

## Bonus episode #073 - History lesson

### Episode description

In this episode, Andrew talks about the history of Culips from its early days as one of the first English-language education podcasts, to where it's at today! Plus, he answers a very frequently asked question: What does the word "Culips" mean?

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Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

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**Andrew:** A question that I get asked often is how did Culips start? I think many listeners out there are curious about our history. Well, in this bonus episode, which is episode number 73, by the way, I'm gonna tell the history of Culips as I know it. Now, I haven't been there from the beginning. And I don't know all of the details, but to the best of my ability, and to the best of my knowledge, I'm going to tell you the story of Culips. But before I do that, I should introduce myself. How rude of me. My name is Andrew, and I am the host of the Culips English Podcast. And in our bonus episode series, which we release weekly, every Monday, I just tell you some stories about what's going on in my everyday life as a Canadian living abroad in South Korea.

But this episode is a little bit special, because well, you're listening to this episode, probably on Monday or Tuesday. But I always record the bonus episodes on the weekend. Of course, a podcast is not live. So, I record them and prepare them in advance for you. But this weekend, I will be running a marathon. So, I am recording right now on Thursday, October the 19th, 2023. And because of the marathon, I won't be able to record on the weekend. So, I'm preparing this episode in advance. But of course, I'd like to tell you some stories and some updates about my life in the bonus episode series. But really, guys, I didn't have a very interesting week this week. You know, from Monday until today, Thursday, nothing really special happened. So, I don't really have anything worthwhile to tell you about other than I just followed my everyday usual routine. So, because of that, I thought I would take this opportunity to answer this question that many people are curious about and tell you the history of Culips. So that's what I will do here in this episode. And I hope that's OK with you. I know many people tune in to hear about my life updates. But like I said, I don't really have any to share. But hopefully some interesting things happen to me before next week's episode, and I can get back to the regular scheduled programming then.

I have some quick announcements here before we begin though. Number one: I want to tell you that there's a transcript available for this episode, and it's completely free. Anybody can access it for free. There are two versions available. There's an interactive one that's clickable, allowing you to start the audio from any word that you click or tap on. And there's a PDF version as well. That's great for printing. If you'd prefer to study that way. You can use the transcript to follow along while you listen. Or you can listen to the episode first, and then go back and check your comprehension and understanding later by referring to the transcript. So, to get it just follow the link that's in the description.

And the second announcement is about becoming a Culips member. So, you can support the work that we do here at Culips, and at the same time, take your English fluency to the next level by becoming a Culips member. As a member, you'll gain access to all our helpful learning materials that are created by our team of expert English teachers. This includes the study guides for all of our episodes, and our members-only series, the Fluency Files. Plus, you'll get ad-free audio, invitations to our monthly live streams, exclusive bonus content, and so much more. So, sign up and become a member today by visiting our website [Culips.com](http://Culips.com).

And speaking of the member live stream, everyone, our next live stream is coming up on October 31st, on Halloween at 8:30 pm Korean Standard Time. So, you'll have to do a conversion and find out what time that happens in your local time. But we'll be kicking off at 8:30 pm Korean Standard Time. And I will be joined by Alina, who is our Discord moderator and one of our expert study guide writers as well. And what you can expect during the livestream is, first of all, we are going to be playing Culips trivia. So, you can test your understanding of all of our October episodes in a fun and interactive game with Alina and with me and with other Culips members, so that will be fun. And we're also going to open the phone line. So, if you would like to call in and talk with Alina and with myself, you can share your thoughts or ask questions about English learning. And then finally,

we'll also be having a Q&A. So yeah, if you want to get some advice or some help about studying English, or just really anything else that you want to talk about, then you can go ahead and do that during the livestream. So, to participate and join the stream, A) you must be a Culips member; this is one of the benefits that we give to our Culips members, is doing the livestream each and every month. And then also, you have to join our Discord community, because that's where the livestream happens. So, I'm going to put the link to the event on Discord in the description for this episode, and you can just follow the link, read all the details, and make sure that you are a part of the Discord community so that you can view the livestream without any issues. And I hope to see you there. It will be fun to spend Halloween with Culips members. Halloween is one of my favorite days of the year. And who knows, maybe I can even throw together some kind of costume. I'll have to think about it. But yes, see you on Halloween for the Culips member livestream.

And with those announcements out of the way, it's time to get started with the main part of our episode, which is where I share with you the history of Culips. Enjoy!

I don't know how long you've been listening to Culips. If you're a new listener, then you're probably familiar with who I am. And maybe some of my co-hosts like Suzanne and Kassy and Anna. But to tell the story of Culips, I have to go way back to 2008. And I have to introduce you to some people who you probably aren't familiar with. Now, it's possible that some listeners out there have been listening to Culips since 2008, which, as far as I know, is when the first Culips episodes were released, which is really wild and crazy to think about, right? Now we are in 2023. But this podcast goes all the way back to 2008. Which is pretty cool I think because, as far as I know, the iPod, you know Apple's music player, the iPod that was released around 2001 or 2002. And that's actually the etymology of the word "podcast". It's related to iPod. So the two words "iPod" and "broadcast", you smash those together, and you get the word "podcast". And I think around by the year 2005, it was pretty easy to download a podcast automatically from your computer right to your

music device, your MP3 player, whether it was an iPod or something else. Of course, at this time, smartphones weren't a thing. Right, I believe the first iPhone was released in around 2007. So shortly after the release of the first iPhone, then in 2008, is when Culips got its start.

So let me tell you about the early days of Culips. Because this was before my time. I actually didn't join the team until much later. But from what I've been told over the years, this is how I understand that the podcast started. And to tell the story, I need to introduce you to four people. So the first is the Culips founder, his name is Yoshi. And Yoshi is still a big part of Culips, working behind the scenes, he handles a lot of the technical things, the business operation side of things. So there's Yoshi, OK, he's the first guy I want to introduce you to. And then also there was Jessie, Harp, and Maura. So how did these four people meet each other and decide to start an English learning podcast together? Well, it all goes back to Montreal. Montreal, Canada, it's the city where they all met, although I don't think any of them are originally from Montreal. Yoshi is originally from Japan, and Harp and Maura and Jessie, I think were from other parts of Canada. But Montreal is a city in Canada where many people move to, like me too. I ended up in Montreal, and that's how I met all of these people and started working with them. But I'm not originally from Montreal. It's like one of those cities in Canada that a lot of Canadians who are from smaller towns in other parts of the country dream about living in one day. And so I think that's how they all ended up in the city.

Anyways, these four people met in a French-language class, because Montreal is located in the French-speaking area of Canada, the province of Quebec. And if you move to Montreal, there are classes that you can take in the city, designed for speakers of other languages who are not native French speakers so that they can learn French. And these classes are offered for a very affordable price. I think it's only like \$50 a month or something, maybe the price has changed now, but I actually took these French classes as

well. And they're very affordable and also very intense. You study every day from 9 am until 1 pm. So you study for about 20 hours a week, four hours a day for five days a week. So you get a lot of French learning, and lessons, and training, for a very affordable price. And it's the Quebec Government's way to try and integrate new people into their society who are not native French speakers.

So anyways, as far as I understand, the four people that I just introduced you to: Yoshi, Harper, Maura, and Jessie, were taking these French classes together. And that's how they met. While they were taking the French classes and studying French together, they looked on iTunes to try and find some French podcasts that would help them with their French study. And they came across a podcast that was pretty helpful. I don't actually know the name of that podcast, or if it still exists. But from what I understand, it was a little bit similar to Culips because it just featured some conversations between French native speakers talking about daily topics. So, they started listening to the podcast, and they realized that it was really helping them in their French class. It was helping them to become better French speakers and helping them in their daily lives living in a French-speaking place in Montreal. So that kind of planted a seed, I think, especially in Yoshi's head because remember, he's originally from Japan. So, he had to learn English first. And then now he was studying French as well. And something clicked. And he was like, "Somebody should be doing this for English as well." So, he went on to iTunes and tried to find a podcast that was doing something similar in English. And he couldn't find a good one that was like, as good as this French podcast. And that was making content that he thought could help him with his English fluency. So that was really the impetus, that was the starting point that made Yoshi think that, hey, "We should get together and we should do what this French podcast is doing but do it in English."

So, he pitched the idea to Maura, Harp, and Jesse. And that's where Culips started. Now, the early days of Culips, I'm not too familiar with. They had many different series and many



different co-hosts. And there were people coming and going, but the four main people were Harp, Maura, Jessie, and Yoshi. And I think one day here in the near future, I'm going to get Yoshi on the podcast so he can tell the story and really just share a little bit about his life story as well, because I think a lot of you would be interested to hear about his story. A really interesting guy. Anyways, so that was the start of the podcast back in 2008. And then fast forward five years, into 2013. And that's when I first learned about Culips and joined the Culips team. Let me share about how that part of things happened.

I was living in Montreal at that time. I first moved to Montreal in the summer of 2011. And so, I had been living there for a few years. I was attending grad school working on my master's degree. I was also taking the French classes that I told you about a moment ago. I was playing in a band, and I was doing some English teaching at different companies in Montreal. You know, because it is a French-speaking place. A lot of companies give English language training to their employees. So, I was doing that as a part-time gig. It was actually a cool job. I'd go from office tower to office tower and meet with corporate employees, salespeople, HR people, advertising people. There were tons of different fields and tons of different companies that I worked with. But that job was hit or miss in terms of how much work I got. There were times where I'd have many classes to teach. And then other times that weren't so busy and I didn't have as many classes to teach. And I was always on the lookout for different opportunities and different side gigs, maybe something that would be a little bit more regular. So, I always kept an eye on this website, Craigslist. And Craigslist perhaps still exists, but it's not popular anymore. But back in 2013, it was the website for buying and selling used items, or maybe looking for an apartment, or even looking for a job.

So, I was browsing Craigslist one day, and I saw an ad. And actually, I went back in my email and I tried to find that ad, but I couldn't find the ad. But I did find the email that I sent in response to that ad. And I could see the title of that job listing on Craigslist. So, the job

listing said, "Co-host for English as a Second Language podcast." So that is like the title that I saw when I was surfing on Craigslist that day. And I remember that I immediately clicked and was very, very excited about the opportunity.

Why? Well, first of all, I love podcasts. Even at that time in 2013, I was a huge podcast freak. I really feel like I started listening to podcasts, even before podcasts were a thing. Maybe some of you remember this application for old, old computers, called RealAudio. RealAudio was an application that allowed you to stream audio from your computer, way back in the day. I'm talking like in the late '90s to early 2000s. And even at that time, I would use this application, RealAudio, to listen to different radio stations from around the world. And especially, I loved listening to talk shows on the radio, talk radio. So, this was back even when I was a teenager. And then as podcasts developed and became more popular, it was super natural for me to start listening to those as well. Because I was already in love with this kind of medium, this kind of art form, and this way of communication. So, I was already really, really passionate about podcasting. And even when I was a teenager, one of my future career goals was to work in radio in some capacity. Maybe not as talent behind the microphone on air. I don't know if I ever wanted to do that, per se. And it's kind of funny that I'm doing that right now. But I was interested in maybe producing radio content, or editing, or doing some technical side of things, anything to do with talk radio, I was really interested in. But, of course, that never really happened in my life. I didn't work in radio. I ended up taking a different path and becoming an English teacher.

So, when I saw that job listing on Craigslist, "Co-host for English as a Second Language Podcast", I got so excited because I saw two of the things that I'm really passionate about combined into one, OK? Podcasting, and also English teaching in one thing. And I also felt a little bit silly. Like, why hadn't I thought of this idea, like Yoshi really beat me to the punch. I had never considered combining those two things. I guess at that time, maybe I



was too busy studying to think of starting my own podcast. But anyways, I saw that ad and I immediately sent off my application. And I guess in the cover letter that I sent, I was effectively able to communicate my passion as an English teacher, and my passion as a podcast listener, and I got an interview. So, I actually met Maura, who was one of the Culips co-hosts that I mentioned before, and we met at a coffee shop, and we had a chat. And after that, she said, "Welcome to the team. You're on board, you are a member of the Culips English Podcast." So, amazing.

From that point on, I was a part of the Culips family. Now I didn't start as a podcast host right away. I actually started instead doing behind the scenes stuff. So, I was a study guide writer, I helped plan and prepare episodes. Maybe you guys don't know this, but it's not very often that we just hit record and talk here on Culips. I mean, sometimes we do that. Like if Kassy and I are having a catch-up episode or something. Or in these bonus episodes too often. I'll just hit record and talk. But usually that's not what happens here. Instead, we really do a lot of research and planning before we record, and that's what I started doing at the start. So yeah, I started out writing study guides and preparing episode plans. And then a little bit later on, after a few months, I started doing some audio editing as well, because I was always interested in music and was doing a lot of recording with my band. So, I was familiar with how to record and how to edit audio. So that seemed like a natural next step.

And then after doing that, for about six months, I was asked if I would like to come on the podcast as a guest. And so, I decided to try my hand behind the microphone. And shortly after that, then I became a regular co-host on Culips, as well. And at that time, I was mainly recording with Maura and with Harp. And Jessie, who I mentioned a little bit earlier, was doing a lot of the study guide editing, and more of an organizational role at that time. And one of the reasons why I was asked to become a host on Culips was because at that time, Harp and Maura's careers were really starting to take off and they were getting

busier and busier and busier, not only with their professional lives, but also with their personal lives. And they thought that by adding another member to the team, well, then that would give them a little bit more time to devote to their careers into their personal lives and their family lives and that sort of thing.

Well, fast forward around another nine months to a year or so, I would say. And at that time, Maura and Harp had to take even another step back from their responsibilities as co-hosts. Because around the very same time almost, I think exactly at the same time, they both started families. And of course, once you have a baby, then your life changes dramatically, right? And your priority, rightly so, should be on raising your family instead of making podcasts. So, at that time, Harp and Maura both took a step back, and I took a step forward. That was really the moment where I started becoming even more active in Culips. And at that time, we needed to find some replacement hosts.

So that's when I invited Suzanne to join the Culips team. We both were studying Applied Linguistics for our master's degrees. And we were classmates and in the same cohort. And we had worked on many projects at university together. So, I knew about Suzanne and her personality and interesting stories that she had to share, and her ability to speak many languages and do many accents and all of these things. So, I thought Suzanne would be a great fit for Culips. So, we asked Suzanne to join the Culips team. And she is still part of the team all these years later. And in fact, Suzanne and I are scheduled to record some new content together everyone here in the near future. I know it's been a little while since she's appeared on Culips. And that's because it's really hard for Suzanne and me to find a time that works in both of our schedules. But we were able to make an arrangement to record here soon in the near future. So that will be coming up. Soon you'll be hearing new Susanne episodes. But anyways, she joined the team, probably not too long after I did maybe around 2014 or so.

And at that time, we also added Morag to the team. Morag was a co-host for Culips for a few years back in the day. And if you listen to some early Simplified Speech episodes, for example, then you'll hear Morag's voice. After working for Culips for a little while Morag got a great job as a computer programmer, and then decided to pursue that full time.

And also, around this time is where I also had a big change in my life. I moved away from Montreal and moved to South Korea and still am to this day. And here in South Korea is where I met Kassy and eventually invited Kassy to become a new member of the Culips team as well, probably in around the year, and I'd have to ask Kassy to confirm, but I think probably it would have been in 2016. So Kassy and I first met in a language exchange group. Kassy was learning Korean. I was learning Korean. And we met up with a couple of Korean people who were learning English. So, there were four of us and we would meet every week we would spend half of our time speaking English and half of our time speaking Korean and it was just a great way to socialize and to have some fun and also to learn each other's languages. So that's actually how I first met Kassy. And it's where I realized that Kassy would be a great co-host for Culips. And it was just around the time that Morag was leaving the podcast that I invited Kassy to join.

And speaking of learning Korean, that's actually how I got to know about another one of our past Culips co-hosts, Jeremy, who many listeners may remember. Now at that time, and this is probably again, around that 2016-2017ish area. Jeremy was very active as a Korean teacher for English native speakers, he was making content on YouTube, and he had a podcast as well, for English speakers who are learning Korean. And that's where I first heard about him. And I loved his teaching style, how clearly he would communicate his ideas. I loved his passion for learning Korean. And so, when it was time to add a new host to the Culips crew, then I decided to just go out on a whim and send him a message to see if he would be interested. And he was. And that's how Jeremy joined the Culips Team. And it's possible that some of you are curious about why Jeremy left Culips. And

really, I think Jeremy was just too busy with his life with different projects that he had going on in his life at the time with starting a family and having young children. And also, he wanted to be less present on the internet. So, because of that, he removed his YouTube channel, and he removed his Korean language podcast, and his website, and those kinds of things all went offline, as he just wanted to live a life that was less public and less online, which actually, I understand. I completely understand that. So, it was sad that we had to lose Jeremy. But I respected his decision to move on.

And at that time, we had to have a replacement host for Jeremy. And that's when I invited Anna to join Culips as our newest Culips co-host. And the way that Anna came across my radar is that she was actually recommended to me by several different Culips listeners, who asked me to invite her for an interview on Culips. Now Anna has her own English teaching podcast. At the time, it was called Anna with two Ns English. And that's how I first learned about Anna was listening to that podcast of hers. But now she's changed the name. It's now called Confident Business English with Anna, and I will put the link to her podcast in the description for this episode. If you haven't heard it yet, it's great for all of you out there who may be learning English for business purposes. And especially if you are a native Spanish speaker, then I think it could be especially great for you to check out. Anyways, that's how I learned about Anna, and I thought she had a lot of the skills and qualities that we were looking for in a co-host. Especially, I really wanted to add Anna to the team because she is from the UK, and I wanted to introduce Culips listeners to a different variety of English. Now that decision may have frustrated some of you a little bit because I do get comments from time to time saying that Anna is more difficult to understand because of her UK accent. But guys, that's good. We have to do some hard things sometimes. And ultimately, trying to adapt to different speaking styles and different accents from English speakers around the world will just make your English skills even that much stronger. And Anna and I are going to be recording next week some brand-new

Chatterbox episodes. So, I'm looking forward to that. And I hope you'll also be looking forward to hearing them in the near future.

And I think that about brings us up to date. During this whole time this period of 10 years. Wow, it's insane. 10 years that I've been doing Culips! During this time, we've also had many people come and go in the background: transcriptionists, study guide writers, study guide editors, audio editors, people who have helped us with the tech side of running a podcast. There are too many people to name, but they've all been a very important part of our team. And of course, we couldn't do Culips without them.

Now, finally, one last thing that I'll end with, and now thinking back on it, perhaps I should have started with this. I don't know. But another question that I get asked here in Culips very, very often is what in the world does the word "Culips" mean? So, way back in 2008 when Culips got its start, the original Culips team needed to think of a name for their podcast. And they came up with the word Culips, which is a blended word of culture and lips. So, if you put those two words together, culture and lips, then you get the word Culips. And that word was really their motto representing the kind of content they wanted to create, and the kind of lessons that they wanted to teach to the audience. They wanted to teach about English culture. And they also wanted to teach about English speaking, right? So the "lips" represents speaking, and the "CUL" part of Culips represents culture. And I think we still live by that name today, here at Culips. Our goal is to teach you about the English that you need for your everyday life, and also about different cultural tips so that you can improve your knowledge and understanding of the culture of English-speaking people, because that is really a super important core part of improving your overall English fluency is that you also need to know about the culture. So that brings us up to the present, everyone. Culips has had a long and varied history, as you now know. But we're stronger and we're better than ever. And I hope we have many more years to come in the future as well. And of course, we can definitely do that with your support.

And I'm curious, how long have you been a Culips listener? If you've been a longtime listener, thank you for your support. And if you're a new listener, well, welcome aboard. It's great to have you here. I'd love for you to share about your experience learning English with Culips. If you have a favorite episode, or a favorite series, or a favorite host or a favorite guest, anything like that, please let me know. And please let other members of the Culips community know as well in our Discord. Our Discord is amazing. We're having great conversations on our channel every day. We have almost, I think, 3000 members now on our Discord channel. It's just a great resource for improving your English fluency and practicing your English output. Because on the Discord, you can participate in voice chats and have conversations with other Culips listeners. Or you can communicate through text and message back and forth about a whole range of different topics. So, if you haven't joined us on our Discord yet, then please do so. And you can do that by following the link in the description for this episode.

Everyone, I'm going to skip the vocabulary lesson for this week just because this episode went a little longer than I was originally intending. But I'll be back to the regular format next week, telling some stories from my everyday life and teaching you about an interesting expression in the vocabulary lesson as well. So, you can look forward to that happening next week. But for now, I'm going to take off. So, thank you for listening. Happy English studies, as always take care and I'll talk to you next time. Bye!

## Episode credits

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