

Simplified Speech #083 – Raising a bilingual child, revisited

Episode description

In this Simplified Speech episode, Andrew and Jeremy continue their discussion about raising a bilingual child. Tune in to learn some useful tips on how to raise a bilingual child in your own household.

Fun fact

Even monolingual parents can raise bilingual children! It's important that they set clear goals and dedicate time and energy to exposing their children to the language, and that they give their children plenty of opportunities to communicate with fluent or native speakers of the language.

Expressions included in the study guide

- A follow-up
- Recap
- Revive
- To come at [someone] from all sides
- To pick up on [something]
- To clarify



Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hey, everyone. My name is Andrew.

Jeremy: Jeremy here.

Andrew: And you're listening to Culips.

Andrew: Welcome back to another Culips episode, everyone. Today, we have a Simplified Speech episode for y'all, which is our series where we have completely natural English conversations, but we speak just slightly slower than we do in our everyday lives. And today I'm joined by my cohost from California, Jeremy.

Jeremy: Hi there. Hello, everyone.

Andrew: So, Jeremy, we recently recorded an episode about how to raise a bilingual child. And after we recorded the episode, you messaged me and said I think I have some more things to say about this topic. So we decided to do a **follow-up** episode and continue our discussion on raising a bilingual child, because you have some more things to say, right?

Jeremy: After we recorded that episode, I started to notice that my son's English had developed a lot more than his Korean. So in the last few months, he has started to speak more and more. And I have noticed that when I asked him a question in English, he responds in English. But when I asked him the same question in Korean, he doesn't understand me.

Andrew: OK, Jeremy, so let's get into the details here in just a moment. But before we do that, I would like to let all of our listeners know that there's a study guide available for this episode. So, guys, if you go to Culips.com and sign up for a Culips membership, you can get unlimited access to the study guides for all of our episodes. And the study guides are jam-packed with things that will help you improve your English. There's a transcript, there are detailed vocabulary explanations, and examples of how to use all of the key vocabulary that you'll hear Jeremy and I use here today. There's a quiz. There are comprehension questions. And, perhaps best of all, if you become a premium member, you can have ad-free audio, too. So you don't have to hear me plug the study guide every episode, which is quite nice, I'm sure. So just visit Culips.com to sign up and become a premium member and study with the study guides today.

Andrew: OK, Jeremy, let's just **recap** a little bit about your specific situation.

Jeremy: Sure.

Andrew: You have one son. And how old is he at the moment?

Jeremy: He's a little over 2 years old right now. He turned 2, let's see, about 3½ months ago, 3 months ago.

Andrew: OK. Are you still counting in months? Do you say, like, he's 27 months? Or when does that stop? When do parents stop counting in months?

Jeremy: I think it stops around 2 years old. But when I ask other parents at the park, "How old is your daughter?" or something like that. The child is under 3. Sometimes they will say 2 years and 6 months, or 2 years and 3 months, like that, because the differences are noticeable, sometimes, between a 2½-year-old or a 2, just a 2-year-old, 24 months.

Andrew: Wow. So they're developing so rapidly that the difference of a month can make a big difference in their developmental progress?

Jeremy: Yeah. So parents like to know that when they ask about other kids, as well.

Andrew: Oh, he should know how to share by now. He's 27 months.

Jeremy: We are learning sharing right now. That is where we are at right now.

Andrew: Nice. OK, so you have a young son. And what about your language backgrounds? You said you're trying to teach your child to speak Korean and English. You are a native English speaker, but also a Korean learner, right?

Jeremy: Yes. I would say that I am bilingual. I feel almost as comfortable in Korean as I do in English. There are just some topics and some situations in which I don't know the proper vocabulary. But I speak Korean quite well, in that regard. So I feel confident enough. And I also have been teaching Korean to Korean learners for the past 5 years or so. So I feel confident enough to help my son learn Korean.

Andrew: OK. And perhaps we should talk about your wife's linguistic background, too, because she's also, of course, a very important player. She plays a very important role, as well. So what about your wife's linguistic background?

Jeremy: Yeah, so my wife was born in Korea. So Korean is her first language, but she moved to the US when she was 9 years old. So her English is basically a native speaker level. She started learning at 9 years old. And she speaks English just like a native speaker. She relearned Korean at a later age. We went back to Korea and we lived there together. We learned Korean together. But she really just **revived** her Korean. So she very quickly went back to basically a native speaker level in Korean, as well. So we can definitely say that she is fully bilingual.

Andrew: OK. So the challenge you have right now, then, is how to raise your son to be able to speak Korean in the USA, right? In a place where he's getting English **coming at him from all sides**, right? His peers are probably speaking English. If you go to the supermarket, he's going to hear English on the radio and all of the other shoppers are speaking English.

Jeremy: All the other kids at the park are usually speaking English. Yeah.

Andrew: Right, so the challenge is how to get him to learn Korean where ... Yeah, you said that you're speaking English at home for the most part, except when you're with your in-laws, right?

Jeremy: So we speak English mostly at home, but we speak Korean when we're with my in-laws, my wife's parents, they live nearby. And, of course, my in-laws, my son's grandma and grandpa, they speak Korean to him. But because they live here in the United States, they understand basic English. They don't speak very well, but they have to survive here. So they have, so they do understand a lot of basic English and my son is speaking basic English right now. So because he can communicate with them in English, and he can communicate with us in English, I think he hasn't felt the need to communicate in Korean. But I will say that he doesn't know that they are different languages yet. So we are trying to teach him that there are different languages.

Jeremy: And in this episode today, I'd like to mention three tips for anyone who would like to raise a bilingual child. And the first tip I have is the child has to feel like the language is necessary.

Andrew: OK, the child has to feel like the language is necessary. So how can you do that? How can you create a situation where he wants to use Korean because he has to?

Jeremy: So with my in-laws, sometimes, they don't understand the English that he is using. They don't understand the sentence that he says. So if that continues for a long time, eventually he will learn to switch to Korean, because English doesn't work in that situation.

Andrew: So kind of, I guess you're putting some of the burden onto your in-laws, right? It's like, speak Korean with him, please.

Jeremy: They naturally tend to speak basic English with him, as well. And so recently I told them, "With you guys, he needs to speak Korean." So we decided that we will not call them grandma and grandpa, we will only call them *halmoni* and *haraboji*. Those are the Korean words for those things. So when we say *halmoni*, that is Korean grandma and *haraboji*, that is Korean grandpa. So with my son, I have used that to tell him, oh, when you talk to *halmoni*, you say this word. And when you talk to grandma, my mom, so my mother is grandma. When you talk to grandma, you say this word. And so I'm trying to teach him that some words work with *halmoni* and some words work with grandma, but not both.

Andrew: OK, they're not interchangeable.

Jeremy: The first one is that the child has to feel like they need the language. The second tip I'd like to mention is ... We'll call it pairing words and phrases. So pairing.

Andrew: OK, pairing. So matching, right? Matching.

Jeremy: Mmhmm. So we're matching the English word to the Korean word. So what we do these days is if my son knows how to say something, like thank you or airplane or, you know, banana, then we say, oh, in Korean, that is *bihaenggi*. Airplane is? And I ask him like that, airplane is? And he goes, *bihaenggi* and I say, OK, and *bihaenggi* is? Airplane. So now I know that he has connected those two words in his mind.

Andrew: Right, OK.

Jeremy: And I've done that with short phrases, as well. So that's my strategy right now.

Andrew: Strategy right now is kind of playing a game, right? Like, how do you, how do you say this in Korean, the sentence that I just said or something like that. OK.

Jeremy: Another way that I use this pairing is there are some questions forms that my son is very familiar with. For example, can you say. For example, when I say "Can you say," he knows that I want him to speak. So sometimes I will say, "Can you say this?" And then right after that, I'll say, "*Igo malhae bwa*," which was the equivalent in Korean. And so I'm pairing the phrases by saying them one after the other. And I always try to use the same form, the same sentence form. So if I say, "Can you say," then I'm going to say, "*Malhae bwa* this," you know, something *hae bwa* is the way they say it in Korean. And he has started to **pick up on that**. So after I've paired the two, then later on, I will just use the Korean one and say, "Hey, Jayu, you know, *hae bwa* blah blah blah *hae bwa*" and use the Korean version and see if he responds. And if he responds, then I know he understood.

Andrew: I have a question that's a little bit off topic here. But I'm curious. Have you noticed him using novel Korean words that you haven't taught him?

Jeremy: Um, he taught me a word recently.

Andrew: Oh, yeah?

Jeremy: Well, I didn't know why he was saying it, but I could guess. He said the word for, like, it's a sound word. There are lots of sound words in Korean.

Andrew: Too many, in my opinion.

Jeremy: He said this word *ttaenggeurang*, *ttaenggeurang*. And I was like, why does he keep saying that? I don't know what that is. But he was, he was throwing coins on the ground. And so I figured out that it was the, like, ding ding ding, you know, the sound of the coins hitting the ground. And later on my mother-in-law told me that that is the word that she uses when she talks about coins.

Andrew: OK.

Jeremy: Like *ttaenggeurang*, *ttaenggeurang* and he pours the coins on the ground, he likes to do that.

Andrew: Nice. So that must be encouraging, then, because, it's, he's learning Korean naturally as well, it's not just the Korean that you're teaching him with effort, right? He's picking up stuff from his environment, from his grandma. That's great.

Jeremy: So the first tip was to make them feel like they need the language somehow, maybe with a game or with a lifestyle choice. The second tip is pairing. So pairing words and pairing phrases in context. So if we see an airplane flying by, I say, "Jayu, what's that?" And he says, "Airplane!" And then I say, "And in Korean airplane is?" And he goes, "*Bihaengi!*" Now I know he knows that word. So pairing in context.

Andrew: OK, and what about the third tip?

Jeremy: The third tip is: expose them to consistent, interesting content in that language.

Andrew: OK, expose them to consistent, interesting content. So for a 2-year-old, I would imagine that's storybooks, maybe some cartoons, something like that?

Jeremy: Yes. So we will usually read the same storybook for a week or two, not every day, but repetitively. Sometimes we read it two or three times in a row. My son likes to read it again. He says, "Again, again" when we get to the end of it. But what I mean by consistent here is actually the characters. I think that the, that children recognize characters, just like they recognize people. So if they see the same character every time, and that character is always speaking, then the language starts to feel more familiar to them, right? And if they are interested in the content, they will want to continue reading about it or watching it and consuming that content. So it makes the language a part of their life.

Andrew: OK, so it's more personal maybe, right? Because I think some children develop kind of relationships with the characters that they meet in storybooks all the time. So, yeah, they can relate it, "Oh, this guy," I don't know. What are some of the characters that he likes these days?

Jeremy: For example, Pororo is a Korean cartoon character, I guess we say.

Andrew: Penguin, right? He's a penguin.

Jeremy: Yeah. He's a, he's a penguin. And my son knows that Pororo is in Korean, because we whenever we have shown him Pororo, we show him the videos in Korean. And the same with books. He remembers characters from books, and he calls them by their Korean name. So I said, oh—even if we are speaking English, he will say, "I saw *go in ajossi* yesterday." So that's like, the Mr. Giant or something. So he'll use the English phrase. He'll say, "I saw *go in ajossi* yesterday," but he'll put the Korean word in there. So I use pairing after that. And I repeat the sentence he said in Korean. "Oh, *go in ajossi bwasso?*" And then I have paired the correct Korean sentence with the sentence he just said in that context.

Jeremy: So timing is very important, I think. Pairing in context and keeping familiar characters in their life. So, for example, maybe some Korean parents who want to teach their children English, maybe they have a stuffed animal, like a doll or a bear or teddy bear or something like that. And that bear always speaks English to the child. So the mom, mother or father can speak for the bear. And if the child learns that, oh, you know, this bear only speaks English, then maybe it will make English feel more necessary for them to speak. That will make them feel like they need it. That's the first tip, right?

Andrew: Right.

Jeremy: And the parent can use pairing in context to help the child learn new words with the bear.

Andrew: Jeremy, one last question for you here before we wrap things up. Jeremy, I know that a lot of immigrants in North America, maybe they're from China or Korea or Japan, when they have children, they grow up speaking English, right? Even though the parents are native Chinese speakers, let's say.

Jeremy: Spanish.

Andrew: Spanish speakers. Yeah, when the children grow up, they tend to be monolingual or not strong speakers of the parents' native language. And so what they do is they send their children to Saturday school, where they can take Spanish classes or Chinese classes or whatever language classes. When your son grows up and is a little bit older, will you consider sending him to a school like this?

Jeremy: Well, when I was growing up, a lot of my friends went to Chinese school or Spanish school or Korean school on Saturday or after school. And all I know is they all hated it. My friend, all my friends told me that they hated going to another school on Saturday.

Andrew: I can understand that.

Jeremy: Yeah, me too.

Andrew: Yeah.

Jeremy: And, you know, I learned Korean without taking any formal language classes. And I also have learned Spanish without taking any formal classes, although I don't speak Spanish as well. So, personally, I won't send my son to a school like that. I feel confident that I can work with him as he grows up and use my skills as a language teacher to help him learn both languages. So I won't do that, but I can definitely see why some parents would choose to do that.

Andrew: OK.

Jeremy: I, I can't say that I think it's necessarily a good or a bad thing. It probably really depends on the school. But my opinion is that real language learning happens in real life.

Andrew: Right.

Jeremy: So it's very hard to teach language in a classroom setting, because the classroom is not real life, usually.

Andrew: Not real life. Yeah, and I think these schools, they're not just about language, sometimes they're about culture too, right? Immigrants want their children to know the culture of their home. And so when they are gathered with students from a similar cultural background, they can, can learn a little bit more about the culture of the home country, perhaps. I don't know, I've never gone to these schools, but I think that's what they do.

Andrew: Well, Jeremy, thanks for coming back and **clarifying** some of your ideas here about how to raise a bilingual child. I'm sure out of our listeners, there are some people who have done this successfully.

Andrew: And, guys, this is something that I really know nothing about. Jeremy is more of an expert than I am. But I think we would both be interested to hear about your experiences. If you have raised a child bilingually, send us an email and let us know how you did it. We would be really interested in reading those kinds of stories. So our email address is contact@Culips.com.

Andrew: And if you want to stay up to date with all of the news here at Culips, you can follow us on social media. We're on YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. You can find us everywhere on social media. So follow us and stay up to date. Finally, the study guide for this episode is on Culips.com right now. So if you wanna download the study guide, study again with this episode, then just visit Culips.com to give it a download.

Andrew: We'll be back soon with another brand-new episode and we'll talk to you then. Goodbye, everyone.

Jeremy: Bye, everyone.

Detailed Explanations

A follow-up

Noun

A **follow-up** is a continuation or repetition of something. For example, this episode is the continuation of a conversation about raising bilingual children. Andrew and Jeremy thought that there was more to talk about related to this topic, so they wanted to continue the conversation; they wanted to have a **follow-up** conversation.

The word **follow-up** is often used for doctor's appointments, too. If a patient has surgery and leaves the hospital, they are often required to come back for **follow-up** appointments to make sure their body is healing properly.

Here are a couple more examples with **follow-up**:

Daniel: Do you remember that video we did about the mom who gave birth to eight children?

Vincent: Yeah. That was a couple of years ago, right?

Daniel: That's right. I was thinking we could do a **follow-up** story on that. Viewers are probably interested in how the family changed over the years.

Vincent: That's not a bad idea. OK, make some calls to the family. If they say yes, we'll start planning the production and scheduling of things.

Daniel: OK, boss. I'm on it!

Dr. Lee: How are your eyes feeling? Any pain or dryness?

Heather: Nope. I still can't see perfectly out of my left eye, but besides that it's been wonderful. I love not having to wear glasses anymore.

Dr. Lee: Well, I'm glad you are satisfied. Everything looks good so far. We just have to wait for your eyes to heal completely. I'll see you in 2 weeks for your next **follow-up**.

Heather: OK, thanks. See you then.

Recap

Noun

The word **recap** is an abbreviation of the word **recapitulation**, which means to briefly summarize or go over something that was already discussed in the past. **Recap** is a very common word, but almost no one uses the full word, **recapitulation**, when speaking.

Have you ever watched a TV show and, at the beginning of an episode, it shows you a brief 2-minute summary of what happened in the previous episode? This is an example of a **recap**. TV shows often show a **recap** of the previous episode's events at the start of a new episode, so that viewers can easily remember what is currently going on in the story line.

Here are a couple more examples with **recap**:

Sally: Do you wanna watch Iron Man 2 with me today?

Jasmine: I mean, sure, but I don't really remember what happens in the first Iron Man. Can you give me a **recap**?

Sally: Sure. So, in the first movie, tech billionaire Tony Stark builds a super suit that can fly and shoot lasers, and he fights bad guys using his suit and his amazing brain. Also, he's kind of a jerk, but really witty and hilarious.

Jasmine: Ha, that's a really short **recap**, but I think I'm remembering more details now. I'm guessing the second movie will be similar to this one.

Sally: Duh. Action movies are all the same: good guy fights bad guy and eventually beats bad guy. Even though it's predictable, it's still fun!

Darrel: OK, everyone, that concludes our meeting. Roger will send a **recap** of what we discussed in an email this afternoon.

Martha: Can we add a reminder for the bake sale fundraiser to that email? It's this Friday.

Darrel: Sure thing. Roger, please make sure that gets added with the meeting notes. OK, everyone, enjoy the rest of your afternoon.

To revive

Verb

To revive is to regain life, or to give strength and energy to something. For example, in this episode Jeremy said that his wife forgot a lot of her Korean when she moved to America, but she **revived** it when she went back to Korea for a while. In other words, her Korean skills were weak, but moving to Korea and using Korean every day helped **revive**, or helped strengthen, her Korean skills.

Revive is also often used when talking about medical conditions. For example, if someone faints or collapses from fatigue, it often takes them a while to **revive**. In this case, **revive** means to regain consciousness by resting and gaining back strength after a sickness or overworking oneself.

Here are a couple more examples with **to revive**:

Sandra: You've got to come to the hospital right now! Frank hit his head at work and now he's in a coma.

Bethany: What? How long has he been out? Will they be able to **revive** him?

Sandra: The doctors don't know for sure yet. They said he doesn't look like he sustained any serious brain injuries, so he should wake up soon.

Bethany: OK, I'll be there as soon as I can. Watch over him until I get there!

Ricardo: I was thinking, why don't we **revive** our band?

Miguel: You mean our high school garage band? That was 20 years ago!

Ricardo: So what? You still know how to play, right?

Miguel: Yeah, but we're old. I'm not sure if I have time for it ...

Ricardo: C'mon. It's not like we have to practice every day like when we were in high school. We can just do it for fun, maybe once a week.

Miguel: It does sound pretty fun. OK, I'm in if you can convince Mikey and Dano to join, too.

Ricardo: Yes!

To come at [someone] from all sides

Phrasal verb

The phrase **to come at [someone] from all sides** means to be surrounded by something in every direction. This phrase can have a positive or negative meaning. In this episode, Andrew uses this expression in a positive way, saying that Jeremy's son has English **coming at him from all sides** because he lives in America. In this example, **to come at him from all sides** means that the child is surrounded by the English language everywhere he goes, so he can quickly and easily pick up on English vocabulary and phrases.

However, in the example "the crowd **came at [someone] from all sides**," it is not a positive thing. It means that the person was being surrounded by people in every direction and he couldn't escape.

Here are a couple more examples with **to come at [someone] from all sides**:

Danny: Have you ever been to a 4D movie?

Charlie: No, what's that?

Danny: It's really cool. It's like a 3D movie, but you can also feel and smell things that show up in the movie. The special effects **come at you from all sides**.

Charlie: Really? Like how?

Danny: Well, if a character in the movie gets caught in the rain, then you get sprayed with water. Or if they start flying, your seat in the movie theatre starts to move like you're flying, too.

Charlie: Wow, that sounds really cool!

Alexandra: I had the craziest dream last night.

Jessie: What was it about?

Alexandra: I dreamed that I was in the zombie apocalypse. I was outside the grocery store after trying to find some food, and zombies started **coming at me from all sides**.

Jessie: Oh my goodness, what did you do?

Alexandra: Well, it was a dream, so of course I had a gun in one hand and a sword in the other. I shot and hacked my way through all of the zombies to safety!

To pick up on [something]

Phrasal verb

To pick up on [something] is to understand something even if it is not explained or taught directly. For example, people can **pick up a language** simply by hearing it on the street or watching TV; people do not have to go to a formal language class to understand a language.

To pick up on [something] can also mean to notice something even if it is not exactly obvious. For example, a child might **pick up on the fact that his parents are fighting** even if the parents are not shouting at each other—he could notice their awkward or cold behaviour towards each other.

Here are a couple more examples with **to pick up on [something]**:

Rosie: Oh my goodness, did you know that Cassidy and Ryan are dating?

Teresa: Um, yeah. I **picked up on that** when I saw them kissing in front of the school.

Rosie: What? When did you see that?

Teresa: I don't know. Last week sometime?

Rosie: And why didn't you tell me?

Teresa: I don't know. It wasn't any of my business.

Rosie: Ugh! What is the point of having you as a friend if you don't know how to share juicy gossip?

Andy: Dude. Did you just flirt with that girl in French? When did you learn how to speak French?

Logan: Oh, I **picked up on it** a bit when I went on that trip to Europe last summer.

Andy: That's awesome. What did you say to her?

Logan: I just told her that she looked beautiful and then I asked for her number.

Andy: Man, you've gotta teach me some of that!

Logan: Ha! All right, all right, I'll tell you what I know.

To clarify

Verb

To clarify something is to make it clearer or easier to understand. For example, after reading something difficult in class, a teacher might summarize the passage **to clarify** any parts that might have been difficult to understand; in other words, she might summarize the contents to make the passage easier for her students to understand.

In this episode, Andrew thanks Jeremy for **clarifying** some ideas introduced in the first episode about raising a bilingual child. Jeremy came back to make a second episode so that he could more clearly explain the best ways to raise a bilingual child.

Here are a couple more examples with **to clarify**:

Denise: Can you **clarify** for me exactly why you want to buy a llama?

Doug: So that I can use its wool to make llama socks. They're really popular right now. We could start a small business. It's a great investment!

Denise: You want to start a llama sock business with only one llama?

Doug: Well, at first. We can get more llamas as the business grows.

Denise: Do you even know how to take care of a llama?

Doug: No, but I can learn!

Denise: This has got to be your craziest idea yet.

Sundar: Excuse me, sir. Could you **clarify** what the answer is for question 4 on the test? I'm not sure why I got it wrong.

Professor: Of course. Actually, quite a few of you in the class got that one wrong. Let's all turn to page 52 in our textbooks and I'll walk you through the solution.

Quiz

1. Which word has a similar meaning to the word recap?

- a) reseal
- b) redo
- c) retell
- d) remake

2. Which of the choices below is an example of a follow-up? Select all the correct answers.

- a) getting rechecked by the doctor
- b) seeing a friend in the grocery store
- c) interviewing someone for a second time
- d) following someone in your car

3. Why might someone ask the question, “Could you clarify that for me?”

- a) the person is hungry
- b) the person doesn’t understand something
- c) the person wants help making something
- d) the person is angry

**4. Which word has a similar meaning to the underlined word in this sentence?
“Watching that movie revived my desire to learn Spanish.”**

- a) strengthened
- b) ruined
- c) detailed
- d) destroyed

5. True or false? In order to pick up on a language, you must study the language in a formal classroom setting.

- a) true
- b) false

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What are some strategies that you would try when raising a bilingual child?
2. What is your favourite way to learn a language?
3. How would you recap what you learned in this episode?
4. What are some phrases from another language that you picked up while travelling in another country?
5. What other Culips episode would you like a follow-up on?

Quiz Answers

1.c 2.a, c 3.b 4.a 5.b

Episode credits

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