

Listener Interview 001: May from Malaysia

Full Transcript

Kevin: Hi everybody! Welcome to A to Z English. Today Jack and I are trying something new. We're gonna be starting to interview our listeners and we have our first listener today who is May Fong from Malaysia actually and May hi.

May: Good evening!

Jack: Hi!

May: Good evening!

Jack: Thank you for joining us. This is very cool.

Kevin: Yes, thank you.

May: Thank you for inviting me too!

Jack: It's our pleasure yeah well yeah yeah.

Kevin: I agree and because we are on an English podcast of course I'd like to know well how long have you been studying English for?

May: Um yeah, obviously I'm learning English from school during my school time. That means from primary until secondary school but then um after study I have honestly I've forgotten most of my English like grammar tenses and all that okay and then I started to reinforce all my English language skills since 2020.

Kevin: Oh, so just a couple years?

May: Yeah. Where at that time I got a study grant from Malaysia okay it's it is basically a three-month English course so yeah I studied it and with one um e-learning company so okay yeah

Kevin: That's great and it's a Malaysian company?

May: It is not a Malaysian company actually, it's um I can call it national company.

Jack: So how long was the gap where you stopped studying English and then you started again? Was it like five years or longer than that?

May: Honestly, I had not been studying English since the day I left school. I should say that so yeah I'm speaking English on a daily basis but then I just I just speak. I don't know whether what or whatever I speak is correct or not and why do we why do I say things in such a way, so yeah, I just speak English but uh I understand.

Jack: So after school you continued to use English? You spoke English but you weren't studying formally until 2020? You started studying again more formally?

May: Okay yeah for me I study again.

Kevin: Okay and so you if you started studying a couple years ago again and first you started studying with that program right with that three-month course which is great, but now you listen to podcasts and thank you for listening to our podcast of course but what other, how do you self-study? What do you do to = help you improve?

May: Okay. I will watch videos on YouTube okay basically where the moment I finished that the online class so I did I did not stop there so uh every day I will go to YouTube and then I will search for whatever video that I think interesting and important for me to learn.

Kevin: Yeah and are these videos specifically English videos like English grammar pronunciation or is it just some other random video that you're interested in but it's in English?

May: Um I started learning grammar learning then from there and then I search for also search for listening daily conversation vocabulary lessons and anything any I mean almost anything just anything that English language.

Kevin: Sure okay and I'm curious to ask, you said you watch a lot of YouTube videos but something that you have told us is that you are visually impaired right? It's hard for you to see the screen and you have a voice screen reader reading to you which is very cool. So what do you find useful about YouTube? You're not really watching the videos, right? You're just listening to them.

May: Okay on YouTube all the videos okay I can see all the video most of the video come with audio so I will just listen to the audio and then whenever there is a word that I don't understand I will read this subtitle. From there I can pick up the words. Then I will go and look into the dictionary. That's how I learn.

Jack: Oh wow, so you as you watch the videos, everything that you understand you keep running the video but if you find a word that you that you're not familiar with you will look it up and find the definition and then go back to the video and then finish the video?

May: Yes correct. I will pause the video and then I will check it out on the dictionary. I'll check it out in the dictionary then that's how I live.

Jack: That's great! A great way to do it is checking the dictionary for anyone yeah.

Kevin: Did you learn any interesting words today?

May: Um not today.

Kevin: That's okay, um but soon.

May: Usually I will do my, I'll start learning at night time like um after 8 00 pm okay 8 pm so I'll go on YouTube and see what is interesting.

Jack: And how many hours do you spend every day on learning English and watching videos or podcasts?

May: Um I have no specific hours of day. About one or two hours.

Kevin: Nice! Wow, that's great. One or two hours every day is very good. I need to do more Korean every day, I do maybe two minutes, very small. That's funny, um, so May you're very busy on our

Whatsapp group. How and and that's great we we love to encourage our listeners to participate I in the website. It's good to see.

Jack: Yeah it's great to see and um how as uh um as a person who is visually impaired, how do you how do you do that? How do you participate do you um do you record your voice usually or do you type? I mean how does what does the what is the technology that you use to interact on our Whatsapp group?

May: Okay there's a software. Basically, it's a screen reader okay um different type of software like on my laptop the software I use is called NVDA basically this this software will read whatever things appear on the screen okay. Let's say when I'm browsing a website so when I move the cursor around the software read for me okay what is currently showing on the screen whether it's a link it's a heading it's a there's some chat box of um something that I can click on to get more details things.

Kevin: So, you move the cursor around the screen and it gives you a kind of uh um of mental a mental picture mental like information so you can kind of get an idea of what is on the screen well what about images. Does it also describe images as well?

May: Okay it is depends on the website and the apps created by the provider. KSM created it in a very friendly way of redline user where they labels all the images with proper words so for that kind of a picture. Yes the system or the screen reader will describe but sometimes they are also challenges for me as a blind user where the I mean the provider did not label all the images graphic so that is the challenge for me.

Kevin: Yeah may that's something that I've seen because for our website our A to Z English podcast website I'm the person who makes the website and so I've seen when I put up a picture or when I put something up it often tells me make a good description for blind people and so I have to remember so if my website is not good enough yet please tell me and I will go add better descriptions but we don't have too many pictures yet.

May: It is good if you can consider this people with disability. I mean the need of people with disabilities so that you know yes can also read whatever on your website.

Kevin: So it is actually good. Yeah I will I will keep that in mind for people like you so thank you for the reminder.

Jack: Yeah I noticed that you also like to post memes as well and uh is that is that a challenge to because uh it seems like you have you're really good at uh posting memes as well is that because the picture description is really good or okay?

May: For the picture that I posted, I mean, they're all the pictures that I post every morning. I got it from a Facebook page okay yeah I mean on Facebook what I most of the picture and it can be I mean the screen reader can describe it properly so that's how I got it and I post it in the group. I share it in the group.

Jack: So you search on Facebook and you find something that's funny and and interesting and then you put it into the Whatsapp group.

May: Yeah I shared it if there was a group and also some of my friends like morning greetings.

Kevin: That's great and why do you enjoy using our English Whatsapp group? How is that helpful for you?

May: Every day okay actually I was learning English with Robin's channel. like Shaw English Daily English homework.

Kevin: Yeah he's great.

May: That's all very good. So from there I was you guys who always joined the what's up good job there was some bro so I I clicked the link to join the group and that's how I come into the group yeah

Jack: How do you uh how do you listen to the podcast? Do you listen to it on your smartphone or do you listen to it on the computer? I'm just curious. What's your favorite way to listen to a podcast?

May: It can be done in both way actually but most of the time I'll listen at home. That means I will use my laptop to listen.

Kevin: Uh so are you listening from our webpage?

May: Yes from your webpage.

Kevin: Oh that's great! That means I need to make the webpage better if you're using your own page.

Jack: Blame Kevin blame Kevin.

Kevin: Yes that's my um that's for me you you said that you have this special software that helps you describe the screen.

Jack: And how like how long have like what was the process I I'm guess I'm wondering like when did you how long have you been visually impaired is this something that was from the time you were born or did it happen later in life? Did you lose your sight later?

May: I was blind since I was born so that means when I was kid I started to learn I mean at that time there is no computer no internet right I think so we will learn for blind people. We will learn some uh braille. Have you heard about it?

Kevin: Yes of course.

May: Braille is a method for to assist blind people to read. It's a traditional way actually. It's a traditional way and actually it's um we are still using it until it until now the only thing is nowadays we have computer so we have um screen readers so most of the time we are using them.

Kevin: Yeah and I know Jack and I talked in an episode not too long ago about technology and it's so amazing because when I was a kid the technology would be impossible for blind people to use the internet and now you browse the internet just as well as anyone else.

Jack: You're a pro internet user and meme sharer and on social networks. I'm sure you're much better than I am at browsing the internet. I'm not very good with computers to be honest.

Kevin: Yeah we're we're old people.

May: Yeah okay they're actually this can do most of the things for blind like the light user

only sometimes there are challenges but of course overall it helps.

Jack: Yeah that's what fantastic to hear. Yeah what is the what's maybe the biggest challenge um when using a screen reader? It's something that you if you if you could design your own software is there something you would change to improve it?

May: The biggest challenge I could say will be when the provider created the website um as I mentioned earlier not friendly to blind users like they didn't label the image and the graphic and then one more thing is um they I mean uh for your information blind user doesn't use a mouse when navigate while navigating a computer all right so yeah so we use only keyboard only keyboard that means we have to remember most of the keyboard commands.

Kevin: So you do know all of the pro commands, at least the main keyboard command the important ones?

May: Right of course you'll need oh yeah when something is created on they created something where we can only click by the mouse or move around by the mouse that is the biggest challenge sure

Kevin: Interesting right yeah well May this is all very interesting to hear. It's so very cool that you're able even without being able to see the internet you're able to watch YouTube's from Robin's channel and you're able to listen to our podcast. That's so fantastic what the internet does for you today. I have one final question for you if because again we're an English learning podcast if you could give everyone a tip, what would you tell someone who wants to learn English how can they how can they learn what do you think was helpful?

May: Um well there's a lot there's a there are a lot of free um learning channel learning tips learning exercises learning lessons on the internet so you just have to browse through it that's all you can learn okay actually yeah like The A to Z English Podcast.

Kevin: Yep of course. Yeah that's great, so May, thank you very much for joining and for everyone else out there who's listening, we have a Whatsapp channel that we were talking about here and if you want to come and talk to us in our Whatsapp channel and maybe even talk to us here on an interview episode you can find all of the links and everything from our hopefully friendly website absolutely thanks very much nice to talk to you!

Jack: thank you so much

Whatsapp Group Link: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/H4LaiLAUc5SEiaxBp16aEp>