**Exercise**

When one is studying intensively, it might seem an unnecessarily waste of time to get up and exercise. In fact, in the act of perseverance (the internal push to keep going), much time can pass unnoticed. All work and no play, however, is…well, you know.

Exercise advantages the language learner in a number of ways:

* releases feel-good endorphins
* boosts brain activity
* retention of new skills in memory

The question, then, is not if you should exercise but rather when, how long, and how. Therein lie a number of options that you can choose from, depending upon your personal schedule, needs, and interests.

**Exercise to improve mood and energy**

Any exercise prompts the release of endorphins will improve mood and energy. Both will serve you will in the classroom as you work with others, and you may also gain additional energy for homework and self-study,

*active learner = happy learner*

**Exercise to boost brain activity**

Any movement has been found to boost brain activity, including something as simple as standing up. So, after a little time studying, stand up. Do it often. Stretch. Do some jumping jacks, squats, yoga, whatever suits your fancy. Just move!

Try some aerobics, either as a study break or once a day. Suggestion: make it the first thing in the day, and you won’t “forget” or run out time for your aerobics. Aerobics help with memory and critical thinking; that is another reason to start the day with aerobics.

The common thinking among medical professionals is that a 15-minute workout will boost brain activity. What are some activities you can do?

* If you are just starting language study, count your steps in the target language wherever you go.
* Walk or jog while listening to a broadcast or other lesson.
* Review your notes from class while on the treadmill.
* Get and use youtube videos in our target language for gymnastics, yoga, etc.
* Dance to a foreign band’s youtube video while singing along (you may need to track down the lyrics—and make sure you understand them.
* Spend time at a gym on a regular basis with a native speaker (and talk as time permits).
* If at the gym alone, count your repetitions in your target language, recite dialogues as you row, and talk to yourself in your target language as you use any of the machines.
* Get your own coach in your target language. Check out Runtastic’s physical fitness coaching programs; one of them will count out pushups for you in your target language.
* Check for other physical fitness apps online in your target language.
* Switch your fitbit to your target language.

*Spend physical energy = gain more energy = smarts*

**Retention of new skills in memory**

In terms of physical skills, exercising for 15 minutes after learning or practicing a new skill helps retain that new motor skill. Similarly, some K-12 language teachers have noticed that some students learn vocabulary faster and retain it longer when they learn it through bouncing balls or otherwise moving and talking at the same time.

*Move more = remember more*

Keep moving!