Hi! I am Marianne Raynaud from QualityTime-ESL located in Grenoble in France, to the east of the city called Lyon (pronounced “Lyon” in French). The weather is fantastic and so is the scenery. In the winter we go skiing and in the summer there is hiking along beautiful trails.

Today I am back with more grammar exercises in our series “Better Speaking Skills”. I recommend you do the exercises WITHOUT looking at the script. If you feel lost or confused you can tap the center of the control pad of your iPod three times, and the first part of the script will be displayed. However, you can also download the complete written script by going to our website QualityTime-ESL.com.

I am sure you know that in English there are two forms of the present tense: the simple present and the continuous present. We use the simple present to describe “habits”, “opinions” or “actions that occur regularly”.

First examples of “habits”
Listen and repeat:
Every morning he listens to the radio.
We always have dinner at 7 pm.
I play tennis once a week.

Secondly examples of “opinions”
Listen and repeat:
We expect politicians to be dishonest.
He thinks it is time to cut the grass.
I believe we must stop destroying our environment.

Thirdly examples of “actions that occur regularly but not necessarily at the present moment”
Listen and repeat
I speak several foreign languages fluently.
She says whatever she likes.
They want us to work together.

We use the second present called the continuous present to describe actions taking place while we are speaking or actions that will occur in the very near future.

First actions occurring while the speaker is talking. Listen and repeat:

She isn't feeling well right now.
We are trying to decide where to go.
Be quiet! I am reviewing for my English test!

Now let’s practice with actions that will occur in the very near future”. In this case there is very often an adverb of “time” for instance.” this afternoon”, “this evening”, “tonight”, “tomorrow”.

Listen and repeat:
The children are visiting the zoo tomorrow.
We are going to the cinema this evening
Tonight he is spending the evening at Peter's. (=at Peter's place)

*Note you can also use the verb “to go” in the continuous present to express an idea of "intention" in the future.*

*Listen and repeat:*
We are going to examine his proposal.
He is going to help me tomorrow.
They are going to come by and see us this week.

*Now we will do some transformation exercises. Listen to the examples.*

*I say: Every morning he listens to the radio.*

*And I say: She*

*You say: Every morning she listens to the radio.*

*I say: They*

*You say: Every morning they listen to the radio.*

*Now you go on in the same way. Be sure speak before I give the right answer.*

Every morning he listens to the radio.
She
Every morning she listens to the radio.
They
Every morning they listen to the radio.
We
Every morning we listen to the radio.

*Now let us try the same thing with another verb. Transform the sentences just as you did in the last exercise. Be to sure speak before I give the right answer.*

I believe you are right.
She
She believes you are right
I
I believe you are right.

*And now the same thing a third time, but be careful with the second verb.*

He says whatever he likes.
She
She says whatever she likes.
We
We say whatever we like.
They
They say whatever they like.
Finally let us practice a little with the continuous form.

I say: Be quiet! I am reviewing for my English test!
     He
You say: Be quiet! He is reviewing for his English test!
     They
You say: Be quiet! They are reviewing for their English test!

Now you go on, but be careful with the possessive pronoun: my, his, their etc.
Be quiet! I am reviewing for my English test!
He
Be quiet! He is reviewing for his English test!
They
Be quiet! They are reviewing for their English test!
We
Be quiet! We are reviewing for our English test!
She
Be quiet! She is reviewing for her English test!

And now let us do an exercise where I give a few words, and you will give the simple present with the pronoun “he”. Listen to the examples.

I say: Play tennis every week.
You say: He plays tennis every week.
I say: Speak English whenever he can.
You say: He speaks English whenever he can

Now you go on in the same way.

Play tennis every week.
He plays tennis every week.
Speak English whenever he can.
He speaks English whenever he can.
Eat in a restaurant twice a week.
He eats in a restaurant twice a week.
Go out on the weekend.
He goes out on the weekend.

Now let us do an exercise where I give the simple present and you will give the continuous present.

Listen to the examples:
I say: He reviews for his English test every Thursday.
You say: He is reviewing for his English test right now.
I say: She speaks French when she is in France.
You say: She speaking French right now.

Note that “right now” means “at the present moment”.

Copyright 2007 QualityTime-ESL.com
Now you go on in the same way.
He reviews for his English test every Thursday.
He is reviewing for his English test right now.
She speaks French when she is in France.
She is speaking French right now.
I play tennis once a week.
I am playing tennis right now.
They work together every weekend.
They are working together right now.
We eat fish once a week.
We are eating fish right now.

Listen and repeat

This is a short lesson today, because we are continuing with this lesson next time. I believe the best lessons are not too long. I want you to work a little on your English every day. I want you to say to yourself, “Every day I listen to Better Speaking Skills. Every day I do my QualityTime-ESL exercises. Right now I am practicing my English. Very soon I am going to be very good at speaking English!”

That is the end of today’s podcast. We will soon be back with more. Thank you for listening and don't forget to keep smiling.