

If we are going to transpile JavaScript, why not use Clojure?

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Built an LMS from 2012 to 2016

Consisted of an API, Admin, Web and Native Mobile Interfaces

Long projects force you to eat
your own dogfood

Followed all best practices
(linting, flux, folder structures, build workflows)

Ended up changing the
build system thrice



You can argue that JS ecosystem was maturing

Either it's still not mature or JS
people like to reinvent the
wheel

Even the syntax is still evolving



rollup.js

The JS community is blessed, with some amazing work like React, Lodash and date-fns

But there is a problem with the underlying language

That's why nearly all prod apps are ES6, TypeScript or some other superset of JS

I wanted a language with:

Stable syntax and language guarantees

Rich standard library

First class functional transformations
(map/reduce/filter)

Ability to easily understand, fork and update third party packages

A community with aversion to shiny things

Type Safety

Changing stacks is a high risk event

Need to keep prod systems functional

Train/ Hire Talent

Experiment, make mistakes, grow

And at the end, you might end up disliking it

Why Clojure/Script sucks
and 7 reasons why you should not try it, ever

Clojure is a hosted language

You need a JVM, Browser, V8, CLR or something else to run it

You also need to know the underlying language in case Clojure misbehaves (rare)

Clojure is a hosted language for good

Being hosted helps you tap into the existing ecosystem. Clojure gives you the power of and Java, JavaScript, .Net (C, Python, Erlang)

(It's flooded (with (parenthesis)))

Matching parenthesis would be painful.
Resolving a merge conflict on a large feature
would take forever.

(It's flooded (with (parenthesis)))
for good

Parenthesis are added automatically using
tools like paredit and parinfer

Tree based editing leads to terse code and allow compiler
level optimizations

It's hard to find or train engineers

Clojure community is small.

Even more so in India.

It's hard to find or train engineers
not for good

It is hard to find talent, that's why I'm here.
My job is to convert and train talent.

The small community is close knit and
attracts the best kind of thinkers.

It has a steep learning curve

Everything is immutable and functional. It's not how humans think.

Humans think imperatively.

It has a steep learning curve

Most of your tooling and thought process will need tweaking.

But the new can't be born, until the old dies.

It's hard to get started with

The community is already small.

Combine that with scarce documentation
and little literature for new initiates.

It's hard to get started with, but things are changing

People answer Clojure questions on StackOverflow. Docs are getting better.

And it's really easy to read and interpret source code.

It's Java at the end of the day

And Java has slow startup time, Null point bombs and a ton of bloat that I don't need.

It's Java at the end of the day

True, it suffers from slow startup time, but it covers for that once it gets started.

You rarely write Java. And the REPL is the answer to slow startup times.