

MEMBERS ONLY

2017



# JUNE 06

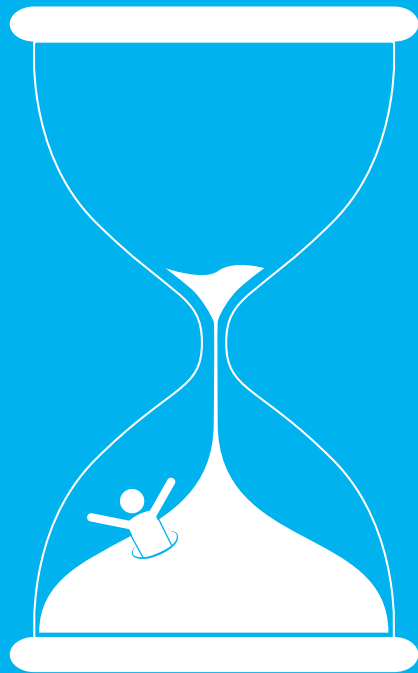
# INNER CIRCLE

THIS MONTH

HOW TO TIME YOURSELF TO  
100% LANGUAGE MASTERY

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# We're always rushing to get something done.



**Welcome to the Inner Circle, listeners.**

Last time, you learned...

- how to break your language learning routine...
- why you should break it...
- and how to actually learn a language with fun, non-academic resources

My last monthly goal was to master 60 Chinese dialogues as part of my listening practice. I only reached 30 last month (meaning I missed that goal). So, I adjusted it down (tip: never double your workload!) to 30 and, as you can guess, I hit my goal! I also took a timed practice test to check my listening, which got me thinking:

Have you ever timed your study sessions?

And did you honestly understand everything within that block of time?

**Let's get into this month's Inner Circle.**

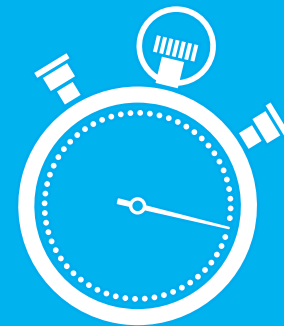
**You'll learn...**

1. Why You Should Time Yourself
2. How I Applied This to My Language Learning
3. How You Can Apply it AND My Challenge for You!

**Let's jump into the first part.**

# 1

# Why You Should Time Yourself

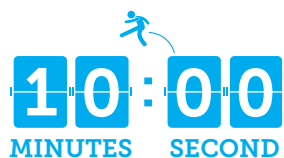


This past month, I took a practice exam to put my Chinese to the test. Not the whole thing, just the listening part. I'm not here to report a smashing success just yet, but the act of timing myself got me thinking.

Our lives are governed by time and deadlines.

We're always rushing to get something done. Rushing to meet someone at home. Waiting on something to happen.

And timing oneself can really put you to the test. Imagine your boss gave you a task to be done within the hour and watched you do it. That'd make you break a sweat! You'd rush to get it done.



So while I was "racing against time" to finish the test...

I couldn't help but think "what if learners timed their study sessions? What if we timed them?"

Our lessons are about 10-15 minutes long, at most. If you listened to one 10-minute audio lesson....

**...did you honestly learn everything within those 10 minutes?**

Some would say yes because you simply put the time in.

But did you understand every word and grammar point? Or just bits and pieces? And what if you need to look up words and research grammar rules?

Now you're going over 10 minutes. So by timing yourself...

1) You get an accurate picture of how much you really understand...  
2) And you realize how much time it takes to ACTUALLY understand a whole lesson.

Maybe you'll find that you're not getting 100% out of that lesson and need to spend more time. Or the flipside, you might notice that you understood it all without any extra time required, it's easy.

**So timing yourself gives you a true depiction of how much you understand.**

It puts you to the test, much like a timed exam would.

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# How I Applied This to My Language Learning



Taking a timed practice exam inspired me to find out how much I would get out of a lesson... IF I timed myself.

I started with ChineseClass101's Intermediate Level Audio lessons.

As you know, the lessons are around 10 minutes with the dialog and all of the explanations.

How long did it take me to understand every word and grammar point and fill in the missing gaps? Twice as long. 20 minutes.

In that extra time I...

- relistened to the lines and shadowed them out loud
- looked up words
- re-read the grammar points
- reviewed the lesson notes and the lesson dialogue
- ...until I could say with confidence that I understood it all.

Fact: By spending a little more time, you get the most value out of each lesson. Many learners just listen once or read an article once and move along. It's like leaving money on the table.



Now, how long did it take me to do the reading part? Well, since we're talking Chinese here, 7 times longer. I imagine it would be faster with a language that uses a romanized writing system. It took me that much longer mostly because I had to look up characters and then try to make sense of the sentences I didn't fully understand. There was a lot of back and forth between the dictionary and grammar rules.

Here's another reviewing tactic that I applied:

I'd come back just to the audio dialogs (not the full lesson) a day later and see how much I understood.

**Why?** It's easy to remember what you learned 10 minutes ago. But a day later? That's a different story.  
**That's how you measure how much you've mastered.**

The good news is - our lesson dialogues are only 30 seconds long.

So, reviewing the 30 second dialog the next day took me just one minute. And I just spent that looking words up.

**So, what have I learned by timing myself? What do I know now?**

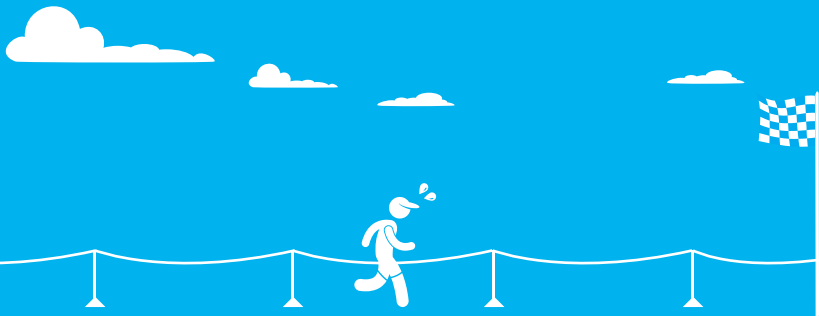
- A)** I'm not getting 100% value out of a lesson just by taking it.
- B)** My listening is improving, but I'm not quite there yet because a full 10-minute lesson takes me twice as long - 20 minutes - to completely master.
- C)** I need to spend more time on these lessons to get the most out of them.
- D)** Reviewing a lesson dialog a day later is a good way to see how much I truly remember, so I'll apply that to my routine.

Now, what about you?



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# How You Can Apply it AND My Challenge for You!



Do you know how much you truly learn within a 10 minute lesson?

There's only one way to find out — time yourself!

So here's a challenge for you. Start a timer, and take a lesson. When the lesson ends, ask yourself:

- **Were there any words and grammar points that you didn't get?**

If there are, then you're not taking full advantage of the lesson. Don't stop the timer and start filling in the gaps. Look up the words that you missed. Once you can fully understand everything in the lesson, then you can stop it.

**By doing this, you put your language to test.**

- First, you see how much you actually know at the end of 10 minutes.
- Second, you know how much extra time you need to master the lesson.

And remember, having to spend extra time is not a bad thing. Don't take it as a failure. It's an opportunity to fill in the missing gaps and reach 100% language mastery for that lesson.

**My second challenge is** — I want you to go back and review the lesson (or just the 30 second lesson dialog) the next day.

See how long it takes you.





Make that part of your goal and routine for next month.

### **Now speaking of goals...**

I finished the 60 audio dialogs despite some setbacks. I'm working on listening, but now I want to add reading into the mix.

**My next goal is to read 60 lesson dialogs.**

**The deadline? July 31st.**

**And, listeners, be sure to let me know:**

- Do you time yourself?
- Do you skim past lessons after "getting the gist of it?"
- Do you try to fill in the missing pieces?
- And, what are your goals for the month?

Shoot me an email at [inner.circle@innovativelanguage.com](mailto:inner.circle@innovativelanguage.com)

See you next month!

To your fluency,  
Peter Galante

Founder, [InnovativeLanguage.com](http://InnovativeLanguage.com)

