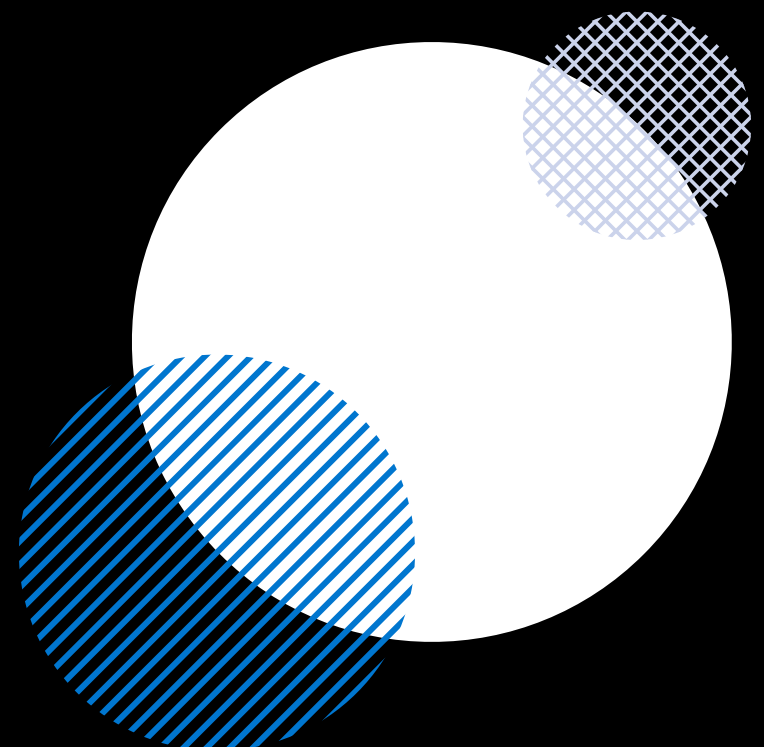
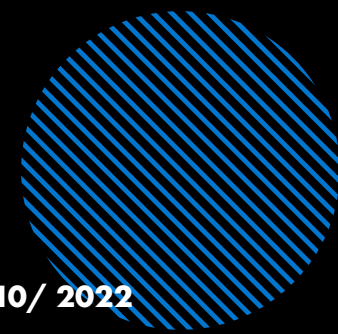




INNER CIRCLE OCTOBER



#10/ 2022

This month

Do You Record Yourself Speaking
Your Target Language?

innovative LANGUAGE.COM

WELCOME BACK TO THE INNER CIRCLE

Last time, you learned about the power of knowing what you want from the language and how being super specific with your goals helps you learn faster. This applies not only to language learning, but to any goal you have in life.

And last time, I also set a goal for 12 minutes of Hindi conversation...and I just barely scraped by. It was super close. What's also close is my end-of-year goal of 15 minutes.

Once upon a time, it was 30 minutes. But with occasional setbacks this year, it's important to know how to adjust goals for the reality of your life. That's why I'm going to take the 15 minutes.

Now, did I do anything differently to hit my language goal this month? Well...

If you've been following along, you know we talk a lot about learning tactics. The tactics are important, but I think it's my routine and consistency, more than anything, that has allowed me to reach these goals. The routine is the backbone. As long as you're putting the time in some way, you will see results with whatever tactic you're using.

That being said, there is something I've been doing for quite a while that we haven't talked much about: recording myself speaking the language.

And that's the topic of today's Inner Circle. So, let's jump into part one.



PART 1: HOW TO PRACTICE INPUT, OUTPUT & IMPROVE YOUR RECALL

INNER CIRCLE 3

Believe it or not, recording myself is one of the ways I learned Japanese many years back.

Long story short, I used to teach English in Japan, and I had one very high-level student. Most high-level speakers have lived overseas, at least in my experience. That's where they picked up or refined their skills. But this one student had never left Japan. And I asked him, "How'd you get so good?" Well, he told me his secret. Basically, he spoke to the TV and to himself. He would have a conversation with the TV, he would listen to what the actors were saying, and he'd answer them. He responded to them as if he were having a conversation with them. And when he was talking to himself, he'd describe everything he was doing that day in English.

Because it worked for him, I wanted to try it with my Japanese.

But I went a step above and actually recorded myself speaking. I wanted to get feedback. And it was so long ago that I had to use a tape recorder.

Nowadays, you can do it with a smartphone. You can instantly record an audio memo, which is so powerful.

Looking back now, there were other benefits to speaking out loud and recording myself. First, I would listen, input, and then I would speak, output. And then more input because I'd listen to my own lessons. So, input, output, input. I was practicing 2 skills at once, speaking and listening.

I couldn't judge myself perfectly, but I figured it couldn't hurt to listen to what I said. You can judge your pronunciation. It made me pay more attention to it. And the choppiness also was very good to identify.

It made me work on fluency and made me aspire to speak like a native speaker. So that's the second benefit. I became aware of my speaking style, and I actually put more effort into trying to speak better.

The third benefit I realized, later on, was that speaking out loud and hearing your own voice actually improves your memory. Studies seem to show this too.

Now, it's not easy to hear your own voice, but... the reason why listening to yourself improves your memory is because you yourself are saying it. At least, that's why the studies say it works. It's personally relevant, and it sticks better.

And it's kind of a double whammy. (1) Saying things out loud helps you remember, and (2) listening to yourself also helps you remember.

I actually ended up learning the words and phrases much better when I re-listened to my own audio recordings. Also, it might be that when you hear your own voice,

you're a little nervous, and it puts you on high alert, so you're more receptive too. But whatever it is, it helps you learn faster.

How did I do this back then?

This was twenty-five years ago, so I was using one of those old-school handheld recorders. I would get out of bed, and I'd say, "Okay, I woke up, I'm getting out of bed, I'm standing up, I'm stretching, and so on - just talking about my day. Explaining my routine. And I went through this for a bit. And once I got used to talking about my day, I eventually evolved that routine into talking about sports and other topics that I was interested in. I chose subjects that would help me communicate and increase my speaking time with people I would come into contact with every day. I'd talk about things I'm interested in, but I also learned what they were interested in.

I'd listen to my recordings a few times. I'd listen again and again until I had the chance to get feedback, which wasn't always easy back then. Sometimes I had to bribe my native-speaking friends to listen to the audio, then

record the proper way to say it. But that also made it fun. They would get to know my routine, and everything helps to build relationships.

But getting feedback wasn't always easy.

Nowadays, thankfully, it's way easier to record yourself with your phone and get feedback. That's why we have our Premium *PLUS* plan, which includes a teacher.

How I Record Myself with Hindi Now

With my Hindi, I send recordings several times a day to my Hindi teacher and get feedback within 24 hours or so.

An interesting new advantage I have is voice recognition. Before I even send my teacher a recording, I'd try to record with voice recognition to see if the actual characters appear. And if they don't appear, then I know I'm way off. So it's actually helping me refine my speaking. First, I'll say something and try to have the voice recognition recognize it. If I can't get it in three tries, I'll send it over

and ask for help. It's like a hack. But you need that human element feedback, too.

As for my process, I send three recordings a day, two or three days out of the week. One in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one in the evening.

A morning recording might say: I woke up, I ate breakfast, I brushed my teeth, and I will go to work.

In the afternoon, I might send: I ate lunch, or I am eating lunch. I'm resting. It is lunchtime.

And for the evening: I am at home. I worked. I am with my family. I will watch TV.

They're all short, practical lines. I would try to play around with the tenses sometimes, depending on what time I recorded. At first, I would only do the future or the present tense. But then I'd try to work on the past tense and practice that again and again.

At the start, you have to research everything you say, so it takes a little bit of time to get the initial script. Once you go through it one time, you have the whole script, and then it becomes super fast. Initially, it took me about 15-30 minutes to set everything up. But once I got used to it, it only took me about a minute or two to say everything. Now it's just like repetition, singing a song over and over. Now I know what I'm saying.

Once I get the basics down, I focus on coming up with sentences for the grammar I learned in the lesson or with my teacher. And then, I practice by using that grammar so that the teacher feels like I'm really applying myself. A few times a week or a few times a month, I have to update the scripts. Updating the scripts takes about 15-30 minutes as I research and get it verified. But once the script is set, it's just a few minutes.

I record, listen to the recording, and send it off to my teacher for feedback. I adjust with the feedback and repeat that process until the teacher says it's ok. But now, with voice recognition and preparation, I usually get it right.

You don't have to do it this way. There are a few ways you can apply this whole speaking, recording, and listening tactic with our system. So let's get into part two.

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PART 2: HOW TO APPLY THIS TACTIC

If you want to practice speaking and listening and improve your recall at the same time, you should try speaking out loud, recording yourself, listening to that recording, and getting feedback if you can. This allows you to practice speaking even when you don't have access to a teacher or a native speaker or only have limited time with a teacher. You can maximize your speaking practice time on your own time.

At the most basic level, all you have to do is pull out your smartphone, open the voice recording app, and record yourself saying some lines in your target language. Doing it once won't be enough. You need to make it part of your routine.

Since you're learning with our system and already have that routine going, here's what you can do:

One: Use the voice recorder tool inside our lessons

You'll find this study tool inside the dialogue section of every lesson. Just click on the microphone icon next to each line. The goal is to hear the native speaker say a line, repeat what they say into the voice recorder, and then compare yourself to them. Do that for the entire lesson dialog. You'll be able to practice speaking and listening and sharpen your pronunciation as well.

If you're already taking our lessons, this will be an easy tactic to add to your routine because the voice recorder is in every lesson. So be sure to do this with every lesson.

Two: Take the Hand-Graded Assessments

These Premium *PLUS* assessments test you on writing and speaking. They're graded by real teachers, and you'll find them peppered throughout your recommended learning pathway.

The way they work is you'll be asked to record a quick dialogue or speech as a way to test your speaking skills, and then our teachers will grade it and give it back to you.

This is a great way to practice speaking and get corrected at your own pace without having to find a teacher. You can also retake the assessments for more practice or to try and get a better grade.

Three: Send recordings of yourself speaking to your Premium *PLUS* teacher

You can do this with the Premium *PLUS* messenger on the site or on the App. Your approach here is up to you, but I think the learners that get the best results with this are the ones that create routines for themselves. For example, we have learners who recite the lesson conversation out loud and pass that to their teacher. You can also send three recordings a day, talking about your routine. That's what I did. We even have learners who send recordings of their example sentences from the grammar rules they learn.

If you're not a Premium *PLUS* member, you can use your smartphone to record yourself and ask a native speaker for feedback. But whichever tactic you apply, be sure to listen to your own recordings as well.

This will help you remember the words, phrases, and grammar rules. And even if you can't judge your pronunciation, you can always tell if your speaking is choppy or a little slow. This will help you improve your speaking overall.

Now let's talk about goals.

Last time I went for 12 minutes, so this time I'll go for 15 minutes. This is actually my end-of-the-year goal. I figure I'll try to push myself a little harder this month. That way, if I reach it, I can up my goal next month, and if not, I have a fallback to finish the original goal. I took a look at my upcoming schedule, and I have a little more leeway, so I'll try to push myself a little harder.

The deadline is November 30th. Let us know what your measurable monthly goal is.

Email us at inner.circle@innovativelanguage.com, and stay tuned for the next Inner Circle.