A to Z Listener Interview: Yunita from Indonesia

In this special episode of The A to Z English Podcast, we talk with Yunita from East Java, a student who was interested in English from a young age, and does her best to just make English a habit every day. Come chat with her in our Whatsapp group. (Link here: https://forms.gle/zKCS8y1t9jwv2KTn7)

It's a great conversation, so you won't want to miss it!

Share your thoughts about today's interview in our Whatsapp group or tell us if you think you have something interesting to talk about. Perhaps you could be our next guest on the podcast!

If you could take a minute and complete a short survey about the podcast, we would be very appreciative. You can find the survey here: https://forms.gle/HHNnnqU6U8W3DodK8

We would love to hear your feedback and suggestions for future episodes.

Intro/Outro Music by Eaters: https://freemusicarchive.org/music/eaters/the-astronomers-office/agents-in-coffee-shops/

Full Transcript:

Jack
You are listening to the A-Z English podcast.
Kevin
Welcome to 8 and the English or.
Kevin
Today we're bringing another listener interview and today we're talking to UNITA from Indonesia, from from East Bali or East Java.
Kevin
I'm sorry E Java specifically, not too far from Bali as she was telling us before we before we got started here, so.
Kevin
You need to.

Kevin
Thanks for joining us.
Kevin
This evening, is it about dinner time?
Yunita
Uh, yes, yes.
Yunita
About to have dinner, but not yet.
Yunita
I told him to wait.
Kevin
Yeah, I just finished dinner myself actually, so.
Kevin
Thanks for joining us.
Kevin
It's it's great to to have you and to talk to you about about English here tonight.
Yunita
Pleasure is mine was so small.
Jack
Absolutely, yeah.
Kevin
Just to get started, we were talking a little bit before we got started and you were saying that.
Kevin
You're a teacher and.
Kevin
You teach a lot.
Kevin
Of different things, but with English.
Yunita
When did you?
Kevin
First, Start learning English when you were an elementary school student, or after or before.
Yunita
I was eight years Old Town.
Yunita
I was allowed to do school and at night time there is no English lesson.
Kevin
8 so.
Yunita
At my school was my brother, my oldest brother, who brought this to me into my life.
Kevin
OK.
Yunita
So my oldest brother got these English lesson at his junior high school and he was like trying to read some short stacks.
Kevin

Oh, wow.
Yunita
And I was curious what is done because the language the way he speak is weird.
Yunita
It sounds like aliens language.
Yunita
And I asked him, what is that?
Yunita
And I decide it's English.
Yunita
What is English?
Yunita
English is international language and everybody loses.
Yunita
Will talk about it and if you want to communicate with people in Eustis.
Yunita
And at that time I.
Yunita
Was so curious about that really.
Yunita
And I was.
Kevin
So your your older brother and he's he was in a middle school, he said.
Kevin
So what he's maybe five years older than you about?
Yunita
Yes, yes.
Yunita
I I was eight and.
Yunita
He was 1515 imported.
Kevin
Oh, a bit more than so long.
Yunita
More here, more than.
Kevin
OK, OK, well, he's, he seems quite mature than to even at that young age to be teaching his young elementary sister.
Yunita
He actually doesn't care if I if I was curious or not.
Yunita
He just said this is English and that's it.
Yunita
And what is not English?
Kevin
This is go always, yeah.

Yunita
What do you think with and what is English?
Yunita
English is international language.
Yunita
That's it.
Yunita
And he just left me with this curiosity and I was like.
Yunita 1
What is there? Please tell.
Yunita
Me and he doesn't.
Yunita
He didn't even bother me to explain what is in his own blood.
Yunita
Well, I always have lost world.
Kevin
And he OK, I I take it back, then he.
Kevin
Wasn't very helpful.
Jack
He never he didn't become your teacher.
Jack
He just he just planted the seed, kind of right, OK.
Yunita
No, no at all.
Yunita
I don't.
Kevin
So then how?
Yunita
Yeah, what is that?
Kevin
Did you actually start to?
Yunita
That's idiom.
Kevin
So yeah, how did you actually start to study then?
Kevin
Where does it just on your?
Kevin
Own 'cause you're curious.
Yunita
Yes, yes.
Yunita
I was actually so, so proud of myself.

Kevin
Well, how?
Yunita
And at that time, yeah, even even there is no English lesson at like at night time.
Kevin
Even in elementary school, that's impressive.
Yunita
And then a year later my my dad come back from.
Yunita
Saudi Arabia and he and he brought these little radio and the bottom, all the bottom is in English and I asked my dad what is that and what is that what he said.
Kevin
OK.
Yunita
And he explained to me sleep is sleeping you know like sleeping and then if on is something you on and then.
Kevin
Yeah, sure.
Yunita
Of something like that.
Yunita
Is it worth USD symbols or can you explain to me?
Yunita
Can you teach me?
Yunita
I can't teach you, but eventually when you are in the middle school you got that.
Yunita
And then OK, best.
Kevin
Ah, so then when you were in middle school, did you actually have proper English classes in school?
Yunita
No, not at all.
Kevin
Is that when they started?
Kevin
No, no then.
Yunita
I just.
Yunita
I just hate my English teacher because he was mean and mean here.
Yunita
Whenever there there was a student who can't pronounce some words, he was disputing us, really literally bleeding us with with some new small stick in our lack of this.
Jack
No, no, no.

Yunita
Try it again.
Yunita
Try it again.
Yunita
That was.
Yunita 1
Yeah, well.
Yunita
It was odd at that time, but he just.
Kevin
Sometimes I want to hit my students, but.
Kevin
It's not very good education.
Yunita 1
It's not, not.
Jack
We we we.
Kevin
A good way to do it.
Jack
Frown on that.
Yunita
Exactly, exactly.
Jack
That's a bad idea.
Yunita
No, no, never.
Kevin
So then, when, so I mean, you learned about English in elementary school, you became curious about it.
Yunita
How we do that?
Kevin
Middle school, you had a teacher who would literally beat you, but somehow you still remained interested in it.
Yunita
I don't have brought their teacher, yeah.
Kevin
He it's amazing that he did not turn you off.
Kevin
Of English?
Kevin
You were still curious so then?
Yunita
Yep, it because of growing pains.

Kevin
OK, so you're like, yeah, you just have to go through this?
Yunita
No, we.
Yunita
Hello baby or anything?
Kevin
And then what?
Kevin
About in high school is is that when you finally started to get like real classes or?
Yunita
No, I still don't have that.
Jack
Still no.
Yunita
Still don't have that and we have like 1 channel here in.
Yunita
Admission at that time.
Yunita
And easy.
Yunita
A movie called Little House in the Prairie and then growing pains and then run and then yeah, TV show all or in English.
Jack
OK, yeah.
Jack
Uh, TV shows.
Yunita
Fish and I don't know and I don't understand and we have like this subscription the bottom yeah subtitles and and and the way they solve problems they the way they communicate between brothers begins to sister is so nice and they are not fighting they just like.
Yunita 1
We need subtitles.
Yunita
Can we discuss about this without fighting things on web?
Yunita
And those are very nice.
Yunita
Only if I can be done with my brother.
Yunita
My brother would teach me more about angles so.
Yunita
Instead of getting my brother teaching me, I'm watching that television, watching that show again and again, and I'm trying myself to like mimicry.
Kevin
Oh, nice.

Yunita
You know, like whenever they say how are you?
Yunita
And then my mouth seems like.
Kevin
Right, you would copy after.
Kevin
Right now, that's great to watch the show again and again.
Kevin
Actually, I remember when I first started teaching here in Korea.
Kevin
One of my students at the university his.
Kevin
English was quite good.
Kevin
And compared to many of the other students and I was quite surprised at so.
Kevin
I asked him, did you live in another country or travel or whatever?
Kevin
And he said no, no, no.
Kevin
I asked him how did he learn?
Kevin
And he learned from watching friends the same way.
Kevin
And the way he did it was it was very interesting.
Kevin
He said he watched friends three times.
Kevin
He watched it first with Korean subtitles.
Kevin
Basically, to learn the story, to learn the characters.
Kevin
Then he watched it with English subtitles, so he still has something to help him, but you know, not not Korean.
Kevin
And then he watched it again with nothing.
Kevin
Just just watching it because it's amazing.
Kevin
Even just watching TV again and again.
Kevin
I think that's the trick, watching it more than one time.
Kevin
If you just watch.
Kevin

A movie.
Kevin
One time you'll just watch this up.
Kevin
Titles and it's done.
Kevin
You won't learn anything from it.
Jack
One of the common themes from us doing this, these interviews, is that our students are our our interview.
Jack
Interviewees often say I they're really passionate about learning English, specifically because there are so many.
Jack
Language choices that you could have, you know chosen, but for whatever reason in English was the one that you just really latched onto early, and that has.
Jack
Become an, another person interviewed said.
Jack
That was it's the passion of my life is to to study and learn English.
Jack
So what?
Jack
What did?
Jack
What was?
Jack
It about English that was so you, you know, attractive to you, even even as at such a young age.
Yunita
I want to be a stewardess at that time.
Yunita
'cause I I see that stewardess is so beautiful, tall and slim and everything about you.
Kevin
Ah, nice.
Yunita
This is so just awesome.
Yunita
And then I asked my dad.
Yunita
If I want to be stewardess and my dad said you have to speak English, that's a trigger, trigger when I was a.
Jack
Go fast.
Yunita
Kid so, but.
Yunita

I'm not a stewardess anymore.
Jack
Yeah, but I mean that's.
Kevin
Did you try and become a stewardess after you got out of high school?
Kevin
Did you continue to want to do that or at that?
Yunita
I apply.
Kevin
Point you did you drive?
Yunita
I applied the application here as I did, but my mom didn't allow me.
Kevin
Just try for it.
Kevin
Oh, I.
Yunita
No, no, no, no, no.
Kevin
Didn't do that.
Yunita
It's it's just too bad.
Yunita
But here, it's Indonesian culture and stuff.
Yunita
But when your parents say no, we say OK.
Jack
Yeah, but this.
Kevin
Still, you got the English from from learning it, and you're still using the English even though you weren't flying in in in airplanes.
Jack
And there's something about about being a stewardess and and traveling all over the world that is I can see is very attractive to young person who you know, wants to go out and see the.
Yunita 1
We will.
Jack
World so yeah.
Jack
That that makes a lot of sense.
Kevin
My aunt actually is a flight attendant and I think we should interview her one of these days.
Jack
Yeah, yeah.
Kevin

'cause it's kinda.
Yunita
Charles, that would be fine, you know, and actually you you got a season and podcasts about traveling in space.
Jack
No, yeah, she's been.
Kevin
Doing it for a long time.
Kevin
Yeah, coming out, yeah, yeah, yeah.
Yunita
That counts.
Kevin
By the time this episode will be released, it will have have come out.
Yunita 1
No, no.
Kevin
Already for anyone to listen.
Kevin
But yeah, it was just what do we think about space travel?
Kevin
I wonder what the Space Flight attendants will be like in here for those life.
Yunita
Right, exactly, exactly.
Yunita
That was that was in my mind.
Yunita
How how would a stewardess looks like in this space here?
Kevin
No nice zero gravity flight attendants.
Yunita
Maybe, yeah.
Yunita
Oh yeah, you know, like they always are.
Kevin
That that, that is even more fun job.
Yunita
Flying things like.
Yunita
That and I'm sure that Members will got interested in that kind of podcast because.
Yunita
They they would like thinking out of their mind, like, Oh yeah, there will be awesome.
Kevin
So before we, uh, just just to move on a little bit, how do you practice, how do you study English these days?
Yunita

My phone number.
Kevin
What do you do to continue improving?
Yunita
Talking with us.
Kevin
Although then listen to our podcast of course.
Yunita
The same the same things.
Yunita
Now every time I listen to podcasts, listen to songs and everything which related to English, I try to translate it.
Yunita
I like to read.
Yunita
To meet.
Yunita
And then I like to read in Kindle because I don't have to bother myself to open the dictionary because I just like.
Yunita
There is a, uh, a word which I don't understand.
Yunita
I just click it and there is a dictionary about it and they explain it.
Kevin
So it's quite nice you didn't know.
Yunita
Yeah, and then.
Yunita
But somehow I didn't teach my students to have Kindle because they have to open dictionary and I did that too.
Yunita
And I still do do this mimicry from movie I really like. So like role-playing and then I, I I'd be a bad day and good girl and then we do water hard things like that. So that's the way I do and maybe people have.
Kevin
That's great.
Yunita
Uh, I think that I have this what nature or normal way of talking with people, maybe because of movie and maybe because of the way I listen to people when they're talking.
Yunita
When you guys talking on podcasts is seem so normal.
Yunita
It seems like you were just two friends.
Yunita
And having tea together before Chandra.
Kevin

Well, we are, we are pretty.
Jack
Much and what our podcast is.
Yunita
Yeah, so that's why I told John that I liked your podcast.
Jack
We did, yeah.
Yunita
It seems like you you guys are talking in real life, in the porch, sitting together, having tea and cookies, things like that.
Jack
Right.
Yunita
So I described that.
Yunita
It's enjoyable. Relax.
Kevin
Nice, yeah.
Kevin
Mimicry really can be helpful, and it's it's something that you can do by yourself.
Kevin
That's one difficult thing about learning a language is when you're alone.
Kevin
It's often hard to practice, but even just copying it is a way to help you learn how to be natural, and it puts those.
Kevin
Language patterns into your.
Kevin
And then when you finally do speak with someone, those patterns are already in there and then they come out much more naturally, hopefully after after using.
Yunita
Find out.
Yunita
Yeah, exactly.
Jack
Them and it sounds, you know well.
Yunita
I really like your broadcast as we leave the.
Jack
Thank you so much.
Yunita
Sounds horrible.
Yunita
Some normal sounds natural.
Yunita
You're not making this.

Yunita
Up you start talking.
Yunita
That's all.
Kevin
Yeah, we we have tried making some scripts and it it we're not very good actors.
Kevin
We're better at just being friends than the nesting.
Jack
Improvising, yeah, a lot of people are self-conscious when they when it comes to learning the.
Jack
Language they they.
Jack
Be like I don't want to try because I might make a mistake or I don't want to watch and repeat while I watch this television show.
Jack
'cause what if somebody sees me?
Jack
I'll be embarrassed, you know?
Jack
What's your message to people out there?
Jack
Who think like that?
Jack
You know, because I think there are a lot of people to feel that way.
Kevin
You are shy? Thanks.
Jack
Like, oh, I don't want to be embarrassed.
Jack
I don't.
Jack
Want to say the wrong thing?
Jack
But then they get stuck, you know, they can't move up anymore, they can't improve.
Jack
So what?
Jack
What's your, what's your, what would be your advice to to people who are stuck in that mindset?
Yunita
I I would rather to tell about my experience if I give them advice.
Yunita
Sounds like I'm older.
Jack
Yeah, sure.
Yunita

So, Oh yeah.
Jack
Well, just to tell.
Jack
Them what you do you know, yeah, yeah.
Yunita
All my experience I.
Yunita
Well, whenever I make mistakes in grammar, in the way of pronunciation, in the way I ride or whatever, whatever, what kind of mistake is that I I just feel.
Yunita
I feel that I have the self-confidence because people would correct my my pronunciation the way I the way I write everything.
Yunita
Everyone will correct me and that is fine because if I make mistake and then people correct me, I will remember that the rest of my life.
Yunita
Because if I learn from mistake.
Yunita
I will just recall that over and over again, but if I am not making mistake, I didn't know which one is the error one.
Yunita
So even I'm talking right now, people might say that you are fluent in talking, but I feel that I make mistake and you guys might know it.
Kevin
That's true.
Yunita
I'm sure, but I I still have this confidence.
Yunita
With this I will.
Kevin
Yeah, that's a really good point.
Kevin
Like, you can't, no, you can't fix your mistakes.
Kevin
Unless you know what they.
Kevin
Are so making mistakes as important?
Jack
And even here, as native speakers were we start, I start sentences, and I stop.
Jack
And then I I restated again.
Jack
And I I make a lot of like if you wrote down everything I said on paper, it would, it wouldn't.
Jack
It would look like there were a.

Jack
Lot of mistakes.
Jack
Language is messy.
Jack
I think some people think it's clean, right?
Jack
They just like, oh, it's so clean and perfect.
Jack
No, no, no, it's it's always going to be met.
Jack
See, and I think if people accept that, then maybe they feel a little less shy, a little less embarrassed to do, you know, just try.
Kevin
Yeah, everyone makes mistakes.
Jack
Yeah, you you seem like a person who's not afraid to just try.
Jack
Like, I'm going to go talk to this person.
Jack
I'm going to do the best I can, and if I make some mistakes, who cares?
Jack
Like names.
Yunita
And I will remember that dress on my lap.
Yunita
I make mistake and the right one is like this.
Yunita
I will remember that.
Yunita
That that's the difference when you are good already good at the 1st place and you will know that you are actually making something wrong.
Kevin
Yeah, that's that's a great lesson, I think, for everyone to learn and just just to wrap up here at the end just because of of time.
Kevin
I'd love to talk to you longer.
Kevin
If you could give our listeners and everyone else out there one thing that you think worked best for you, since you said you don't want to give advice, so this doesn't have to be advice but for you.
Kevin
What do you think?
Kevin
Was the single one.
Kevin
Best thing that you do or did that that helped you in English.

Kevin
Maybe it was something we already talked about or?
Kevin
Something new, just what do?
Kevin
You think was the best for you?
Yunita
Languages habit, so make it your habit.
Kevin
And how did you make it a habit?
Yunita
Talking, enlisting, kingless, riding Inglis.
Yunita
Do everything about English.
Yunita
If you have like, you know if you have like 5 minutes in your feet.
Kevin
Just a little bit every day, all the time.
Yunita
Warm start writing in English, even it's messy.
Yunita
Start talking with yourself involved, Neil.
Yunita
Even you don't know whether it is right or wrong.
Kevin
Right.
Yunita 1
Guys, thank you.
Yunita
Dismember views about habit.
Kevin
Flash drive.
Yunita
That's it.
Kevin
Yeah, I've I've heard similar advice before, so I think that's that sounds like it.
Kevin
It worked very well for you, and I think it can work well for other.
Yunita
Come on.
Kevin
People. So thanks a lot.
Kevin
You know, this is amazing to hear about your English journey and how you got from your brother just not telling you anything to to where you are today.
Jack

Yeah. Thank you.
Yunita
Even though I tell him that I got, uh, this broadcast schedule with a friend of mine and.
Kevin
So it's because of you.
Kevin
Thank you.
Kevin
Thank you.
Jack
Brother, I'm so glad it it wasn't a French book or you wouldn't be here right now with us, right?
Yunita
And then and then.
Yunita
I'm getting set up and then what should I do?
Yunita
I don't have anything to do with that, right?
Yunita
So we got.
Yunita
That's it, that's good.
Kevin
Awesome, nice.
Kevin
Well that's great.
Kevin
You need again, thanks very much for coming.
Yunita
Sure, sure, sure. Yeah, yeah.
Kevin
For everyone out there who's listening, remember from our website you can find our WhatsApp links and you can join the same group that United talks to us in every day and and talk to her and ask her questions or leave us some comments in there.
Jack
That's right.
Kevin
And tell us about how you make English a habit.
Kevin
So thanks again for joining us this evening.
Yunita
Sure. Yeah. Bye. Bye.
Kevin
Go have a good dinner and we'll talk to you in.
Jack
The chat, alright, thanks UNITA.
Jack

Bye bye.
Yunita
Later, yeah. Bye bye.