

MEMBERS ONLY

2017



SEPTEMBER 09

INNER CIRCLE

THIS MONTH

THE 3 POWERFUL LANGUAGE
LEARNING HABITS YOU'LL
PICK UP AT THE GYM

innovative LANGUAGE.COM

This whole picture is incredibly motivating



Welcome to the Inner Circle, listeners.

Last time, you learned...

- how to learn and master words with Spaced Repetition Flashcards
- and why this learning technique is so powerful.

For this past month, I promised to do a Chinese proficiency practice test. I did finish one. I reached my goal. But, you know how these tests are usually an hour to two hours? I didn't do it all at once. I did a little bit every day over the course of a month. Why? This approach was inspired by... the gym.

So let's jump into this Inner Circle.

THE 3 POWERFUL LANGUAGE LEARNING HABITS YOU'LL PICK UP AT THE GYM

You'll learn...

- 1. How to Approach Learning or Any Goal**
- 2. How to Find Time to Learn a Language**
- 3. Why You Don't Need the Best Possible Routine**
- 4. How I Reached My Language Goal for The Month.**

But first, let's jump into the first part.

1

How to Approach Learning or Any Goal

So I started going to the gym again this past month. The gym is great because it gives you a snapshot of where most people are with their goals.

Everyone has one goal - to get fit.

But not everyone is there yet. You have a handful of men and women that look seriously fit. Then you have around 20 or 30 people that have good, respectable physiques. And then, there's the rest. Those that are on track to obtain their goal one day, but not probably in the coming month.

I'm in that last group, at the bottom. But this whole picture is incredibly motivating. Why?

It's motivating for 3 reasons.

A. You see all 3 groups in one place. And, while you may not be at the highest level right now, you can see the possibility. Imagine you're at a place where you can have a few drinks and are surrounded other language learners. You can see the perfectly fluent speaker. You can see the intermediate speaker who's good enough. And then you can see the beginner speaker who's running out of words.

You see where you stand amongst them and where you truly want to be.



B. You can get “there” (meaning to reach your goals), simply by going and putting in the work.

With every ounce of work that you put in, every extra little push, pull, curl, press and step on the treadmill, you get closer and closer. And if you can do it over a long period of time, you’ll get there.

So, I really like this idea of “putting in the work” because it makes goals feel realistic and simple to reach.

The same goes with languages. If you want to learn more words, do the reps and do the work.

- If you’re learning 10 words a day, add 5 new words a day to your routine. These are extra little steps that will carry you to fluency in the long run.
- If you’re spending 10 minutes on a lesson a day, add 5 more minutes of review.
- If you’re practicing speaking, repeat those lines 5 more times - above what you usually do.

C. And so, everybody has a chance to succeed.

It’s just a matter of putting that work and, just as importantly, making the time to put in work.

This is where the second gym lesson comes in.



2

How to Find the Time to Learn a Language



There's a reason why the people you see at the gym daily, and especially at 10 PM on a Friday, are usually the ones with the best results.

They're consistent.

But, how do they get that level of consistency?

Every now and then, I like to ask the more fit people about their routines, what they do for work (since work occupies a large portion of our schedule), and how they find time to train.

You'd imagine they're all athletes and it's part of their job to train. Sure, there are a few. But, I've also run into accountants, business owners, dentists, and programmers. And usually, I get one of three answers.

- **One:** They have plenty of free time after work so it's a non-issue.
- **Two:** The busier ones make time regardless of what their schedule is like. Meaning, they show up at 1 AM just to fit in a session or they cancel other plans to make time.
- **Or Three:** There are those running on autopilot. Their habit is so ingrained that they don't even have to think about it.

The third one is the best. I think that's the ideal place to be.

But most people, myself included, we fall into the 2nd camp. The cold, hard truth is, we have to make time. We have to cancel other plans. We have to say no. Some people wake up earlier to squeeze in a session in the morning. Some go late at night.

It's the same exact thing with language learning. You make time.

If that level of sacrifice scares you, don't worry.

The good news is, you don't need to open up a lesson at 1 AM. That's exactly why we suggest setting small, measurable, monthly goals. That way, your daily routine is super easy to accomplish.

For example:

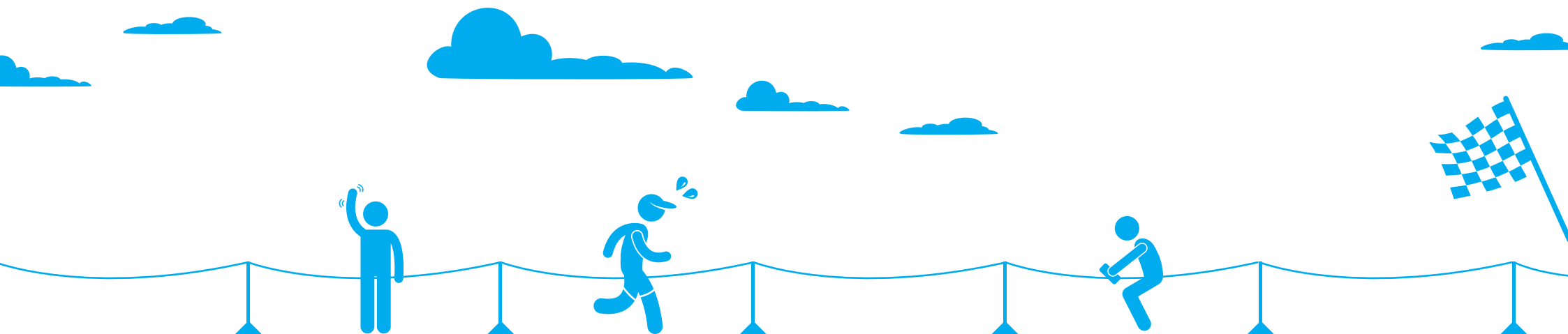
- If you're learning 100 words for the month, that's about 3 words a day.
- If you're aiming to finish 25 lessons of an audio series in a month, that's less than 1 lesson a day.

You don't have to sacrifice much time to learn 3 words or take 1 lesson. If you have 5 to 10 minutes to squeeze in a lesson on the app or review your flashcards, you're good to go.

And that's what I've been doing this past month with my language goal — doing a few test questions a day.

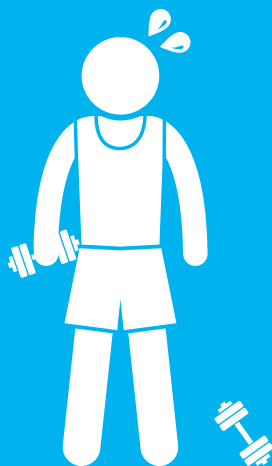
But, there is something you can learn from smart beginners and the guys in the middle camp at the gym.

Let's get into that in the third part.



3

Why You Don't Need the Best Possible Routine to Get Results



Most learners spend a lot of time worrying about “starting right” instead of “just starting” and keeping at it. And some don’t even get started at all.

It’s the same with language and with fitness.

If you start learning from a textbook and stick with it, you will see results. You’ll improve your reading, vocabulary and grammar. Of course, you won’t learn to speak well because textbooks can’t help there, but the point stands — you get results.

Same with the gym. If you start off with bicep curls, you’ll see progress in time. Not the “best” start” but it gets the job done for now.

So here's what you can learn:

The smart beginners know this. They don't look for the best way to start. They just start and keep going. Once they have a consistent routine, they start optimizing. They improve their routine.

- If you started with bicep curls, you soon realize that you can't ignore your core and your legs. So, you add some extra exercises to your routine. That's how you grow.
- **With language learning:** If you started taking 1 lesson a day and can maintain that routine, then you may realize that you want to practice speaking too. You need to shadow that lesson's conversation. So, you add shadowing to your routine. That's how you grow.

But, you will NEVER get to this point if you worry about the "best" methods and overthink yourself into inaction.

So, doing the basics is enough.

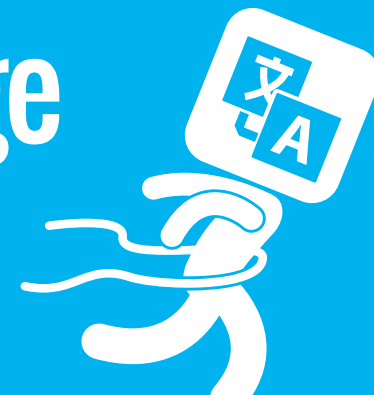
Most starting routines, learning methods are good enough as long as you start and continue. You don't need the "best" possible method right now. You could have the best possible language book but if you don't consistently use it, it's useless.

Now, what about my goal?



4

How I Reached My Language Goal for The Month.



I did a little bit every day over the course of a month.

It goes back to the idea of just putting in the time. Now with a 1 hour timed test, doing it all up front is too much. It would be like lifting 200 pounds on your first day at the gym. Too hard. Why overwhelm yourself?

What you can do is start smaller.... And put in the time.

That's what I did with the practice exam. There are about 100 questions in total, covering reading, writing, and listening. What I did was, I did 5 or 6 questions a day because I could easily make the time for that.

Aside from not overwhelming myself, the second benefit to this was — I had extra time to get the questions right, review, understand and correct my mistakes.

Does this mean I passed? No. I failed. But at least by going slowly, I know where I went wrong.

Here's my goal for next month. I'll take 2 practice tests. I want to keep putting in the time.

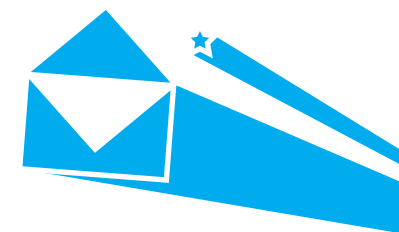
Deadline? October 31st.

Let me know what your goals are for the month.

Shoot me an email at

inner.circle@innovativelanguage.com

See you next month!



To your fluency,
Peter Galante

Founder, InnovativeLanguage.com