

MY FUTURE PLANS AS A POLYGLOT

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Abstract: This article discusses my future plans as a polyglot.

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It's not all work and no play, though. The post reminded me that keeping up your languages isn't about interminable formal study sessions, or filling all your spare moments with strict *heads-down books-open* calendar scheduling. There *is* a place for that, of course, and many of us happily geek out over it.

But too much intensity will burn the shine off anything in the long run.

One antidote to this is to foster brief but very regular habits, or daily tactics. These draw on the trusty old *little but often* approach. But there's a second, even simpler method for working this sage advice into your day: *putting language in your path*. Create an environment in which you naturally bump up against foreign language material in the course of your day-to-day, even when not *officially* studying.

MULTILINGUAL MANIFESTO

Setting this environment up requires just a little initial planning. It involves putting together a *multilingual manifesto*: a plethora of personal polyglot policies which create effortless exposure to language.

These tweaks, or *displacements*, help shift your focal centre to target language interactions with the media around you. Most importantly, they are dotted around, and embedded within you day. They are the kind of activities that work just as well for one or two languages as they do for handfuls of them at the same time – especially if you have both active and maintenance projects.

Here are a couple of my own personal favourites for levering in the languages almost imperceptibly!

LANGUAGES ON DRIP

I am a news junkie. I can't help it – I just love knowing what's going on. Under normal circumstances, I will be checking live UK news outlets multiple times a day. *Yes, I acknowledge that this can be an unhealthy addiction in current times!*

Predictably, bad news fatigue prompted me to make a change-up in my life. But this change-up could be useful; I decided that overseas, foreign-language news sources would now be *my first port of call*.

First, I shuffled my links and icons so that foreign sources (like the excellent NRK app from Norway) were more accessible. Next, I turned *off* notifications from English-language news apps, and turned *on* those in other languages. This is incredibly

useful; I now get regular snippets popping up on my phone in multiple languages. I hear a *ping*, and get a little reading tester in any one of my languages. Bite-sized practice, drip-fed at regular intervals: perfect.

There's another positive side-effect. The news is engaging again – the Fleet Street-induced media fatigue has subsided!

SUBTITLES AND CHILL

News-fixing via notifications is the perfect example of a zero effort change to make language pop up in your everyday. Another is to tweak your defaults on streaming services like Netflix and Amazon Prime.

Of course, the obvious (and most full-on) language learning advice for using streaming is to watch foreign language series or shows *dubbed* into your language(s). But that can be quite hard work, and there is actually no need to max it out *all the time*. Heaven knows, watching nothing but shows in a language you're still learning can frazzle the mind.

Instead, simply switch target language *subtitles* on by default. That way, there is always some foreign language content in front of you, even when you just want to relax and not bombard your brain *too much*. Your eye will wander to the bottom of the screen now and again, catching the odd new word or interesting translation. Believe me, I've picked up some *very* interesting Polish vocab watching Star Trek Enterprise.

And of course, the full-blown, polyglot, stereo experience is always there when you're ready for the mental gym.

Programming has come a long way since the early days of computing, evolving from machine code to high-level languages that empower developers to create complex and sophisticated software. As technology continues to advance, the landscape of programming is undergoing a significant transformation, with polyglotism and domain-specific languages (DSLs) emerging as key trends. This article delves into the exciting world of polyglot programming and the growing importance of domain-specific languages in shaping the future of software development.

SWITCH YOUR SAUCES

Of course, you don't get more *everyday* than food and drink. And foodies can mix it up a bit by introducing a couple of kitchen-specific personal policies.

If you regularly cook from scratch, switch your sauces... I mean, ahem, *sources*. Find a target language recipe book or website, and *commit to find dishes from there* alone. It needn't be for every meal. But once or twice a week, banish your native language from your meal prep.

2020 saw me resurrect my old, forgotten Greek, and initially through the medium of food. Making a night a week Akis Night has been transformational (at least for my food and drink vocabulary!).

THE WORLD'S YOUR (POLYGLOT) OYSTER

This trio has worked a treat for me lately. But you can find polyglot tweaks to put languages in your path in all corners of your life. From gaming, to exercise, to background chatter while you work, there are ways to study multiple languages a day yet *not* be studying 24/7.

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