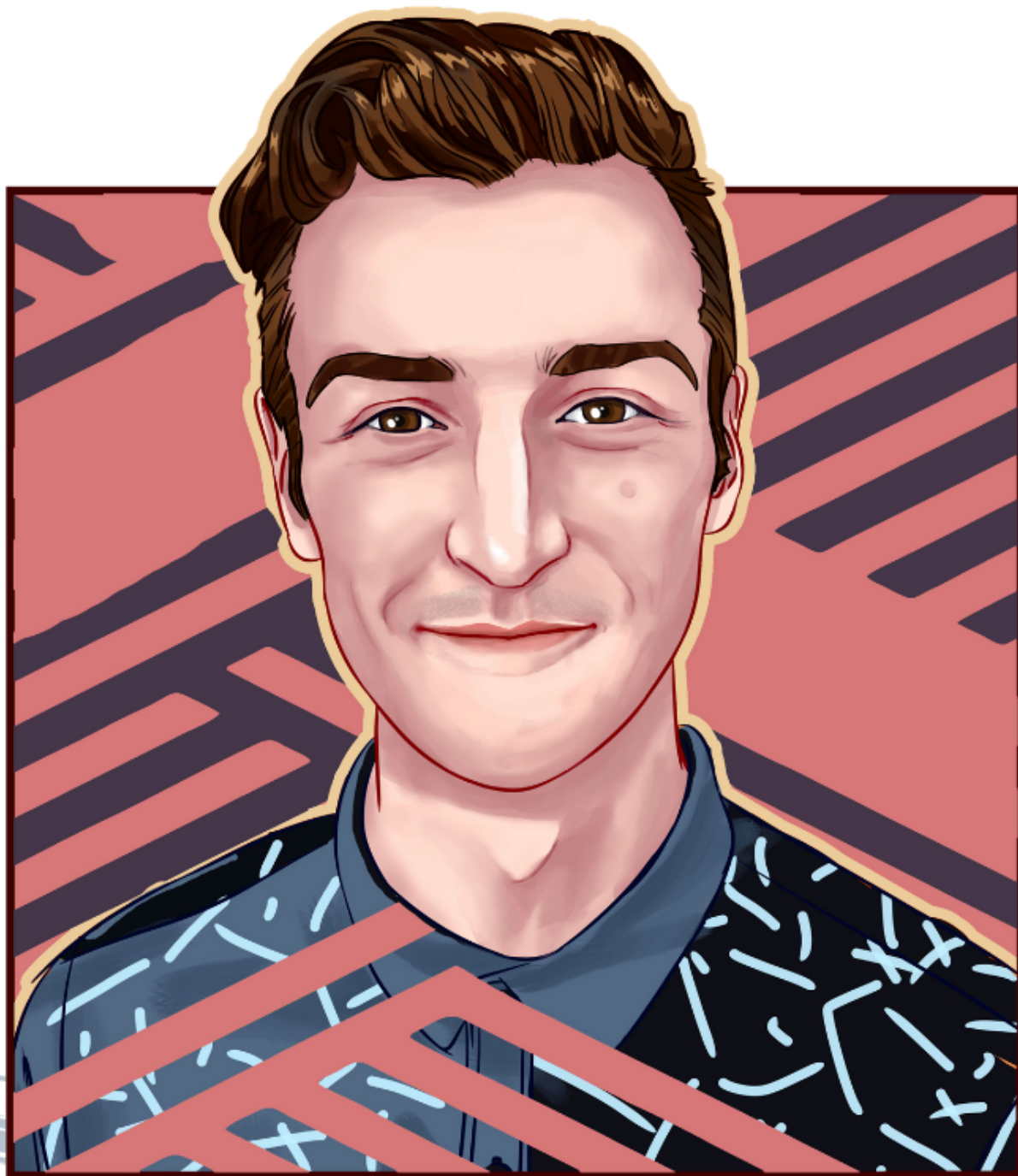


Jeremy's English Tips

Episode #27: Signs you're improving



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.

Welcome back to another episode of the Culips English Podcast series called Jeremy's English Tips. In this episode, I'm going to answer a common question that I get from language learners all over the world. And that question is, how can I know if I'm improving? Have you ever wondered this yourself? I know that I certainly have. And it can be a frustrating question because what if you're not improving? So in this episode, I'll tell you about a few things that I have done to check and see if I am improving.

Now, in other episodes of this series, I have talked about repetitive listening. If you haven't heard those, I highly recommend checking those out. But if you don't have the time to listen to that one, right now, I'll just say this. Repetitive listening is listening to the same audio over and over again for a prolonged period of time. So for example, when I was learning Korean, I would do this quite often, after learning Korean for a year or so I started doing repetitive listening. I found some short conversational audio files, and I started listening to them on repeat for quite some time. I listened to one of them every day as much as I could, for about one month, then I moved on to a different audio file. Three years later, I went back to that same audio file and tried listening to it again. What I noticed was that I understood much more of what was said, than I did in the very beginning. You can do something like this as well to check and see if you are improving. But it will require that you maintain a habit of repetitive listening for quite some time.

You can also do this with written material as well. If you have used grammar books, or other kinds of literary study materials, maybe try going back and looking at your old materials, this often can give you a very visceral sense for how much you have improved because when you look back at that old material, it often will be much easier for you than it was back then. Another good way to measure your progress is to keep a diary. You can write a short diary every day, or once a week, or however often you like. By doing so you are keeping a record of your language ability. And after a year, or two or three has passed, you can go back and look at your old diary entries to see how much you have improved.

Another way to check your progress is in terms of tasks that you can accomplish in your target language. For example, in my experience, when I was living in Korea, I remember when it was very hard for me to order food at a restaurant. I was very nervous because I couldn't understand what the server was saying and I fumbled over my words while I was speaking. Then I remember one day, I went into a restaurant by myself for lunch, I ordered

my food, I had a nice conversation with the server, and I left feeling quite confident about my Korean ability. In that moment, I realized that in the past, I used to have a lot of difficulty with that task. But at that moment, it had become easier.

The same kind of thing might happen with certain grammatical forms or expressions. For example, there might be a grammar form or idiom that you use very well today that used to be very difficult for you. So in this way, by comparing your current situation, your current language ability to your previous language ability, you can measure how far you've come. So, I'll leave you with this. **You don't need to worry about improving or not if you maintain good language learning habits**, and a good way to do that is to keep listening to Culips.

So, that's it for this episode of Jeremy's English Tips. I hope you enjoyed it. If you like this episode and you enjoy Culips, why not leave us a review on Apple podcasts. You can also find the transcript and study guide for this episode at [Culips.com](https://culips.com). Take care, bye!

Key Points

1. You can check to see if you are improving by keeping a repetitive listening habit for a long time and listening back to audio files you used in the past
2. You can check on your progress by looking back at old grammar books you used to use to study
3. You can know that you are improving by looking back at study notes from the past.
4. You know you have improved when certain tasks are easier to accomplish in your target language.
5. You can know that you have improved when certain idioms or grammatical forms are easier for you to use now than they used to be.

Questions for Speaking and Writing

1. What are a few things that you used to struggle with a lot in language learning?
2. Have you ever looked back at old notebooks? If so, what did you notice?
3. Have you ever listened to an audio file that you used in the past to study? If so, what did you notice?
4. Have you ever reviewed grammar books that you used in the past? If so, what did you notice?
5. Are there any other ways that you have used to measure your language learning progress? If so, what were they?

Study Challenges

1. Start a language learning journey. Once a week write an entry about what you are learning at that time and what you are struggling with.
2. Write out ten things that you remember struggling with in the past that have become much easier for you now.

Credits

Music: Miei by Broke for Free, Feel Good (Instrumental) by Broke for free

Episode preparation/research: Jeremy Brinkerhoff

Audio editor: Jeremy Brinkerhoff

Transcriptionist: Jeremy Brinkerhoff

Study guide writer: Jeremy Brinkerhoff

Business manager: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima