

# Russian Made *EASY!*



## Podcast



## Episode #26

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[RussianMadeEasy.com](http://RussianMadeEasy.com)



Привет! And welcome to episode 26 of Russian Made Easy. Как дела? Всё нормально?

Right to biz today. Please repeat after the speaker...

Джон сказал ДА.

Линда сказала НЕТ.

Repeat just this part, now:

Джон сказал. / Линда сказала

So, сказал and сказала are the masculine and feminine forms of a past tense verb in Russian.

сказал -- сказала

Let's see if we can figure out what the verb means.

My Dad could be pretty strict with us when we were kids. I remember once when I really wanted to go to a concert on a school night. "Dad, can I go see Flock of Seagulls tonight?"

But he said, "No. It's a school night."

"Please, Dad?"

And he replied, "Я сказал НЕТ and I meant it!"

How would you translate that?

Я сказал нет....translates as, "I said no!"

How would your mom say:

I said no!

Я сказала нет.

Did you say "skazala" with an "a" sound?

Try saying:

Andrei said hi.

Андрей сказал привет.

Svetlana said thank you.

Светлана сказала спасибо.

Try this:

How would a guy say:

I was talking with Vadim.

Я говорил с Вадимом.

He said no.

Он сказал нет.

How would a woman say:  
I was talking with Karina.  
Я говорила с Кариной.

She said yes.  
Она сказала да.

Ask your friend Jim,  
What did you say?  
Что ты сказал?

Now ask the same question to your friend Olga.  
Что ты сказала?

Now, how would you ask that to your boss?  
Что Вы сказали?

We of course have the rhyme..ВЫ...сказали .

We're about to segue into our tip of the day, and as we do, I want you to think about something. What's the difference between "I was talking" and "I said"? I mean, in both cases your mouth was open and words came out. How do they differ?

**V.O. And now, here's your Tip of the Day from Russian Made Easy...**

The difference between "said" and "was talking" is basically one of process versus a one-time thing. What I mean is, when you say, *I was talking with Mom*, it creates a feeling of a conversation...the whole process of talking with someone. Whereas "*I said*" gives the feeling of a one-time action. You said one particular thing, and that's it.

This idea of emphasizing a process versus a one-time action is known as "verb aspect" in linguistics. We solve this in English usually by using verbs that end with "ing". For example, *I was walking in the park....* You get this feeling of a long stroll. You feel the **process** of the walk. But if I say: *I walked to the store*. You see the result. It was a one-time, completed action.

I'm bringing all this up because in Russian they solve this by having **two different verbs** for the same action. Often, the verbs are totally different! For

example, to say...

I was catching big fish all day we'd use the verb:

Я ловил

Ya lovil. I was catching (or, I was fishing.) That's the **process** form.

But to say:

I caught a big fish.

...we'd say:

Я поймал

Ya poimal. That's the one-time, completed action.

So you have a word starting with an "L"...lovil....And a word starting with a "P"  
sound: poimal.

**Two totally different verbs for the exact same action of catching fish.** The only difference is "lovil" creates the impression of the **process** of catching, whereas poimal is a **one-time thing**. You caught one fish, and that's the whole action.

The strategy of using two different verbs for this seems unique to Slavic languages like Russian and Polish. It's one of the things that makes them seem to exotic to us. But if you understand this fundamental concept about verb aspect -- the idea of an ongoing process versus a one-time, completed action -- you'll have a very bright future in Russian.

Alright, let's get back to it. Listen to this short conversation. Mike is offering Olga a piece of pizza.

Хочешь?

Нет, спасибо. Я не хочу пиццу.

But Mike insists, telling her...

Пицца очень вкусная.

Olga is getting a little angry now...

Я сказала что я не хочу!

Listen to her last phrase again. What's that third word?

Я сказала что я не хочу!

She said: Я.... сказала ....что ...я ....не хочу.

Hmm...Didn't we learn that "что" means "what"? As in:

What is this?

Что это?

Yes, we did. But didn't I also tell you that words -- especially the smallest ones -- have many meanings and uses? (Да, я сказал это.)

In this construction: Я сказала что....

...the word ЧТО translates as "that", as in, "I said **that** I don't want any."

Try saying: She said that she doesn't want pizza.

Она сказала что она не хочет пиццу.

Try saying:

He said that he doesn't want beer.

Он сказал что он не хочет пиво.

How would a guy say:

I said that I don't like to dance.

Я сказал что мне не нравится танцевать.

How would a girl say:

I said that I don't want to eat.

Я сказала что я не хочу кушать.

Imagine this scenario. Your boss says...

I want to eat.

Я хочу кушать.

So you rush out and buy him some Chinese takeout. But when you deliver it to him, he pushes it away, saying, Нет, спасибо.

Now how would you say...

But you said that you want to eat.

Но Вы сказали что Вы хотите кушать.

Imagine you just got off the phone with Greg, who said he doesn't want a salad.  
Try saying..

I was talking with Greg.  
Я говорил с Грегом.

Of course, if you're a woman you'd say:  
Я говорила с Грегом.

Now say:  
He said he doesn't want a salad.  
Он сказал что он не хочет салат.

Imagine you come home and see that your wife has cooked you a big mound of Russian pancakes. Not being hungry, though, you decline. So she says....

You said that you like pancakes.  
Ты сказал что тебе нравятся блины.

With just two words, tell her...  
Yes, I said  
Да, сказал.

With three words, add:  
But I don't want.  
Но не хочу.

Let's reverse the roles and try a similar situation. You bought a big jar of caviar, thinking you wife would like it when she comes home. And yet, she doesn't want any. Tell her...

You said that you like caviar.  
Ты сказала что тебе нравится икра.

How will she say:  
Yes, I said. But I don't want.  
Да, сказала. Но не хочу.

Imagine this scenario: You're in a cafe with your buddy to have a few beers. You head off to the bathroom, and when you come back, you see that he's drinking coffee instead of beer. Tell him...

You said that you will have a beer.  
Ты сказал что ты будешь пиво.

They only carried Baltika beer, which he didn't want. So, listen to his reply:  
Да, но я не хотел Балтику.

хотел translates as "wanted"

How would he say:  
I wanted Heineken.  
Я хотел Хайнекен.

Try saying:  
She wanted pasta.  
Она хотела пасту.

Imagine you're in the kitchen with your friend, eating pizza. Thinking that your wife upstairs might want a slice, you take one and bring it to her. But then you come back holding the slice of pizza and you explain to your friend:

She said that she didn't want.  
Она сказала что не хотела.

You could've used six words, by saying "she" twice, like this:  
She said that she not want.  
Она сказала что она не хотела.

Imagine your friend's phone rings. It's her dad. A minute later she hangs up.  
In three words, ask:  
What did he want?  
Что он хотел?

Ask:  
What did he say?  
Что он сказал?

Try saying:  
She said she wants coffee with milk.  
Она сказала что она хочет кофе с молоком.

You'll use this construction a lot whenever you're having to translate for people.

Imagine you're in Russia with a friend who doesn't speak Russian. Any time he tries to communicate, you'll have to translate for him, and you'll often frame things with that construction. *He said that....whatever.*

Try saying:

Jeff said that he wants to eat.

Джэфф сказал что он хочет кушать.

Maria said that she doesn't want pig fat.

Мария сказала что она не хочет сало.

Abbott said that he wants to dance.

Аббот сказал что он хочет танцевать.

...and so on. So try working this very common construction into your daily practice routine. As the one person in your group of friends who now speaks both languages, you'll end up using it a lot.

Keep up the great work and I'll see you in the next episode!