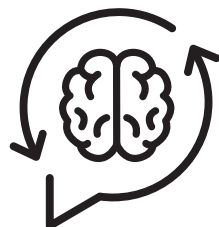


Passive Active & Pro- -active learning



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Description: This is a short description of how Luca organizes his activities based on the 3 different modes and across the 4 main language skills

Reading

Passive

Simple, extensive reading. No writing. I do this when I have a high level in the language (B2 or more). The main goal of passive reading is to get exposed to the language through interesting content, without having to spend much mental energy on the process. When you reach a high level, in fact, you are able to understand the gist of what you're reading without resorting to looking up new vocabulary terms word by word. I do this mainly at night after dinner, just before going to bed. I read magazines and books that interest me, especially in Russian, Polish and German. The topics range from personal growth, (mainly in English), history, (Polish, Russian and English) and astronomy (German, and Polish). I normally spend an hour to an hour and a half on this during the workweek, and 2 hours or more during weekends or when on holiday.

What: Books, magazines, newspapers

When: Mainly at night

How Long: 1-2 hours a day

Where: Normally in bed.



Active

Intensive reading, done seated in a chair, with a pencil in hand. I do this when I am reading books for work—ones on growth, or Second Language Acquisition, for example. I also do this for languages in which I want to actively expand my vocabulary. I do this for 30 minutes in the morning, and then have another session after lunch. Each session lasts between 25 and 30 minutes. Over the last 6 months (from February to August 2020) I have been reading magazines in Polish about politics, history, and cosmology.

What: Books, magazines

When: Morning and afternoon

How Long: 30-60 minutes a day (across 2 different sessions)

Where: Normally sitting on a chair at my in-home workspace (living room)

Proactive

I do this for two types of resources—books that help me improve my coaching business, and for podcast transcriptions. For books (mainly in English), I create a personalized summary of the contents as soon as I'm done reading it. Once I finish a book, the whole process takes me about two weeks, and I work on it for about 30 minutes every day. This way, I retain about 90% of everything I read. For podcast transcriptions, I don't do summaries; instead, I write down useful vocabulary in my language learning notebook and review them regularly over time.



What: Books and transcriptions of podcasts

When:: Morning

How Long: 30 minutes a day on average

Where: Desktop

Listening

Passive

Listening only. I normally do this when running, taking a shower, taking walks, eating meals, and cooking. I engage in passive listening when I reach at least a B1-B2 level in a language. Currently doing it in English, French, German, Polish, and Russian. Passive listening also entails watching movies or TV series, which I do on Fridays or Saturdays if I don't go out.

What: Podcasts, news, YouTube videos, movies and TV series

When: Morning, lunch, dinner

How Long: 30 minutes a day

Where: Desktop, kitchen, bathroom, park, street, bed

Active



I sit down and listen to foreign language audio with pencil and paper in hand. My active listening content usually consists of recordings of my recent online tutoring lessons (Hungarian, Greek, and Polish, for example). When I listen actively, I don't read; I just take notes, and write down fragments of meaningful and interesting sentences I hear. I also try to train with numbers, which I often find difficult. I also attempt to write down all the words whose meaning and/or spelling I don't know, and then I check everything I wrote down in an online dictionary. When I watch TV series or movies, I make sure I have a notebook in my hand so that I can jot down new vocabulary on the fly

What: Lessons on Italki, Podcasts

When: Morning

How Long: 15-30 minutes

Where: Desktop

Proactive

Other than sitting down and jotting down fragments of interesting expressions on a piece of paper, I make sure that I read these fragments out loud. I also practice shadowing for audio that has transcriptions. I normally shadow the audio or read the text out loud while standing or moving around the room.

What: On-line lessons or podcasts



When:: Morning

How Long: 30 minutes

Where: Standing up or walking

Speaking

Passive

Speaking is never truly a “passive” activity. You will always need to devote a certain amount of mental resources to the speaking process—even for your native tongue! That being said, you can alter how engaged you are when you speak, in an attempt to speak in a more or less engaged way. So for me, “passive speaking” is typical chatting or interacting with people who speak the languages I speak. In these cases, I give no thought to actively improving my level, but rather focus on the joy of conversation. I am currently engaging in conversations on a weekly basis in Italian, English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, and Polish. I do this at home, with friends, in my private life, at work, and when I go out

What: Conversations with friends, colleagues, and flatmates

When:: All times of the day

How Long: I don’t count it

Where: Home, Internet, bars

Active



My active speaking routine is as follows: I speak with my tutor for 30 minutes, and make sure I get out of my comfort zone as much as I can, so that I can get feedback for any mistakes I make. This requires effort and concentration. I also record the conversations so that I can review them later. Nowadays, I do this for Greek, Hungarian, and Polish.

What: Conversations with tutors

When: Morning

How Long: 30 minutes

Where: Skype

Proactive

When I am reviewing the recordings of my active speaking sessions, I make sure to go through and I jot down fragments of the conversations that I find interesting or useful. Then, I create an “alternative conversation” based on a rearrangement or reinterpretation of those fragments. In other words, I use the sentence fragments as “jumping-off points” introducing new sentences and integrating the feedback from my tutor as I go.

I apply this technique to any kind of content. I use these fragments to recreate a short and simplified version of the material, and I practice speaking it aloud while standing and holding the piece of paper in front of me. By re-creating the content of a lesson or piece of content, I am able to rehearse and recall the words and expressions and at the same I engage in meaningful and fun speaking training with myself. I have been applying this to myself for Greek and Hungarian, and explain all the details on how to do this to my students (in



English, Italian, French, Spanish, German and Russian). The results are nothing short of amazing!

What: Conversations with tutors

When: Morning

How Long: 30-60 minutes

Where: My room

Writing

Passive

As with speaking, there is no truly “passive” writing. However, you can engage in simple, low-stress writing activities to engage your “writing muscle” without working too hard on it. For example, I often write in my journal in Italian for around 30 minutes a day, and compose emails to friends, colleagues, and clients in English, Spanish, and French.

What: Journal, email, blog articles

When: Morning mainly

How Long: Depends on the day, at least 30 minutes a day

Where: My office at home or in cafés



Active

Active writing for me is the deliberate act of writing in a language I have a B1-B2 level in, with the goal of receiving and implementing corrections. Typically, I write 200-350 word short stories or essays (and occasionally a mock-up of an email). To do this, I follow a set of principles I have developed that I call “the 10 Principles of Good Writing in a Foreign Language”. This is a special training I use only in my own learning, and that of my coaching clients. I take about 30-60 minutes every few weeks to write up a text in this way, and then I review the text with a tutor to get feedback.

What: Writing short essays

When: In the morning

How Long: 30-60 minutes

Where: At home, my desktop

Proactive

Once I’ve written a short text (in the active phase), I sit down with a tutor and ask them to give me live feedback on the quality of the text. Together, we go through the text from two perspectives—content, and grammar. Based on the feedback my tutor gives me, I create a cleaner, more native-like version of the text, and then repeat the process. Reviewing and implementing feedback is a powerful component to the process that can really help to improve your skills.



What: Short essays, stories or emails

When:: Weekends, every 2 weeks

How Long: 30-60 minutes

Where: My desk at home

List of Resources

Here is a list of some resources I use for French, German, Russian, and Polish.

Polish (Podcasts, News and YouTube videos)

<https://www.spreaker.com/show/polskidaily-polish-for-advanced> (Paulina Lipiec)

<https://www.spreaker.com/show/biznesowe-potyczki-jezykowe>
(Agnieszka Papaj-Żołyńska)

<https://www.spreaker.com/show/historia-dla-dzieci> (Historia Polski dla dzieci)

<https://realpolish.pl/podcast/> (Real Polish)

News in Polish: <https://fakty.tvn24.pl/>

Astrofaza: <https://www.youtube.com/user/Astrofaza>

Historia bez Cenzury:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/HistoriaBezCenzuryMB>



French (Podcasts and YouTube videos)

<https://www.france24.com/fr/> (France24)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHGMBrXUzClgjEzBMei-Jdw>

(Geopolitics)

Russian (Podcasts, News and YouTube videos)

<https://realrussianclub.com/slowrussianpodcast/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF0ZeqSkybD1aFtFxjA8z9w>

(Russian Progress)

<https://echo.msk.ru/> (Russian radio)

<https://meduza.io/> (Russian news)

<https://www.1tv.ru/> (Russian news TV)

<https://www.youtube.com/user/starmeda> (Russian TV channel with TV series, movies, and documentaries)

German (Podcasts, News and YouTube videos)



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<https://www.youtube.com/user/Clixoom> (Science)

<https://www.youtube.com/user/KurzgesagtDE> Dinge erklärt . Kurz
Gesagt (Science)

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MrWissen2go> - Wissen2go (Politics and
interesting fact)

<https://www.ard.de/> - News, Documentaries, movies, and debates