

# Engaging Minds<sup>1</sup>

Date: Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Topic being discussed: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=P6FORpg0KVo>

How to make learning as addictive as Social Media.

When technologist Luis von Ahn was building the popular language-learning platform Duolingo, he faced a big problem: Could an app designed to teach you something ever compete with addictive platforms like Instagram and TikTok? He explains how Duolingo harnesses the psychological techniques of social media and mobile games to get you excited to learn — all while spreading access to education across the world.

Luis von Ahn and his partner decided on an app to teach a foreign language for the simple reason that a large number of people want to learn foreign languages, the maximum being for English. When paying to switch off ads it was found that the maximum people who did so were from US and Canada, in terms of English, the maximum were from Japan. This indicates that rich were paying for the poor.

The url below indicates why learning a foreign language is important.

<https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-021-06750-4>

In his talk, Luis Ahn pointed out that learning Maths for instance did not help you get a job<sup>2</sup>, but knowing the language helped you get a job, if you were a waiter, you could try for a job in a hotel.

Two sides to this

- a. No jobs for the medium skilled
- b. More service sector, unskilled jobs. ☺.

An issue with the population displaced from rural India too. ☺

Background to why a learning app needs to compete with addictive ads : Limited scope for jobs based on the knowledge you have. Within job too, the way to progress is narrow and defined. Hence little interest in learning reading etc.

People want information to get jobs or to relax and chill from stress.

However brain seeks knowledge information, so when opportunity arises people interested. ☺

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<sup>1</sup> Season 1 Episode 2 How to make learning as addictive as Social Media

<sup>2</sup> Editor's note: This aspect was discussed in a limited sense here, the demand for the study of languages also relates to tourism and in relation to International business cross cutting most sectors

Luis Ahn points out that the repetitive nature of learning makes it conducive for learning through an app. There are more people learning foreign languages on duo lingo than there are those learning foreign languages in schools. This is because learning dull and monotonous things have been made interesting by using some techniques like memes, streaks etc. While pointing out about what AI does he simplified it by saying, what works for my Mum, works for AI. If you were free today at 3 pm, you will most probably be free at 3 pm tomorrow, this about the wisdom of AI in deciding the best time to send a reminder to use the app.

At CGA - VERRM, we are not dealing with dull monotonous things, we are a dealing with a learning process to know more. More about different countries, more about a particular subject, more about what makes people tick ☺. So creativity comes in choosing the subjects, developing them further, scope for further learning. ☺

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ghaziabad/i-am-next-how-libraries-are-plugging-the-study-gap-for-students-across-villages/articleshow/92629070.cms>

Not all learning takes place through apps. See you next week.

Time; 9.30 pm IST on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January.

Next topic :

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