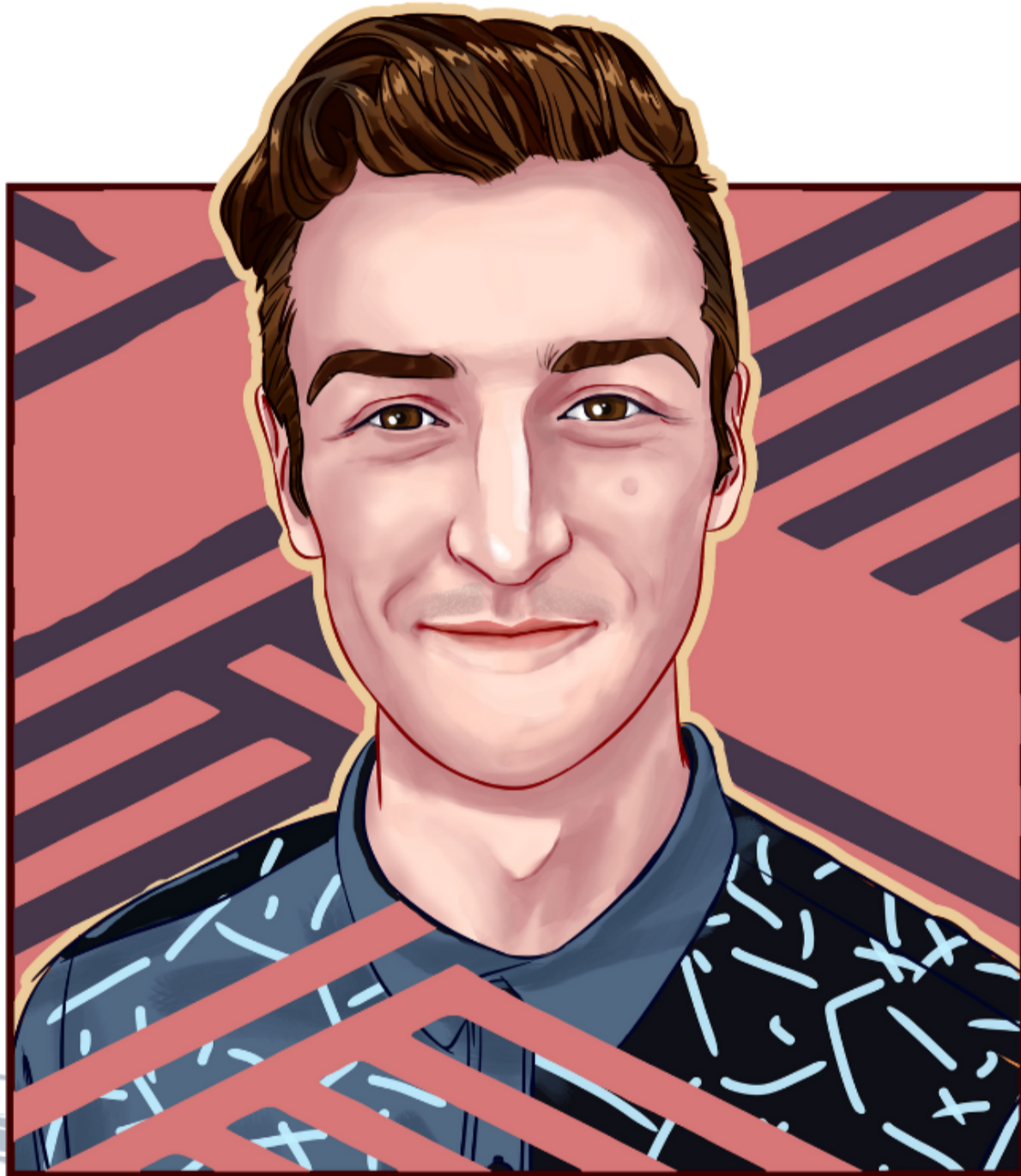


# Jeremy's English Tips

Episode #30: A Bad Study Habit



**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.

Now, before I get started with the topic for this episode, don't forget, we have a study guide and a transcript for this episode available at [Culips.com](https://culips.com). In this episode, I'm going to talk about a bad study habit. This is something that you should avoid doing when you are studying English. Do you have any bad study habits? I know that when I first started learning Korean, I had lots of bad study habits. And also, as I was teaching English in Korea, I noticed that many Korean people also had some bad study habits.

The bad habit is memorizing long lists of words. I know when I first started studying Korean, I was definitely **guilty of this**. I made a flashcard deck on the app called Anki - a n k i - and in that flashcard deck, I had over 200 expressions. I studied these words and phrases and idioms every day, for a long time. But I was never able to actually use the words on my list. Most of the words, I could not remember when I needed them.

So why is memorizing a long list of words a bad idea? Well, the reason is, because there is no context. In another episode of Jeremy's English Tips, I will talk about context and how to add context to the things you learn. But for this episode, I'll just explain why context is so important.

Children learn their first language through context. Have you ever seen a three year old studying flashcards? I doubt it. Young children learn by watching their parents and their friends and other people say things in real life situations. This is another way of saying in context. They learn things in context. For example, let's say a young child sees a bowl fall off the table and break on the ground. Then the adults in the area say, "Oh no." This young child immediately understands that "Oh no" is connected to something bad happening. So the next day when they see a toy fall on the ground, they might say, "Oh no." They did not need to understand the meaning of the phrase "Oh no." They also did not need to know how to spell it, or how to write it. They just connected the phrase to the situation.

When people memorize long lists of words, they usually just connect the new word in the target language to the meaning in their native language. So in other words, they connect word to meaning. But meaning alone is actually not very helpful in our daily lives. When you are speaking your native language, do you think about what the words mean when you are using them? Probably not. It's much more likely that you are paying attention to the situation. And while doing so, the right word spontaneously jumps into your head at the right time.

Now I should mention that sometimes studying long lists of words can be helpful, but only if your goal is to be able to recognize those words. This is usually what people do when they are studying for tests. If you need to remember lots of vocabulary words to take a test, then studying a long list of words might be the quickest way for you. But, **I assure you**, you will not be able to remember most of these words when you try to have a conversation. **In other words**, you won't be able to use them in real life until you have added context into the mix.

So **that's all I have** for you in this episode of Jeremy's English Tips. In the next episode, I'll talk about context and how you can add it into your studying to make all of your study efforts much more fruitful. Thank you for listening, and I'll catch you next time. Take care everyone. Happy English learning!

## Key Points

1. Jeremy introduces a bad study habit, which is studying long lists of words.
2. Studying long lists of words is difficult and ineffective because you can't use the words when you need them in real life
3. Memorizing words and their meanings doesn't give you context for how the word is used by native speakers in real life
4. Knowing when to use a word is more important than knowing what it means.
5. Cramming long lists of words can be helpful if you are going to take a test, but for serious language learners, it is not advisable.

## Key Expressions

- **I assure you:** what I am saying I believe is the truth
- **I am/was definitely guilty of** \_\_\_*action*\_\_\_ : Other people have done \_\_\_*action*\_\_\_ and I have also done \_\_\_*action*\_\_\_
- **That's all I have:** this is the end of what I have prepared to say to you
- **In other words:** I am going to say what I just said in a different way and simplify it

# Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Why is memorizing not a good study habit?
2. Why does context improve recall?
3. When might memorizing long lists of words be helpful?
4. Have you tried studying long lists of words before? Did it work for you?
5. What mistake to most people make when studying words in a foreign language?

## Study Challenges

1. Add context to the things you learn by creating example sentences and asking friends to look at them for you.
2. Do an assessment of your current study habits. Have you given enough importance to context in your studies or have you focused on connecting new words to their meaning in your native language?

## Credits

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