

Paolo is talking to his teacher about some techniques to help him assess his progress in learning English.

Teacher: Paulo, you've been trying out some self-assessment techniques. How have things been working out?

Paulo: Good, I think. It's been useful.

Teacher: The first thing you decided to do was the learner diary.

Paulo: Yes. At the end of each day I write everything down in my diary. I write what we do in class. Then I write about my feelings: If I enjoy activities or find them boring. This part was difficult for me.

Teacher: Why?

Paulo: I felt unable to write anything negative. Everything was "good" at first.

Teacher: But nobody needs to read your diary, Paulo. You can write anything.

Paulo: Well, a few days ago I had an awful class. It was hot, I was tired, the grammar was difficult. I wrote exactly what I thought in my diary.

Teacher: And did you reflect on this?

Paulo: Yes.

Teacher: And?

Paulo: The same thing happened a few times. I realised that it usually happened in the reading classes. One of my problems was "time". I felt rushed.

Teacher: So what are your conclusions?

Paulo: I spoke to the teacher about it. He thought I needed to practise my reading skills to try to read faster. I don't read much at all. So I think he had a point.

Teacher: Have you done anything about this?

Paulo: I've started reading the newspaper every morning. I time myself and see how quickly I can get the information. It works.

Teacher: Have you noticed a difference in class?

Paulo: I've got a reading class today. I'll tell you later!

Teacher and Paulo: (laugh)

Teacher: And the "progress cards". Have you been using them?

Paulo: Yes, they're great.

Teacher: Good. Why?

Paulo: They don't take up too much time. And,

Teacher: Yes?

Paulo: They work. I prepared one yesterday before my Speaking class. The teacher helped me. I wrote three things in the first column; Listen and understand a news programme, listen and understand a list of ten numbers and write a dictation with less than five mistakes.

Teacher: How did it go?

Paulo (laughing): Well, I ticked all three things in my column before the class. I was convinced I could do it. I'm good at listening. After the class, I had to tick number one and number three and put a cross by number two.

Teacher: The numbers?

Paulo: Yes, I got four wrong! But the cards worked.

Teacher: Yes?

Paulo: Well, I was surprised about the numbers. I'd expected to have three ticks. I wasn't happy about the cross. I asked the teacher how I could improve things and he had an idea.

Teacher: Yes?

Paulo: To listen to the business news on the radio. They talk about numbers a lot. I listen and write down the numbers. It's useful.

Teacher: So the cards helped you to identify a weak point.

Paulo: Exactly. A weak point that won't exist soon!

Teacher: You sound determined!

Paulo: I am!

Teacher: What about the recordings? Have you taped yourself speaking?

Paulo: Now that was embarrassing - *(fade out)*