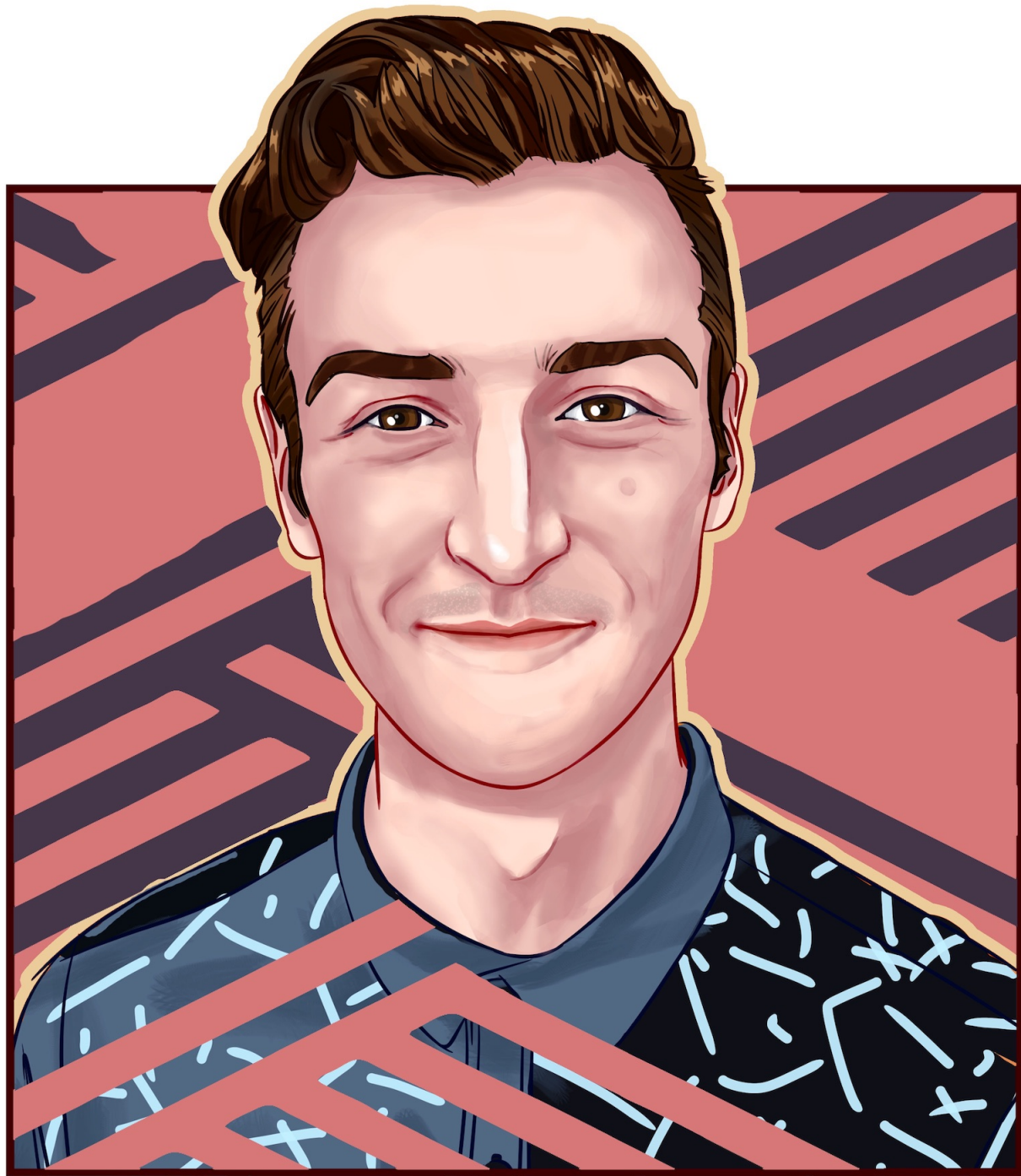


Jeremy's English Tips

Episode #24:

The most fun and difficult part of the English learning journey



Culips English Podcast

Transcript

Hello everyone, this is Jeremy and you're listening to Jeremy's English Tips, a series by the Culips English Podcast where I teach you interesting expressions or share language learning tips.

Hello everyone, in this episode of Jeremy's English Tips, I'd like to talk about the terrible twos. Do you have something like this in your native language? In English, we have this term, the terrible twos. This term describes a developmental stage in which young children under the age of three throw temper tantrums quite often, and say no to seemingly everything. If you have children, then I'm sure you know exactly what I'm talking about. And if you don't have children, then you have probably seen little ones screaming in the line at the grocery store, or throwing some kind of temper tantrum at the toy store. This seems to be almost universal, in that almost every child goes through this phase.

I believe that the terrible twos are so common because as we learn our native language, we hit a point where we have very strong wants and desires. But we cannot communicate those wants and desires with verbal language. For example, my son right now, who is two years old, will yell no at almost anything. If it doesn't please him. For example, if it's raining outside, and we tell him, oh, it's raining, we can't go outside right now, he says, "No!" This often makes us laugh because it is as if he's saying no stop the rain, and of course, that's impossible.

I believe that, **as language learners, we must also go through this phase in which we do not know how to communicate what we want or need in our target language, and as a result, we often get frustrated.** I remember when I had been learning Korean for just a couple years, I was in Korea, in a taxi, trying to explain how to get to my house to the taxi driver. I could only make basic sentences and tell him left or right, straight. And due to my inability to properly communicate, it took us a very long time to find my house. I had many, many, many experiences like this, with servers at restaurants, people in public, and most frustrating of all, with close friends as well.

Now the fully developed native speaker in you must act like a parent, helping the little one learn to communicate what it means. In the previous episode of Jeremy's English Tips, I talked about this exact point how our fully developed mind in our native language has to take on the role of a guide or a parent to the frustrated learner inside of us. Now the good news is that this phase will pass just as it does with all young children. Continued encouragement from parents, as well as repetitive exposure to content in English, inevitably, the young child will grow and improve their linguistic abilities until they no longer struggle so much.

It is also very important to deliberately practice the things that you are weakest at. And by doing so, you will find that your English learning both speeds up and becomes more enjoyable. Now I can tell you from my experience as a language teacher and learner, that **the number of hours you invest in your English learning will dictate how fast you grow and improve.** So if you are working full time and you have children to take care of, then there may not be very much time to invest in your English. So although the learning may be slower for you at first, if you keep at it, success is inevitable.

I would like to recommend that you listen to some of the earlier episodes of Jeremy's English Tips in which I talk about repetitive listening and language exchange. These two methods have been very, very valuable for me and for my students. So, I recommend checking out those episodes to learn more. We all know that childhood is not just a frustrating period, there are lots of fun times as well. The mind of a child is full of wonder the world is new and exciting. There are so many things to learn about, and so many new skills to acquire. So I hope that if you ever find yourself struggling with English study, that you come back to Culips, turn on one of these episodes and find a way to have fun with it again. Usually, when we are struggling, it is because we are putting too much pressure on ourselves or we have high expectations. But remember, young children do not have such high expectations for themselves. They just do and play. So my advice is play more and have fun with English.

That's all I have for this episode. Tune in next time for another Culips podcast. Happy English learning!

Key points

1. The “terrible twos” are a developmental stage in which toddlers throw temper tantrums quite often and say “no” to seemingly everything
2. As language learners, we must also go through this phase in which we do not know how to communicate what we want or need and often get frustrated as a result.
3. The fully developed native speaker in you must be like the patient parent, helping the little one to learn to communicate what it needs.
4. This phase will pass, just as it does with young children. Continued repetitive exposure to content in English combined with deliberate practice is the fastest way to get out of this phase.
5. The number of hours you invest will dictate how fast you grow and improve.

Writing and Speaking Questions

1. Can you think of a time when you experienced the terrible twos in your English learning?
2. Do you think you have already made it through the terrible twos? Why or why not?
3. What do two year olds and new language learners have in common?
4. Why is this phase inevitable for most language learners?
5. How can you help yourself get through these frustrating times?

Study Challenges

1. Talk to your parents or friends of yours who have children about this developmental stage and see if you have experienced similar things in your English learning.
2. Write a journal entry about the most frustrating experiences you had on your English learning journey. Next to each one, try to come up with a potential solution.

Credits

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