



# *PODCAST TRANSCRIPT*

Episode 163:

Title: “Next Stop: the North Pole!”

Duration: 30:10

How to use this transcript

Print this transcript:

- We try to reduce our paper consumption, but we really recommend that you print out this document.

Write on it and take notes:

- Circle, highlight and note anything that you want. We have even provided space for you to do so!

Listen first without the transcript:

- Don't worry about understanding every single word. Just focus on training your ears to the sound of English.

Listen again with the transcript:

- Listen a second time with the transcript, pausing whenever you want to take notes in the spaces provided.

Enjoy! :-)

00 :00	<p>Welcome to the Déclis Anglais Podcast, THE podcast for intermediate, French-speaking learners of English. This podcast is like a steppingstone (<i>un tremplin</i>) to help you understand more advanced materials in English. There is a transcript (<i>une transcription</i>) available for this and every episode of this podcast. You can download the transcript for free from the link in the description of this episode. Or go to <a href="http://www.declicanglais.com/podcast">www.declicanglais.com/podcast</a>.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
01:06	<p>Hello there, dear listeners! I hope you're all doing well. Welcome to <i>The Déclis Anglais Podcast</i> – the podcast where we learn English while exploring interesting topics.</p> <p>If you look at a map of the world today in 2026, there aren't many places where people have not explored. (<i>Si l'on regarde une carte du monde aujourd'hui, il ne reste plus beaucoup d'endroits que l'Homme n'ait pas exploré.</i>)</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
01:54	<p>People have climbed the highest mountains, penetrated into the deepest jungles. We have even travelled to the Challenger Deep, the deepest point of any ocean on Earth - 10,000 metres below the Pacific Ocean.</p> <p>But today, dear listeners, we are going back to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (<i>nous remontons à la première moitié du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle</i>) - back to one of the golden ages (<i>l'un des âges d'or</i>) of exploration. We are going back to a time where advancements in technology finally allowed people to reach the most inaccessible and hostile places on the planet.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

03:00	<p>This month — May 2026 — marks one hundred years since a truly extraordinary journey from this golden age of exploration. A journey not by ship... but through the air.</p> <p>In May 1926, an enormous airship (<i>un ballon dirigeable</i>) called the <i>Norge</i> lifted off from Svalbard — a very cold and remote group of islands in the Arctic. The <i>Norge</i> flew north, across the frozen Arctic Ocean, over the North Pole, and on to Alaska.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
04:03	<p>It was the first confirmed flight over the North Pole, and the first time anyone had crossed the Arctic from Europe to America by air.</p> <p>The expedition was led by the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen — a man who had already reached the South Pole. But today, we are going to focus on his final great adventure: the <i>Norge</i> mission — and what it took to fly over the top of the world.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
04:47	<p>Before we climb aboard the airship <i>Norge</i>, dear listeners, let's briefly meet Mr Amundsen, the man behind the mission.</p> <p>Roald Amundsen was born in Norway in 1872, into a family of sailors. From a young age, he dreamed of exploration. He read constantly about Arctic expeditions and decided early on that he would become an explorer himself.</p> <p>He was extremely determined — we might say single-minded (focused entirely on one goal) — (<i>en français : déterminé, très résolu</i>).</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

05:52	<p>In his twenties, he joined a polar expedition to Antarctica and learned some very hard lessons about survival — including the importance of food, preparation, and teamwork.</p> <p>Later in life, he achieved two remarkable successes: he led the first expedition to sail the Northwest Passage (<i>il a dirigé la première expédition à avoir réussi la traversée du passage du Nord-Ouest</i>) – an expedition that took two years to finish! And in 1911, he led the first successful expedition to the South Pole in Antarctica.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
06:43  07:20	<p>By the 1920s, dear listeners, Amundsen was already famous. But there was one goal, one objective that still eluded the explorers of the 1920s (<i>mais il restait un objectif qui échappait encore aux explorateurs des années 1920</i>) – the North Pole!</p> <p>Many explorers had tried, dear listeners. None had succeeded. Reaching the North Pole is exceptionally difficult. The South Pole is found in Antarctica, a vast frozen continent at the bottom of the world. So, while the conditions are very hostile to humans, at least there's land to walk on! (<i>même si les conditions sont très hostiles pour les humains, au moins il y a de la terre sous les pieds !</i>)</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
08:07	<p>The North Pole, on the other hand, is found in the middle of the Arctic Ocean (<i>le pôle Nord, quant à lui, se trouve au milieu de l'océan Arctique</i>), on the frozen ice cap (<i>la calotte glaciaire</i>) at the top of the world. It's especially difficult to reach, because the North Pole is about seven hundred kilometres (700km) away from land and the ice is very dangerous.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>





15:11	<p>Even before take-off, there was pressure. This was a time when there was great competition between explorers. Another explorer, Richard Byrd, claimed he had already flown to the North Pole just days earlier. (<i>Un autre explorateur, Richard Byrd, a affirmé s'être déjà rendu au pôle Nord par avion quelques jours auparavant</i>). But many people doubted this claim, nobody really believed Richard Byrd. But as you can imagine, that added a lot of urgency to Amundsen's mission – he wanted to be the real number one!</p> <p>Amundsen knew one thing: if they were going to do this, they had to do it properly — and prove it beyond doubt.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
16:20	<p>On the morning of the 11th of May 1926, the <i>Norge</i> lifted gently into the Arctic sky from Ny-Ålesund in Svalbard.</p> <p>There were sixteen men on board the airship – and one dog! Beneath the explorers stretched an endless landscape of ice — white, silent, and completely featureless. (<i>La calotte glaciaire était totalement dépourvue de relief</i>).</p> <p>No mountains, no rivers, no forests, no fields... No towns and cities. Just a white expanse of ice. And so the airship moved slowly steadily north (<i>le dirigeable avançait lentement et sûrement vers le nord</i>). Hour after hour over the icy wilderness.</p>
17:38	<p>Then, in the early hours of the 12th of May, they reached their goal.</p> <p>The North Pole.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>



20:27	<p>But, dear listeners, the journey was only half complete. Oh yes, they <b>had</b> reached the North Pole – but they still needed to get home.</p> <p>After the North Pole, the <i>Norge</i> continued towards Alaska — and <i>this</i> part of the flight proved to be more dangerous.</p> <p><i>(Écrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
20:50	<p>Ice began to accumulate (<i>s'accumuler</i>) gradually on the airship. This was especially dangerous on the propellers (<i>les hélices</i>) – the propellers spinning around could throw chunks of ice at the balloon, which might puncture it. (<i>La rotation des hélices pouvait projeter des morceaux de glace sur le ballon, ce qui risquait de le perforer</i>).</p> <p>Oh my days, could you imagine that? Thousands of kilometres from help, in temperatures of minus ten to minus twenty-five degrees Celsius, and suddenly you have a puncture. It would have been a catastrophe for the expedition (<i>cela aurait été une catastrophe pour l'expédition</i>).</p> <p><i>(Écrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
22:03	<p>On top of that, thick fog surrounded them (<i>un épais brouillard les enveloppait</i>). The visibility was very poor sometimes, and navigation became difficult.</p> <p>At times, strong winds pushed the airship off course. The crew had to constantly adjust their direction.</p> <p><i>(Écrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
22:35	<p>Imagine being there: cold, tired, surrounded by fog, floating above an ocean of ice with no safe place to land.</p> <p>And yet, they continued. Calmly. Carefully. This is where Amundsen's experience — and his meticulous [his extremely careful] planning — made all the difference.</p> <p>Finally, after nearly three days in the air, they saw land. Alaska.</p> <p><i>(Écrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

23:13	<p>So, Amundsen could just land the airship on the ground, right? (<i>Amundsen aurait très bien pu faire atterrir le dirigeable au sol, non ?</i>) Job done, happy days – let's all go to the pub to celebrate! No, dear listeners, I'm afraid not - that would have been too easy (<i>ça aurait été trop facile</i>).</p>
23:45	<p>As the airship arrived over Alaska, the weather worsened again (<i>la météo s'est de nouveau dégradée</i>). Even though an airship doesn't need a runway (<i>une piste d'atterrissage</i>), you still need safe conditions to land. And so the landing (<i>l'atterrissage</i>) had to be improvised.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
24:22	<p>On the 14th of May, the <i>Norge</i> landed near a small Alaskan settlement called Teller. The airship was severely damaged during the landing and never flew again. (<i>Le dirigeable a été gravement endommagé lors de l'atterrissage et n'a plus jamais volé</i>).</p> <p>But it didn't matter. All of the expedition members were safe. And their mission had succeeded.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
25:03	<p>The <i>Norge</i> expedition was a turning point in the history of exploration. It was the first verified and undisputed flight over the North Pole.</p> <p>Today, dear listeners, long-distance flights are so common – we take it for granted (<i>nous considérons cela comme acquis</i>) that you can travel across the Atlantic from Paris to New York in just a few hours. But in 1926, this was unimaginable, it was still like science fiction for most people. So, not only did Amundsen and his crew fly from Europe to America on their airship, they also did it via the North Pole – one of the great unexplored areas of the Earth.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

26:04	<p>And so, the <i>Norge</i> flight remains one of the greatest achievements of the early age of aviation (<i>le vol du Norge reste l'une des plus grandes prouesses des débuts de l'aviation</i>) — a moment when courage, engineering, and careful planning came together perfectly.</p> <p>For Amundsen, it was the final great success of his career. Just two years later, in 1928, Amundsen disappeared while flying on a rescue mission in the Arctic. His body was never found.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
26:58	<p>So, what can we learn from the story of Amundsen aboard the <i>Norge</i>? What can normal people like you and me learn from great explorers?</p> <p>Perhaps this: that success is not just about bravery and dumb luck (<i>que le succès ne repose pas uniquement sur le courage et la chance</i>). It is about choosing the right tools, learning from failure, preparing in detail, and — just as importantly — persevering when things get difficult.</p> <p>Amundsen didn't succeed because he was lucky. Certainly, luck <b>was</b> a part of it, but <b>was not</b> everything.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
27:53	<p>He succeeded because he adapted, he planned his missions carefully, and he never gave up — even when conditions were extreme or the plan went wrong. Amundsen was absolutely relentless (<i>Amundsen était d'une détermination sans faille</i>). I would say he was a bit super-human in this regard. But you or I don't need to be as determined as him, of course not. What we <b>can</b> do, dear listeners, is take inspiration from Amundsen's methods.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

28:37	<p>It's not about being super-human — it's about showing up (<i>that is, putting in the effort</i>). It's about paying attention, learning from mistakes, and keeping at it (having endurance) - especially when things get tough. Those same qualities — persistence, preparation, and flexibility — are exactly what help us make progress, whether we're exploring the Arctic or learning a new language.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
29:13	<p>Alright then, dear listeners – that brings us to the end of this episode.</p> <p>If you have reached this part, well done to you – good work! That's exactly the kind of stamina / endurance needed for success. If you haven't understood everything today, don't worry about it. Take your time, use the transcript (<i>la transcription</i>) and listen again and again until you understand.</p> <p>Thank you very much for listening, and as always, don't forget to share this podcast with your friends and family who are also learning English.</p> <p>Take care of yourselves, and see you next time.</p> <p>Bye for now.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>