But Kassy, let's get into it and go through this conversation one more time. So, the co-worker says, "I think we're going to need around 15 minutes for the presentation." But then the other co-worker

misunderstood. So how did she clarify to make sure that she understood correctly or misunderstood?

Kassy: She said, "Did you say 50 minutes?"

Andrew: Yeah. "Did you say?" Right? And so, this is a nice way to just use that question format. You could say, "Oh, sorry. Did you say or did you mean?" Something like that is a good way to clarify. And then in response to that, my character, the other co-worker, he said, "**Actually, what I mean is...**" So, if you are on the other end and you need to clarify something that you've said to someone, you can use that kind of expression. "**Actually, what I mean is** the presentation is only 15 minutes long." Or, "**Actually, what I mean is** the party will happen on Saturday night." Something like that, right? You can use that sentence template to clarify what you wanted to say.

Kassy: Exactly. Or you could say something similar like, "**Actually, what I said was...**" or something like that.

Andrew: Yeah. And in a rude way, I think this is a little bit rude, but people do it just naturally. And I do this too. It's like something automatic that you don't even think about, but in retrospect is sometimes a little rude, is we just say, "I said..." Right? "Did you say 50 minutes?" "No, I said 15 minutes." So that's a way that native speakers do it all the time. Although I do think that seems a little bit rude. It's like you're impatient with the other person. And yeah, I wouldn't recommend maybe adding that one to your vocabulary and actually saying it like that, but you should understand that many native speakers will respond like that, just, "No, I said 15 minutes." They'll say, "I said..." I said.

Kassy: Yeah. I feel like if you're in a more casual setting with a friend or a family member, you might hear the, "No, I said..." more than, you know, "Well, actually, I said blah, blah." You know, it depends on how formal you are with the person you're talking to.

Andrew: Sure. Yeah, absolutely. OK, Kassy. And then next, we hear a very nice expression, I think. It is, "**Thanks for clarifying.**" "**Thanks for clarifying.**" So, you know, in any kind of communication situation, when there is a misunderstanding, it means that the conversation is taking a longer time than it should. Right? You're sort of wasting the other person's time, to an extent, by asking them to repeat themselves. And again, in some situations, this is no big deal. With your friends, maybe even with your coworkers. But in some other situations, like maybe if you're in a bank situation where there's a long lineup and you have to clarify with the bank teller or something, just for an example, or maybe a busy immigration office or at the airport, someplace where it's really busy and there are a lot of people and maybe the person who you're communicating with feels stressed to try and move through as many customers or as many people as possible. In this kind of situation, when there is a communication breakdown and you have to ask again for clarification, it can be, you know, stressful. So, in that kind of context, it's nice to just say, "Oh, **thank you for clarifying.** Thank you for repeating yourself." Just sort of as a way almost to apologize for taking more of their time. And yeah, I think it's a polite thing.

Kassy: I completely agree. Yeah. Miscommunication can be one of the quickest ways to raise your blood pressure or, you know, cause undue stress. So, by thanking them for taking the extra time to help you understand is really beneficial for both you and the person that helped you.

Andrew: Yeah. And then on the other side of things, if you wanted to apologize because maybe you were the speaker and you didn't pronounce something very clearly or maybe you made a vague statement that wasn't clear to the listener and you want to apologize for doing that, then you could just say, like we heard in that example conversation, "**Sorry for the confusion**" or "**Sorry for the confusion earlier.**" Just sort of acknowledging and letting the other person know that maybe you didn't speak so clearly. And that could be related to your pronunciation or that could be related just to your communication skills

overall. And yeah, like I said, this is an issue that both non-native speakers and native speakers have.

Kassy: Exactly.

Andrew: Cool. Well, Kassy, I think now we are ready to move on to the second example conversation. So, let's take a listen now.

Coworker 1: Hey, do you have any updates on the new project timeline?

Coworker 2: Yeah, we should be able to finish it soon, I think.

Coworker 1: OK, sorry. **Just to make sure I understand**, by soon, do you mean by the end of this month?

Coworker 2: **Let me rephrase that** better. Actually, we expect to complete the project by mid-August.

Coworker 1: OK, that makes more sense. **Thanks for clearing that up.**

Coworker 2: Yeah, sure thing. And just to confirm, the deadline is going to be August 18th.

Coworker 1: Perfect. I'll update the team with this information.

Andrew: OK. And now, Kassy, we should break down conversation number two. Could you give us just a quick summary of what we heard in that conversation?

Kassy: Yeah. So, in this conversation, we had two coworkers discussing a project timeline. And one coworker was a bit vague about the deadline of this project. He said, "Eh, we should be able to finish it soon." And the other coworker is like, "OK, hold up. How soon is soon? Is this a week, a month, several months?" So, they work together to clarify this issue.

Andrew: Kassy, I like that expression that you just used. "Hold up." Hold up. A nice phrasal verb. What does it mean "to hold up?"

Kassy: That means pause for a second. I have a question.

Andrew: Pause for a second. Yeah. You know, if you ever go on a walk with someone, and the other person is a really fast walker, sometimes you have to tell the other person, "Hold up. Hold up. Like, wait for me. Yeah, slow down. Pause for a second." OK. So now that we know what happened in that conversation, let's go through it one more time and focus in on some of the key expressions that we heard. And Kassy, what did you hear? What popped out to you?

Kassy: The first thing I heard that I really liked was the female coworker, she did not understand perfectly right away. So, she said, "Sorry, **just to make sure I understand.**" I think that's a really good way to try to get re-clarification on something. If you don't understand something, start with a "Sorry," because you know you're interrupting the flow of conversation, and say, "You know, in my understanding, **just to make sure I understand,** is this what you meant?"

Andrew: Yeah, well said. And actually, I think we should go back through that whole part of the conversation just one more time, because looking at it, it seems like it could be quite confusing to someone learning English, because, OK, they have this question, right? The coworker asks about the update on the timeline of the project and when it will finish. And my character, the guy, he says, "Yeah, we'll finish soon, I think." And then your character, Kassy, says, "OK, **just to make sure I understand,** by soon." I think that preposition is a little bit weird. "**By** soon," **do you mean** by the end of the month? So, what that preposition there, "by," is conveying or communicating, is meaning, "When you said 'soon,' what does 'soon' mean?" So that little word is passing on a lot of information. But that is the preposition that we use in this context. So, I think, listeners, if you want to add this phrase,

this whole question phrase to your vocabulary, that could be great. **"Just to make sure I understand, by 'something,' do you mean 'something'?"** This kind of question style is a great one to memorize. Good. And then, Kassy, when the speaker, my character, in the example conversation, is trying to clarify what he said, he used a nice phrase as well. He acknowledged that he was being very vague, that "soon" isn't a concrete word, that it has no real meaning. It's context-dependent, right? So, he said, "Actually, **let me rephrase that.**" **Let me rephrase that.** And this is an expression that we use to tell people that we're going to repeat ourselves, but in a different way. We're going to speak in a way that's different from the first time, and hopefully, by doing that, we can become clearer with our communication.

Kassy: Exactly. **"Let me rephrase that"** is a great expression that you could use. A similar one could be one that we used up above, which was, "What I meant to say was," or "What I meant was." That's very similar to a phrase we heard in the first example conversation as well.

Andrew: Yeah, absolutely. And then another kind of polite expression, not one that you must use, but one that's just nice to be polite, is **"Thanks for clearing that up."** Right? So, when there was a communication breakdown, and they had to, kind of, ask for some more information to make sure that everybody understood the situation, well then, Kassy, your character, the woman co-worker, she said, **"Thanks for clearing that up."** And that just means, oh, to clear something up means to make it tidy and organized again. And so, yeah, now the information is tidy and organized, and everybody understands what the real meaning is.

Kassy: And one thing I like about all of these expressions that we just learned here are that you can use them in both casual and formal situations. I can say from experience, I used the phrase, "Oh, **let me rephrase that**" all the time, or **"Thanks for clearing that up.** I was a little confused." Those things you're going to hear daily in a work setting or when talking with friends.

Andrew: Yeah, I think so. And that's a great point that although some of these expressions are a little bit informal, like "to clear up" or "to hold up," just because they're informal doesn't mean they're impolite or not useful in a work situation. So, guys, don't feel like these are just super, super informal expressions that you can only use with your friend. Everything that we've learned here in this episode is perfect for daily life, but also for professional life in an office situation as well. Good point, Kassy.

Kassy: Well, we're almost at the end of today's episode, but before we go, let's summarize what we covered.

Andrew: Yeah, so today we learned about how to correct yourself when you're misunderstood, whether that is due to pronunciation or a vague statement, or what to do if you are on the receiving end, if you don't understand what somebody else said due to pronunciation or a vague statement.

Kassy: Yes, and we learned some useful phrases such as "No, I said," or "**Actually, what I mean is,**" or "**Let me rephrase that,**" or "**Thanks for clarifying,**" and lastly, "**Sorry for the confusion** earlier."

Andrew: Yeah, that's right. So, guys, add these expressions to your vocabulary so that you can clarify and correct misunderstandings in a polite and effective way in the future. OK, that's going to bring us to the end, everybody. Thank you for listening. As always, please take care and happy English studies. Bye-bye.

Kassy: See ya.

Andrew: That brings us to the end of this lesson. Talk to you next time. Bye.

Detailed Explanations

Actually, what I mean is Expression

In the first example conversation, Coworker 1 misunderstands how long the presentation is going to be. Coworker 2 uses the phrase, “**Actually, what I mean is,**” to explain the correct duration of the presentation.

This phrase is very useful when you need to make sure someone understands exactly what you are trying to say. It helps you correct a misunderstanding or give more precise information. It’s a polite way to provide a more accurate explanation and clarify what you’ve said previously.

For instance, if you are discussing plans with a friend and they seem to mistakenly think you’re meeting them this Friday, you could say, “**Actually, what I mean is,** we are meeting next Friday, not this Friday.”

A common variation of this expression is "What I meant to say is," and you can use it in the same situations where you want to make sure the other person understands you correctly and there’s no confusion.

Here are a couple more examples with **actually, what I mean is**:

Eric: So, what you’re saying is, you don’t like action movies?

Lizzy: **Actually, what I mean is** I enjoy action movies, but I prefer comedies.

Eric: Got it! I’ll pick a comedy for our movie night then.

Pete: I’ll be flying to Paris on Monday, so I’ll need to leave a little earlier than usual.

Anna: Wow, amazing! Enjoy! I love Paris. I can give you some places recommendations if you like.

Pete: **Actually, what I mean is** I’m going to Paris for work. So yeah, it’s more of a business trip, but I might have some free time to see the city, though.

Anna: Let me know! I’ll be happy to share some nice places I’ve discovered when I was there.

Thanks for clarifying/clearing that up Expression

In the first example dialogue, Coworker 1 is confused because they heard "50 minutes" instead of "15 minutes" for a presentation. When Coworker 2 corrects this misunderstanding, Coworker 1 says, "**Thanks for clarifying.**" In the second example dialogue, when Coworker 2 explains that the project would be finished by mid-August, Coworker 1 responds with, "**Thanks for clearing that up.**"

When someone says, "**thanks for clarifying**" or "**thanks for clearing that up**", it means that they are grateful for the explanation that made the situation clearer. Both expressions are polite ways to show that you appreciate someone's help that made things easier to understand.

For instance, let's say a friend is telling you a story and a part of it is confusing to you, so you ask them to explain. After they do, you might say, "**Thanks for clearing that up**; now I understand what happened."

A similar way to express the same idea is by saying, "I'm glad we cleared that up." You can use these phrases to make conversations more polite, especially in situations where misunderstandings happen, and show appreciation for the other person's help in resolving the issue.

Here are a couple more examples with **thanks for clarifying/clearing that up**:

Student: Could I ask you something? I'm not sure if I heard you correctly. Did you say the project should include a presentation or just a written report?

Teacher: The project needs both a presentation and a written report.

Student: **Thanks for clearing that up.** I'll make sure to include both.

Patient: Sorry, doctor, I'm confused about how often I need to take this medicine. Could you explain that to me again, please?

Doctor: You should take it twice a day, once in the morning and once before bed.

Patient: **Thanks for clarifying.** I'll follow those instructions.

Doctor: You're very welcome. Take care now!

Sorry for the confusion

Expression

In the first example conversation, after clarifying the misunderstanding about the presentation length, Coworker 1 says, “**Sorry for the confusion** earlier.”

You can use “**Sorry for the confusion**” when you realize that something you said or did was not clear and caused misunderstanding, and you want to apologize for that. For example, if you told a friend the wrong time for a meeting, you might say, “**Sorry for the confusion** about the meeting time.” This helps show you feel bad for any trouble caused by the unclear information.

Other phrases with the same meaning include “Sorry for any misunderstanding” and “I apologize for the mix-up.” Using these expressions can help you fix any misunderstanding and keeps conversations clear and friendly. It shows you care about making things right and ensuring everyone understands each other.

If someone says, “**Sorry for the confusion**” to you, you can respond by saying something like, “No problem”, “No worries”, or “It’s OK.”

Here are a couple more examples with **sorry for the confusion**:

Customer: I was told my flight was confirmed for next Friday, but now it looks like it's scheduled for next month.

Agent: I’m really **sorry for the confusion**. There must have been an error in the booking system. I’ll fix it and confirm the correct date for you.

Customer: Thank you. I appreciate your help!

James: Hey, I thought we agreed to go to the gym together this morning, but I didn’t see you there.

Katie: **Sorry for the confusion**. I forgot to tell you that I changed the time to later in the afternoon. Can we meet then?

James: No problem, I can be there later, too. Just let me know what time works for you.

Katie: Thank you! I’ll text you when I’m certain of the time.

Just to make sure I understand Expression

In the second example conversation, Coworker 1 says, “**Just to make sure I understand,**” before asking for more details about the project timeline. This phrase shows that you want to double-check if you’ve understood something correctly. It helps make sure you have the right information and are able to avoid any mistakes.

For example, if someone says they will call you later, but you are not sure if they mean today or tomorrow, you could ask, “**Just to make sure I understand,** do you plan on calling me today?” This helps to make sure you know exactly what they mean.

Kassy also suggests starting with “sorry” when you need to ask for clarification because you are interrupting someone. This shows that you are being polite. For example, if you are not sure about the location of a party, you might say, “Sorry to interrupt, but **just to make sure I understand,** is the party at Jane’s house or Mike’s house?”

Another way to clarify is to ask, “Did you say...” like Coworker 1 does in the first example dialogue. For instance, if someone tells you the time of the meeting, but you’re not sure if you heard them correctly, you could say, “Did you say the meeting is at 4?”

You can also use other similar phrases like “Just to confirm” and “Let me check if I got this right.” These phrases help to make sure you understand what someone is saying.

Here are a couple more examples with **just to make sure I understand**:

Barista: Hello! Before you place your order, we have a special offer on our medium-sized drinks.

Customer: **Just to make sure I understand,** the offer applies to all medium drinks, not just the ones on the special offer menu board, right?

Barista: Yes, it includes all medium drinks.

Vicky: The cinema subscription is \$12, and then you can watch any movies for a month!

Sam: **Just to make sure I understand,** you said \$20, right?

Vicky: Actually, I said \$12. It’s a pretty good price!

Sam: Wow, that’s a good deal!

By [something], do you mean [something]?

Expression

In the second example conversation, Coworker 1 asks for an update on the project timeline, and Coworker 2 says the project will be finished “soon.” Coworker 1 then asks, **“By soon, do you mean by the end of this month?”**

The phrase **“By [something], do you mean [something]?”** helps to clarify what someone means by a word or phrase. It is useful when you want to be sure you understand someone’s words correctly. As Andrew explains, this phrase can be very helpful in conversations. When you use the preposition “by” in this context, you are asking for more details to understand exactly what the other person is referring to.

For instance, if a friend says they will come by your place you “later,” you can ask, **“By later, do you mean this afternoon?”** This helps you understand exactly when they’re planning to visit you. Another example is, if someone says they like “classic movies,” you might ask, **“By classic movies, do you mean films from the 1950s and 1960s?”** By using this expression, you can make sure if their definition of “classic movies” is the same is yours.

Other similar expressions include “So, you’re saying [something]?” and “When you say [something], do you mean [something]?” Both these phrases are useful when you want to confirm details or clear up any confusion.

Here are a couple more examples with **by [something] you mean [something]?**:

Simon: Hey, I heard you just moved into a new house! How’s everything going?

Lucy: It’s going great! We’re planning to make a few changes, though.

Simon: **By changes, do you mean decorating or actually renovating** the rooms?

Lucy: We’re doing some renovations. We’re updating the kitchen and remodeling the bathrooms.

Mechanic: Make sure to check your tires regularly to avoid any issues.

Customer: **By checking tires, do you mean just looking at them?**

Mechanic: You should check the tire pressure, look for any visible damage, and ensure the tread isn’t worn out.

Let me rephrase that Expression

In the second example conversation, Coworker 1 asks for an update on a project, and Coworker 2 initially says they will finish “soon.” Coworker 1 then asks if “soon” means by the end of the month. Coworker 2 responds with, “**Let me rephrase that** better. Actually, we expect to complete the project by mid-August.”

The phrase “**Let me rephrase that**” is used when you want to say something again in a clearer or better way. It means you realize your original explanation was not clear enough, and you want to explain it differently, so the other person understands better.

For example, if you tell someone, “I’ll be at the cafe near the library,” and they seem confused about the exact location, you might say, “**Let me rephrase that**. I’ll be at the cafe across the street from the library, right next to the bookstore.”

Other similar expressions are “Let me put it another way” and “What I mean is...” These phrases are also used when you need to explain things more clearly if someone didn’t understand your first explanation.

Here are a couple more examples with **let me rephrase that**:

Guest: Excuse me, where can I find the fitness center?

Hotel receptionist: It’s on the top floor.

Guest: Is that the top floor of this building of the main building?

Hotel receptionist: Sorry, **let me rephrase that**. The fitness center is on the top floor of this building, right above the lobby.

Guest: Thank you so much!

Joe: I like your ideas, but I think the presentation could be better.

Sue: Are you talking about the slides or the delivery?

Joe: **Let me rephrase that**. I think you should add more visuals to the slides.

Sue: Got it. Thanks!

Quiz

- 1. Which phrase would you use to show appreciation for someone helping you understand their point better?**
 - a) Sorry for the confusion.
 - b) Thanks for clarifying.
 - c) Let me rephrase that.
 - d) Actually, what I mean is...

- 2. Which of the following phrases would NOT be appropriate if you want to ensure you understand what someone is saying to you?**
 - a) Just to make sure I understand...
 - b) Just to confirm...
 - c) By [something] do you mean [something]?
 - d) Actually, what I mean is...

- 3. True or False? The expression “Actually, what I said was,” is informal and not suitable for formal situations.**
 - a) True.
 - b) False.

- 4. If someone says, “Sorry for the confusion”, which of the following phrases would NOT be best to respond with?**
 - a) Hold up.
 - b) No worries.
 - c) No problem.
 - d) It's OK.

- 5. You are speaking with a friend, and you realize they misunderstood your earlier statement. What phrase would you use to explain your point again?**
 - a) Just to make sure I understand.
 - b) Thanks for clearing that up.
 - c) Let me rephrase that.
 - d) Sorry, by [something], do you mean [something]?

Comprehension Quiz

6. In the first example conversation, what was the misunderstanding about?
7. What is the main issue in the second example conversation?
8. What is the difference in pronunciation between “fifteen” and “fifty” as explained in the episode?
9. What advice does Andrew give about handling misunderstandings in busy settings like banks or airports?
10. What does the term "ambiguous" mean, according to Andrew?

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Do you find it challenging to communicate your thoughts or feelings to others, or are you good at explaining things?
2. Is it easy or difficult for you to ask for clarification when you don't understand something? How do you usually do it?
3. How do you usually feel when you realize that someone misunderstood you? Do you get annoyed, or are you patient in these situations?
4. Do you ever feel like technology (like texting or email) complicates conversations? How do you handle this issue?
5. Can we avoid misunderstandings, or are they a normal part of communicating with others?

Quiz Answers

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

6. The misunderstanding was about the length of the presentation—whether it was 15 minutes or 50 minutes.

7. The issue is the vague statement about the project timeline, specifically the meaning of "soon."

8. "Fifteen" has a T sound, pronounced "fif-teen," while "fifty" has a D sound, pronounced "fif-ty."

9. Andrew advises that it's polite to thank the person for clarifying to acknowledge the additional time and effort they spent to help.

10. "Ambiguous" means that something is not quite clear and could be interpreted in multiple ways.

Episode credits

Hosts: Andrew Bates and Kassy White

Music: *Song One* by Artist One, *Song Two* by Artist Two

Episode preparation/research: Andrew Bates

Audio editor: Andrew Bates or Marshall Vaillancourt

Transcriptionist: Heather Bates

Study guide writer: Alina Morozova

English editor: Stephanie MacLean or Edden Yohanes

Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima

Image: Mimi Thian (Unsplash.com)