

## Bonus episode #132 - 2025

### Episode description

Happy 2025! In this week's bonus episode, Andrew gets the new year off to an exciting start by sharing some big plans for the months ahead. As you listen, you'll pick up practical English expressions, discover useful fluency tips, and hear about a special membership sale you won't want to miss. Let's make this a fantastic year of learning and growth together!



---

Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

---

**Andrew:** Hello and welcome to bonus episode number 132 of the Culips English Podcast. My name's Andrew. I'm happy to be here with you in 2025. Yeah, it's 2025. Happy new year. I hope you had a great time celebrating the new year.

It's time to get started with this episode in earnest. And what I'm going to talk about today is my plan for 2025, some of the goals and things that I would like to accomplish in this new year. So, let's get started. Here we go. Enjoy.

When I was younger, I really, really enjoyed the new year. Throughout my 20s and thirties, New Year's Day was one of my favorite days of the year. And actually, when I'm thinking about it, that really hasn't changed. I love the new year. It's a great time for a fresh start, for a reset, and for getting our priorities in order. I wish I could have the motivation that I have on January 1st every day of the year. I think if that were the case, I would be just a super, ultra-productive person. And yeah, I don't know, for whatever reason, New Year's Day is a good boost. It's a good push to get us moving forward with some of the things that we want to accomplish in life.

So, although that hasn't changed for me, I still love January the 1st as being a real motivator. I would say that I've scaled down the goals that I have for myself each year. Maybe as I get older, I'm starting to be more realistic with how much I can achieve in a year. And I think having a narrower focus about what I do want to achieve can help me to actually achieve some things. Before, I just would set so many New Year's resolutions that it was hard to follow through on all of them. So, over the last couple of years, I've been narrowing down my New Year's resolutions to a few key areas where I really want to see some improvement and growth.

And so that's what I'm going to share here with you today, because I think some of my New Year's resolutions and perhaps some of your New Year's resolutions will actually align and overlap. And it's great that we have this community here at Culips where we all

share one similar goal, and that is to improve with our English. In my case, I'm learning Korean as a second language, but I'm right in there with you. I'm learning a difficult second language and I'm studying hard, working hard. And that's actually what motivates me to a great extent here at Culips is my own language learning journey. I know how difficult it is and how much work and effort it takes. And I want to help you with your language learning journey. So, to a great extent, it's weird, but the Korean language is helping me teach the English language. And yeah, this is the flow of inspiration for Culips.

So anyways, I think we have that language learning goal in common. And let me just talk about Korean while I'm on the subject here for a moment. That, of course, is one of my major goals for 2025 is just to keep hammering away at it. I think I've talked about this over the last couple of years here at Culips during the New Year's show, and that is my major success with Korean is just not quitting. And I know that can sound maybe not so inspiring, but I really think that when you are learning a second language, spending time with the language and interacting with it daily is so, so important. Again, this is one of the reasons why I'm making this kind of content for you guys here listening to Culips is that you need to spend time with the language. You need to get it in your head. You need to be exposed to it. And these are all the things that you need to do in order to become fluent. It's a vital step. And without it, you can't really achieve any high level of fluency.

So, when I say I'm proud of myself for not quitting at Korean, that just means that I spend time with the language every day. Of course, I'm very lucky and blessed that I have a native speaker wife who I live with, who, of course, I can speak with every day. That is really great. But that's only part of the solution. I think maybe many of you out there, you're thinking, well, if I had a partner that was a native speaker, I could get fluent in English so quickly. I can tell you that's not really the case because you find yourself just talking about the same things day in, day out. And yeah, it's not great. I mean, it's not bad. It's definitely an advantage. Don't get me wrong. But at the same time, it's not that miracle cure all that we might expect it to be.

So, I try to do lots of different reading with Korean, watch different TV shows in the

language, listen to podcasts and, of course, speak as much as possible with other people when I get the opportunity as well. But for 2025 here, going into the future, I'm just going to resolve and double down to spend a lot of time with Korean every day and not really to stress too much about anything else other than spending time with the language. I don't have a goal of like, I must read 15 novels or I must watch 20 movies in Korean or anything like that. I find for me at this point, those kinds of goals just stress me out because my life does go through some very, very busy times and sometimes that are less busy. And I find that setting a marker like that is really, really difficult for me.

So instead of having these goals where I must read X amount of novels in Korean or spend X amount of hours studying, instead, I'm just going to make a conscious effort to interact with the language every day. And to as much as I can replace English with Korean. So, if I feel really, really lazy, maybe I want to watch some English YouTube. Well, can I just switch it over to Korean YouTube and spend some time vegging out and watching a Korean video instead of an English video? Sometimes this is not so easy because it requires effort and I want to relax, right? I don't want to spend mental energy when I'm trying to relax, but I think these are some of the steps that you really need to do to make Korean or for me, in my case, Korean and for you, English, more of a part of your lifestyle and to make those big jumps in your fluency by incorporating, adding the language into your regular routine each day.

So, I'm going to keep hammering away at that. I've set myself a long-term goal with Korean. I'm 40 years old right now at the time of this recording. And I figure that by the time I'm 50 years old, I would like to stop studying Korean actively and move on to another language. I think either French or Japanese is where my heart is and where I would like to spend some time with. So, I'm going to spend my 40s really spending time with Korean, actively studying. And I figure after 10 years, if I haven't, if I haven't hit the fluency level that I want to, then I probably never will. And I can start spending a little bit of extra time with another language. Who knows? But that's my kind of long-term goal with Korean. So, I'm just going to keep hammering away at Korean. And that's one of my main goals for 2025.

Speaking of hammering away. Let me talk about the other area of my life where I'm very interested in improving, and that is running. If you're a regular listener of Culips, you'll know that I enjoy running. It's my main form of exercise and it's one of my hobbies. And I run maybe a marathon or two marathons a year over the last couple of years. That has been the case, at least. And usually, a couple of smaller races as well, maybe a half marathon or a 10K. And so, I enjoy running for exercise and for the competitive nature of it, competing mostly against myself. But as a very competitive person, sometimes during a race, passing other runners as well feels very good. It's really motivating for me. And at the 2024 Seoul Marathon, I was finally able to beat my longtime goal of completing a marathon in under three hours. And for 2025, I want to bring that time down just a little bit to two hours and 55 minutes. So, completing a marathon as a sub 2:55, I think that's my goal for 2025. I'll have to bring my time down just by about a minute and a half. So, I don't think that's unrealistic.

Of course, as a 40-year-old guy, I'm past my athletic prime, unfortunately. And so, I think there's a limit to how fast I can go, but I want to find where is that limit. I want to try and do my best. And again, it's one of these things where the more time you can invest into it, the bigger results you can get. I think running and language learning are similar in that regard. But time is always the issue. And how can I find those extra hours?

There's a YouTuber that I enjoy. He makes running content and his username is Ran to Japan, I believe. And he's a really funny guy. He's from the UK, but he actually moved to Japan to run in Japan and learn from Japanese runners because they have a really amazing running culture in Japan with lots and lots of really fast runners. And so, he's this funny young guy and he moved to Japan to start running and he documents his journey there. And one of his slogans for running is work harder, not smarter. And I think what his point is there is that you can learn about all of these different running techniques and running strategies and you can use new technology to help you. But at the end of the day, there's no replacement for putting in time and putting in effort.

And so, his slogan for running and he's an extremely fast runner. He is almost at the elite

level, just like a little bit outside of the ultra-elite, like Olympic level for marathoning almost. So, he's very high-level runner and his slogan there, work harder, not smarter, I think is kind of a good one. It's a joke, of course. He's not saying to be stupid out there, but I think the key point is true in that if you want to see improvement with your running, you need to run a lot, just like language learning. If you want to see improvement with your language learning, with your English learning, in my case, Korean learning, we need to spend a lot of time. There's no replacement for putting in time and effort. So that's my goal with running a sub 2:55 for 2025. I'll be running the Seoul Marathon in March here, and I hope I can repeat my past glory of the sub three in 2024. So, we'll see how it goes. Please cheer me on and I'm going to try my darndest, try my hardest to hit that goal.

All right, what else? Let's talk about Culips goals, because this is another area of my life that really involves you as a member of the Culips community and as a listener to the Culips podcast. So, we have tons of goals. I expect 2025 to be a really huge year for us. We've been putting in a lot of effort behind the scenes, and I hope that I'll have some announcements that I can make about this soon. But there are some huge changes happening here at Culips that I think are going to be really great for everyone who learns English with Culips. It's going to be a gigantic step forward in how we do things at Culips and how you will be learning English with us. I think it's just going to get better and better and better. And I'm working hard to make it better and better and better for everyone.

So, some of the things I made a list here of some of the things that we want to do for 2025. Of course, in 2024, we introduced speaking classes, and these have been just so awesome. And one of the best things we've ever done at Culips, in my opinion, all Culips members are able to join up to three classes per week. And what we do is we get together and we just chat about a recent Culips episode. And so, this has been just so fun. We have Culips members from all around the world. I host one of the classes each week and we have members from Asia, from Europe, from South America, from North America, from the Mideast. I mean, really, it's global. And so, to connect with you guys and talk with you guys is just so fun. And to get to know you and make friends with you as well is just wonderful.

And I think this is just also a really lovely way to learn English. First, you listen to the podcast episode and then later you get to talk about the content and what you heard, and you get to share your opinion, your voice, your thoughts. And so, it's the total package for English learning. You get the listening, you get the vocabulary and grammar study with the transcript and going deep into the study guide. And then you get the speaking practice with the small group classes as well.

So, we're hoping to expand these and offer even more options for the speaking classes for our members going into 2025 and maybe even some specialized speaking classes. I think one of our members suggested that a presentation class could be really fun. And I like that idea of having a presentation class or maybe each week a member or two makes a presentation and everyone is free to join, and we can listen to the presentation and then ask questions. And it could be really a great opportunity for practice your English speaking and formal presentation making as well. I love that idea. Maybe we'd have more leveled classes so that if you are a lower level or intermediate level or advanced level, you could join the class that best fits your level and so that you could feel comfortable interacting with members who are at a similar level to you. Of course, we're going to still have some classes for everyone, but I think those leveled classes, in addition to the free for all classes, could be really fun and a nice thing for a lot of you.

Also, we're planning to introduce courses, Culips courses. So, this has been something that has been requested for a long, long time by many, many people having courses for grammar, pronunciation, culture, maybe current events, and current topics. And we're planning to make that kind of course material available for our members as well in 2025. So, we've got big plans for Culips courses.

And also, one of the highlights for 2024 for me. And I talked about this in the recap, 2024 recap episode that I recorded with Kassy. But spoiler alert, one of the things I talked about in that episode is that the meetup in Osaka in July of 2024 was one of the highlights of the year for me. So, we met up with Culips listeners in Osaka. We had a great time hanging out and spending time together. And it was just so nice for me to connect with Culips



listeners. And I'd love to do more meetups into 2025 as well. And so definitely here in Korea, my home base. We're going to have a meetup in early 2025, I hope by the spring. Definitely. Let's do it. So, if you're a listener in Korea and you'd like to meet up with me and hopefully I can convince Kassy maybe to join me as well, I'll have to check with her, but it would be awesome for us to do a meet up here, probably in the Seoul, Gyeonggi-do area. I think that is probably the most convenient for most listeners in Korea and definitely for me. So, yeah, Seoul meet up in 2025.

And also, I haven't confirmed the schedule yet, but it looks likely that I will be spending a little bit of time in Tokyo in February of 2025. And if any listeners out there who are in Tokyo would like to help me plan a meet up or organize a meet up, I think, why not? Let's do it. I really relied on the Culips community's help to plan the Osaka meet up. And I would really need to do the same for a Tokyo meet up. But if you are out there listening and you are a Culips fan and you would like to help us organize a simple, small meet up in Tokyo sometime in February, please send me an email [andrew@culips.com](mailto:andrew@culips.com) or you can DM me through our Discord server. And if we get enough interest, let's make it happen. And of course, we're still going to keep making awesome English lessons and podcast episodes for you into 2025 as well, as much interesting content as possible to help you achieve your English fluency goals in 2025.

And I also have some goals that are outside of my hobbies to an extent and are more personal in nature that I want to do for 2025. Number one, I want to do something social and that gets me out of the house from time to time here in Korea. To an extent, I think I work a lot and I'm doing a lot of my hobbies like running. And these are pretty solo activities. And it would be nice to integrate a little bit more into Korean society by doing something social with Koreans that's not related to English education or English learning. I spend a lot of time with people here all the time, but most of it is related to English education and English teaching. I think it would just be nice to live my life here in a way that's similar to how Koreans live. And so, I'm thinking about doing something like maybe joining a running club or a hiking club or something like this, maybe a volunteer activity,



something that gets me active and able to meet some new friends and just something that's not like me being an English teacher all the time. I think it would be nice to turn off that side of my brain for a little bit.

So, we'll see. I have to make the time for it. There's a reason why I haven't done that yet. I've been thinking about doing this for years and years and years. And it's just hard to find time in my schedule. So, I'm going to try and make more of an active effort in 2025 to free up some time for these kinds of activities. I think it would just be good for my mental well-being, my physical well-being and living life as an immigrant here in Korea. I think that's an important step to do as well. So, I'm going to try and do that.

And another thing that I would like to do maybe in 2025, my wife and I have been talking about this a little bit on and off. And yeah, the first thing that we want to do is maybe get a car. My wife especially has been saying, you know, as non-drivers... We both have... I think there's an expression in the Korean language where they call it a closet driver's license. It's like you have your driver's license, but you don't use it. So, it's almost like you've hung it up in the closet and it's just sitting there. My wife and I, we both have these closet driver's licenses where we're licensed to drive, but we don't have a car. And public transportation in Seoul is just really, really convenient. So, it's not been something that's necessary for us.

But we've been talking about, like, you know, the older we get now we're in our 40s, if we keep pushing this off and pushing this off, it just gets harder to get into driving again. And if you remember, not too long ago, I had a running injury where I injured my knee and I had to hobble around the city. My wife and I were talking about at that point, like, thankfully, it was just a very minor injury and it healed quickly. But what if it was something more serious? What if I broke my back or something and I needed a car? I need my wife to drive me around to the hospital or something. This would be really, really important. And I would hate for her to suddenly have to just start learning how to drive really quickly in that kind of situation because there was an emergency or something like that. So, we've been talking about, you know, don't delay, act today. And we might as well just get this going and start

driving more often and hopefully get a car for ourselves. And I think there's advantages and disadvantages to driving. But at the end of the day, it's just like anything. You've got to get your time in as a driver. The more time you spend driving, the better driver you are. And we might as well get started with that in 2025.

So, I think that's something that we're going to do. And we've been also talking, maybe me talking a little bit more than my wife. I'm not sure, but I would love to get another dog. We lost our dog, Pinky, about a year and a half ago. And it was a huge loss for us. We really miss him a lot. But I really enjoyed having a dog when we had our sweet Pinky Boy, and I would love to get another one. And of course, it's a huge time commitment. It's a huge commitment just in general. But sometimes my wife and I, we both follow animal shelters on Instagram, and I have some animal shelter apps and you see all these dogs out there that need a home. And we have a home, and we have, I think, a lot of love that we can give to another dog. So, we'll see. We'll see if it happens. But I think it would be awesome to get another dog in 2025. So, we'll see. I'm not sure what the future will hold, but I'd love to get another dog sooner than later.

So those are my goals for 2025. I'm going to try my best to achieve them and to stay on track. I said at the start of the episode that I wasn't going to set too many goals, but kind of in retrospect, I guess I do have a lot of things I want to achieve in 2025. But I think they're all doable.

And now that we're at the end of the episode, it's time for me to share this week's completion code with you. And simply what I'd like you to do for this week's completion code is just tell me about your New Year's resolution, your New Year's goal for 2025. Share that in a comment on our Instagram or our Discord server or our YouTube page. And that will signal to me and our entire Culips community that you listened all the way to the end of this episode, that you completed it, that you did it. And of course, great job for doing that. Thank you for spending some time with me learning English this week and this year, I hope going into 2025, you'll be here with me. Of course, I'll be here each and every week to help you with your English learning journey.

---

So, yeah, share your New Year's resolutions with me and our community. I can't wait to hear what your goals for 2025 are. So that's it for me for this week, everyone. Please take care, have a great week of English learning up ahead. Talk to you next time. Bye bye.

## Episode credits

Host and preparation: Andrew Bates

Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima