



46 Experiences

2.46 English-speaking people will often ask you about how and where you learned English. Michael Robertson is talking with Elena Chekhov at a convention.

Elena: That was an interesting seminar. What did you think?

Michael: Yes, I learned a lot. It was pretty difficult though!

Elena: Mm, some of it was hard to follow for a foreigner like me!

Michael: I don't know. Your English is excellent, Elena.

Elena: Thank you. You're very kind, but I know I make mistakes.



1 Listen and highlight the compliments that Michael gives Elena.

2 Often people 'reject' compliments (*Thank you, but ...*). Highlight Elena's responses to the compliments.

3 Practice the conversation. Use expressions from the box.

Compliment	Accepting the compliment	'Rejecting' the compliment
You speak English very well.	Thank you very much.	But I make a lot of mistakes.
You have a good accent.	That's kind of you.	But I don't know enough vocabulary.
I understand everything you say.	You're kind to say so.	But I find listening hard.
You've worked very hard.	That's a nice thing to say.	But I need to study more.

Michael: I haven't heard any yet. Where did you learn English?

Elena: At school in Russia for five years, then I went to a language school in Britain for three months. But I'm still learning. I study books and videos.

Michael: I'm very impressed.

Elena: Reading and writing isn't too hard for me. But I find listening more difficult. There are so many accents! And people speak too fast.

Michael: It sounds like that! Actually they say English is one of the slowest languages.

Elena: I've heard that too, but I don't believe it!

Michael: Well, I wish I could speak a foreign language as well as you.

Elena: Thank you. But I have a Russian accent.

Michael: Everyone has an accent. I have a Canadian accent. You speak better English than a lot of native-speakers!

Elena: I don't think so, but it's very nice of you to say so.



4 **2.47** Listen to Wilbur Meeks. He's invited Max Devereux to his home. Ask and answer:

How many languages does Wilbur speak?

Where did he study French?

How long has Wilbur been learning Spanish?

When did he begin?

How does he study at home?

5 Look at the questions above. Interview your partner about their language learning experiences.

Culture File **46** Compliments