

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Inner Circle S1 #15

March 2015: Exceed Expectations

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INTRO

Becky: Welcome to a special Inner Circle Audio Lesson! I'm Becky and I'll be your host. My co-host today is the founder of InnovativeLanguage.com... Peter Galante!

Peter: Hi everyone! Peter here.

Becky: In this Inner Circle, we're talking about the secret to boosting your speaking skills..

Peter: ...so that you can talk comfortably in your language...

Becky: ...and how to exceed your own expectations through preparation.

Peter: You'll learn why you should prepare for conversations ahead of time...

Becky: ...how Peter applied this tactic and beat his Spanish goal for the month...

Peter: ..and how you can prepare for conversations in your target language.

BODY

Becky: Listeners, welcome back to the Inner Circle.

Peter: Last time, you learned about language learning failure.

Becky: Why most learners fail before they even start their language goal...

Peter: ...How you can bounce back in the most effective way...

Becky: And of course, how Peter failed his first monthly goal of 2015.

Peter: You really had to bring that back up, didn't you Becky?

Becky: I had to! Everyone talks about success. Failure is an honest, refreshing topic,

Peter.

Peter: You're right. My Spanish definitely had a rocky start. I couldn't get the motivation...

Becky: ...then you failed your goal for February.

Peter: Believe me, Becky. Up until this month, I felt defeated and unmotivated.

Becky: Okay, so how did your Spanish goal for March go then? You promised to find a Spanish tutor....

Peter: ... and reach 1 minute of Spanish conversation.

Becky: So did you do both this time? Or did life happen again?

Peter: Becky, not only did I reach 1 minute, but I actually hit 3 minutes of conversation with my new Spanish tutor!

Becky: What? Wait, how did that happen?

Peter: It's funny. After failing, I really had low expectations.

Becky: Yeah, but 3 minutes is a lot! What did you do differently this month?

Peter: First, I have to say, I was really lucky to find a great tutor.

Becky: That's definitely going to help!

Peter: It is, but really it comes down to preparation. And that's the topic of today's Inner Circle.

Becky: How To Exceed Your Expectations and Improve Speaking Through Preparation.

Peter: In this Inner Circle, you're going to

learn....

Becky: number 1 - Why you should prepare for conversations ahead of time...

Peter: number 2 - How my preparation helped me speak for up to 3 minutes...

Becky: And number 3 - How you can prepare for conversations in your target language...

Peter: ...and exceed your own expectations.

Becky: Speaking of expectations, I think most learners don't expect much of themselves.

Peter: I think you're right, Becky. Especially with speaking. Most learners just aren't confident.

Becky: But you went from failing these past 2 months to hitting 3 minutes.

Peter: Believe me Becky, I had extremely low expectations too. It took me a while to get ahold of this tutor.

Becky: Ah, I see.

Peter: But because I had extra time before the tutor and I started our lessons, I decided to prepare a bit more.

Becky: That makes sense. What did you do?

Peter: Here's how I prepared. I started taking SpanishPod101 lessons. More specifically, the Top 25 Questions You Need to Know series.

Becky: Ah, I know those lessons. You can learn the top questions and answers used in most conversations.

Peter: Yep, and that's exactly why I chose this series before my Skype lessons with

the tutor.

Becky: Listeners, this series covers questions and answers such as...

Peter: 'What's your name?' and 'Where do you come from?' right down to...

Becky: ...'Do you like Spanish food?' and 'Can you say it in Spanish?'

Peter: Basically, everything I'd ever need when talking to my tutor for the first time.

Becky: Or any new person. So you went through the whole series?

Peter: I did. I studied this series for the first two weeks of March before my Skype lessons actually started. I'd listen to about two lessons a day and spend 30 minutes in total. As I listened, I'd write down my own answers to these questions.

Becky: Ah, so you could prepare your very own answers to the questions.

Peter: Exactly. And afterwards, I reviewed all the lessons in the series.

Becky: Alright, so you prepared for the first two weeks. What about the actual Skype lessons?

Peter: Okay, I had low expectations for the lesson with my Spanish tutor. I failed before and I wasn't expecting much from my Spanish skills.

Becky: I completely understand. It's hard to feel like you're "good enough" with a language.

Peter: And even worse, the only time I could book this lesson is really late, 11 at night!

Becky: Hmm, this almost sounds like a recipe for another failure.

Peter: It does, doesn't it? I mean, we spoke about getting into routine and 11 o'clock is late. It actually threw off my other routines. So I'd failed the two months. My very first lesson was late into March. And it was 11 at night after a long day. So I wasn't

expecting much but here's what happened. My tutor, she was very well prepared.

Becky: And you just dived into the lesson?

Peter: Well, we dove into the basics. Spanish numbers, days of the week, months, basic grammar and...

Becky: And?

Peter: And it was a little too easy.

Becky: Really?

Peter: Remember, I learned Italian last year. And Italian is not that far off from Spanish. A lot of the words sound similar to Spanish. So I was able to use what I learned from Italian to progress really fast in my first lesson.

Becky: Wait, so your Spanish Skype tutor actually ran out of material for the lesson?

Peter: Becky, she was scrambling! I mean, before, I had mentioned I had never studied before so we moved from counting to 1 to 10 on to speaking in purely Spanish. And I think she thought I wasn't a real beginner!

Becky: Sounds like she was on to you!

Peter: Becky, she was definitely shocked that this was my first real Spanish lesson ever.

Becky: Huh, I can see how it turned into a great lesson.

Peter: That's where the preparation came in. Because I prepared with the Top 25 Questions You Need to Know Lessons, I had things to ask and talk about. I was able to take control of the lesson and the conversation.

Becky: So it wasn't just her talking at you the entire

time.

Peter: Exactly. And listeners, this is what helped me reach 3 minutes of Spanish conversation.

Becky: This brings us to the first point:

Peter: Why you should prepare for conversations ahead of time.

Becky: I always thought that you couldn't prepare for conversations. They're spontaneous.

Peter: Yes and no. First, imagine meeting someone for the first time.

Becky: And imagine both of you will go through some common questions.

Peter: Exactly. Like "Where are you from?" and "How long have you been studying Spanish?"

Becky: Ah, and The Top 25 Questions series covers these kinds of questions. Is that what you did?

Peter: Yep. After we ran through her lesson material, I switched over and asked my Skype tutor where she was from.

Becky: I see what you mean now. By preparing, you had extra things to talk about.

Peter: Exactly. And when I asked her "where you're from," she was a bit taken aback. How did you know how to ask that? She asked. My tutor, it turned out she's from Spain. Then, she told me her hometown and while we were chatting, I quickly looked up for her hometown on TripAdvisor in my browser.

Becky: Oh, that's a good idea.

And then I found the top 5 tourist attractions. I started making basic comments about them using the sentence structures she showed me. Then I moved onto

restaurants, landmarks and all sorts of things from her hometown. Becky, what do you think her response was?

Becky: I'm sure she was excited.

Peter: She was stunned! She started to get excited and speak really fast in Spanish so I kind of had to slow her down. The point was, the conversation was completely in Spanish and it was very, very interesting.

Becky: I can imagine. So listeners, although you can't always plan out future conversations like this...

Peter: You can always prepare questions you'd like to ask, as well as answers.

Becky: This gives you a lot of talking points to use. Things you ask and talk about with a native speaker.

Peter: And if you're running out of things to say, simply jump into another talking point.

Becky: So that's why you should prepare: You have more to talk about...

Peter: And you don't end up running out of things to say!

Becky: Peter, how did this process work for you exactly?

Peter: Well Becky, that brings us to the second point.

Becky: How preparation helped Peter reach 3 minutes of Spanish conversation.

Peter: Once we switched over to Spanish conversation, I'll admit I cheated a little.

Becky: Here it comes. I knew it, Peter. I knew 3 minutes sounded too good to be true!

Peter: (laughs) What I did was... I had the entire curriculum for SpanishPod101's Top 25 Questions Series on the side opened in the

browser.

Becky: Listeners, you can find series curriculum for any lesson series by clicking on “Explore Curriculum” on the series’ page.

Peter: This shows all the dialogues, lines, grammar points, and vocabulary from the entire series on one page.

Becky: It’s very handy for when you want to get a snapshot for a series.

Peter: So, I had the 25 questions and answers on the side. I already knew them of course...

Becky: ...But it was probably helpful to be able to refer to them.

Peter: That’s right. So that’s how our conversation began. As I said earlier, I asked where she was from.

Becky: And did you just jump from question to question?

Peter: Oh no. After answering, she’d ask me the same question - where I’m from.

Becky: Sounds like a normal conversation, actually! You’re going back and forth.

Peter: Exactly! And the key point is, it’s me and the teacher, two people. So the conversation can be controlled. When you’re in a setting with more than two people, it’s very hard to control a conversation. So, we talked about her hometown. I told her I live in Tokyo. And once we exhausted one of the questions from the Top 25, we moved onto the next. I simply checked the curriculum to find the next question and...

Becky: ... you’d extend the conversation.

Peter: Exactly. Since we talked about her hometown and the restaurants there, I asked her if she liked Spanish food.

Becky: That’s another question from the Top 25 Question

series.

Peter: Becky, we specifically made that series to make speaking easier!

Becky: Nice! So overall, you were using the questions as talking points, you extended the conversation...

Peter: ...And before I knew it, it was midnight. Our conversation passed 3 minutes at one point!

Becky: All because you had prepared with the Top 25 Question Series.

Peter: No secret to it, Becky. I learned the questions and answers directly from the lessons...

Becky: ...You built up a solid supply of things to talk about...

Peter: ...and it made speaking Spanish a lot easier. I knew what I had to say. I was able to answer her questions. And Becky, I was blown away because I had such low expectations before the lesson...

Becky: ...But you exceeded your 1 minute goal!

Peter: And I definitely exceeded my expectations for Spanish.

Becky: I bet you're a lot more motivated now, right?

Peter: You have no idea, Becky. In fact, my biggest motivation now is to impress my Skype tutor with my progress!

Becky: Alright, so how can our listeners exceed their own expectations? And how can they prepare with our learning system?

Peter: That's our third point, let's look at it.

Becky: 3) How you can prepare for conversations in your target

language...

Peter: Listeners, the most important takeaway is...

Becky: You should actually prepare for conversations. Most learners think that conversations are unplanned and spontaneous...

Peter: ...and while that may be true to an extent...

Becky: ...If you're not prepared, you'll run out of things to say.

Peter: This is a very common mistake beginners make.

Becky: They run out of words and the native speaker quickly realizes that they're dealing with a beginner.

Peter: And that's it. Game over. Conversation over.

Becky: Also, realize that there are questions and phrases that you use on a daily basis. It's good to know them ahead of time.

Peter: For example, when you meet someone new, you'll always ask things like....

Becky: What's your name? How old are you? How long have you been studying for?

Peter: Now that you know how important preparing is...

Becky: Check out the Top 25 Questions You Need to Know Lesson Series.

Peter: You'll learn the most common questions and answers used in conversations.

Becky: Just listen to the lessons. Repeat out loud. Then, put what you learn to use.

Peter: These will serve as talking points so you can keep your conversations going.

Becky: And print out the Curriculum so you can review all of the lessons at

once.

Peter: Exactly. So, as you're talking, you can take a quick glance...

Becky: ...and know what to talk about next.

Peter: This will allow you to control conversations and ask questions...

Becky: ...instead of just having the native speaker ask you all the questions.

Peter: In other words, you will sound like a fluid, confident and experienced speaker.

Becky: And if you're looking for specific talking points to prepare...

Peter: For example sports, holidays, food or anything you're interested in...

Becky: ...write them down! Write down any lines you'd like to say in your target language.

Peter: Then, search our site for those topics and you'll find entire lessons based around them.

Peter: ...or if you're a Premium PLUS user, get in touch with your teacher via My Teacher.

Becky: ...and try a conversation with them. They will help you every step of the way.

Peter: You have questions to ask from the Top 25 Questions You Need to Know Lesson Series. Actually, that's what I did right after my Skype lesson. I sent my Premium PLUS teacher a message, asking her several questions I used in the lesson.

Becky: Great! So, you'll now be learning with the SpanishPod101 Teacher?

Peter: I will. And that's more opportunity for me to improve, get more talking points, and speak and write more

Spanish.

Becky: Alright. You exceeded the initial goal. You reached 3 minutes.

Peter: I did. Now, for my April goal, listeners, I'm going to aim for 5 minutes of Spanish conversation.

Becky: Listeners, be sure to set your monthly goals as well.

Peter: And share them with us. Question for you, listeners. Do you prepare for conversations ahead of time?

Becky: Do you note down talking points that you'd want to talk about in your target language?

Peter: And has it helped you improve your speaking skills?

Becky: Shoot us an email at inner dot circle at innovative language dot com.

Peter: And we'll see you next month!

OUTRO

Becky: Well, that's going to do it for this special Inner Circle lesson!

Peter: Bye everyone!

Becky: Thanks for listening, and we'll see you next time.