

TRANSCRIPT · EPISODE 59

# The Spotlight Effect

Full episode script · English

21 lines

Your English Toolbox

Have you ever made a tiny mistake when speaking English and suddenly felt like the entire room stopped just to judge you I Think we have all felt that sudden panic in our chest Your face gets hot your heart starts beating faster and your mind goes completely blank It feels like a bright heavy spotlight is shining right on your face exposing all your flaws Welcome to your English toolbox your slow English podcast where we train your ears

step-by-step I am Martin and I am Julia Today we are talking about a very common psychological trap called the spotlight effect If you often stay quiet in meetings because you are afraid people are watching your every move This episode is exactly for you If you stay with us for the next six minutes You will understand the neuroscience of why nobody is actually looking at you You will also learn four essential vocabulary words to describe social anxiety

plus one advanced see one term and Finally you will learn a simple mental shift to use this Psychological bias to find your speaking freedom Let me take you back to a very painful meeting.

I had a few years ago in London.

I Had to present a new financial project to a room full of native speakers and senior managers That is already a high-pressure Situation for anyone it was incredibly stressful.

I had prepared my notes I had

practiced my pronunciation and I felt ready But right in the middle of my presentation, I completely forgot the word for budget.

Oh No, the mind goes completely blank in those moments Exactly instead of saying budget I panicked and said something completely ridiculous like the money box.

I Felt like five hours Five seconds of silence in a quiet room feels like an eternity.

I started sweating immediately I looked at their faces and I was Absolutely sure that

everyone in that room was questioning my professional intelligence I believed that they would remember this mistake for the rest of the year.

I felt so Incredibly exposed that I just wanted to shrink down hide under the conference table and disappear from the world part three the analysis You used some very powerful words there to describe your fear Let us break those down starting with the feeling of being exposed You said you felt extremely self-conscious Yes, that

is the perfect word for it Being self-conscious means you are intensely and uncomfortably aware of yourself Your awareness turns completely inward and you worry constantly about how others perceive your actions Exactly when you are self-conscious you automatically assume you are the center of attention The center of attention is the person that everyone else is focused on But this leads us to our advanced see one vocabulary word for today When you think you are the center of

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attention you feel like you are under strict scrutiny scrutiny That is a fantastic and very precise word Scrutiny means a careful critical and detailed examination of something It is like someone is looking at your English through a microscope searching for errors But this is where the psychology comes in Psychologists call this illusion the spotlight effect It is a cognitive bias where we massively overestimate how much other people notice about us We think our mistakes are huge

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but to the rest of the world they are just a tiny blur So I thought I was under intense scrutiny, but the reality in that London meeting was completely different Here's the liberating truth about human psychology The human brain is beautifully and naturally egocentric What do you mean by egocentric in this context?

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I mean that every single person in that room was the main character in their own internal movie While I was sweating and worrying about

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my vocabulary mistake My colleagues were thinking about their own problems They were probably worrying about their own presentation or what they were going to have for lunch Exactly People will generally ignore your small mistakes because they are too busy hiding their own insecurities To ignore means to intentionally not listen or not pay attention to something To most people your grammar errors and your pronunciation struggles are practically invisible Invisible means impossible to see So the mental shift

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is this The next time you make a mistake and feel your face getting hot Take a deep breath and look at the people around you Realize that the spotlight is not on you Everyone is holding their own spotlight pointing it directly at themselves So let us quickly recap the vocabulary from today Do not let feeling self-conscious stop you from sharing your voice You are rarely the center of attention in the way you fear People will usually

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ignore your small mistakes your language flaws are mostly invisible to others and Nobody is putting your English under critical scrutiny If you enjoyed this episode, please write a small comment before you go Your comments show the platforms that our community is real active and growing Tell us about a time you made a mistake and felt the spotlight effect Do you want to be part of our slow English community?

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We need your comments because your voice is

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more important than ours Your voice and comments will show us the right path Thank you for listening

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