"It is much easier to learn another language when you are young, enthusiastic and unembarrassed." (M. Jacques)

LANGUAGE SKILLS

October 24, 2017

Rhys Tramacchi: I think that another thing that I've noticed since learning languages and being interested in languages is that I'm actually very easily influenced by things that is- are around me. (Hmm) So one of the ways that I think I practice Japanese was mimicking people on the train, so I guess I have done the shadowing in that way, like not listening to like a recording and mimicking that but, like just mimicking people that pass me by on the street or on the train.

José Cruz: So, so what- So they pass you by on the street and a couple of people are speaking…

Rhys: I might hear them say like a phrase, and I'm like, "oh that's a cool phrase", I'm like, oh…

José: Spit it out as soon as you can, right? OK?

Rhys: Yeah soon as I can.

José: OK well then that's -that's it's own form of long-form shadowing. Um or, I would call it long form mimicking so you're doing full sentences. You're actually capable of absorbing the entire sentence or maybe 85-90% of it, maybe a syllable mistake here or there (Hmm) and then just spitting it out as a sentence. Whereas with shadowing you're going uh, mostly syllable by syllable or maybe word by word (Ah) because most people

don't know enough vocabulary to be able to suck up an entire sentence and remember it (Mm) in sequence (Yeah) so you're you're a pretty high level. And I think that indicates that you have- Obviously you have a particular talent for it, but if you're good at mimicking, that means that your brain- you you might be gifted with a brain that is particularly good for languages. (Hmm) Which means…

Rhys: I hope so. That's my major. He he.

José: Right. Which means that until about 25, 26, everybody's different but- that your brain peaks and then starts to deteriorate for your ability to learn language. (Really) So just keep stuffing it in as hard as you can. However, um there have been cases of people who like at 80 years old and they start a language, and at 82 years old they're speaking at native- fluently. (That's crazy) Yeah well that's that's weird. You know, there's something- **I don't want to** say wrong but very special (Yeah special) about your your neural connections. But most of it is around 26 27 so just keep stuffing it in there.

Rhys: Well like since from doing all this mimicking and like language practice, I've noticed that I am actually influenced by books that I'd read. So this author has a particular way of writing and after I'd finished reading that series or book, my

English was kind of like the book that I'd just read. And then after I read another book **it'd change** to that author's kind of style. And- it's just things that I notice now that I'm actually thinking about languages so much.

José: Great! Which means that um, your choice of model is particularly important.

Rhys: Yeah. **Because** I'm easily influenced.

José: Right. So if- whi- which is good news because like, you just have to choose your your most favourite speaker. The guy that you think, "This guy has the most eloquent style, has the most beautiful voice," and just mimic it you know, you're you're a, you're a crow, you're a parrot. He he.

Rhys: He he I'm a parrot.

José: You just get in there you know and just start doing it. I I- I'm now envious. I mean if you can pick it up that quickly. That's fantastic.

Rhys: Aw quickly, I wouldn't call it quickly, it takes me like a **good** couple of weeks to read a series of books, or…

José: Yeah but you learned Japanese in effectively two years man? I'm envious. I mean anybody shou-

Rhys: Well. I've now been learning for four years **so**. (But didn't you) Like I'm assu- like- After that first year I thought to myself like, "Oh I can do this" now, like **I don't know**. I had enough confidence in myself to be able to like, order at a restaurant, and ask for directions and kind of have small conversations on the phone. After that second year, I did improve, I know I did. (Mm hmm) And then I came back to Australia, (Mm hmm) and I don't know if I improved over that time, but I think again I did.

Word count	Time	Words/Min.
731	3:45	194.93

Pointers:

I don't want to: José says this so quickly you can barely understand, (1:55)

it'd change: Rhys says "**It'd**" (it would) very quickly (2:27)

Because: pronounced, "**KUHZ**" (2:40)

good: colloquially to mean"**slightly more than**" (3:08)

so: some native speakers have a habit of deferentially ending a sentence with the conjunction "**So**" (3:19)

I don't know: colloquially to mean"**perhaps.**" Rhys says this so quickly (3:25)

Discussion:

List the benefits of knowing how to speak more than one language.

Which languages would you like to be able to speak?

Why do you think you are good / bad at learning languages?