

# How the study of languages influences one's appreciation of international competition

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One of the consequences of studying another language for me is that I develop some sort of mental connection with the people who speak that language, despite having no innate cultural basis for it. When I studied German, I found myself cheering for the German athletes in the Olympic Games. And in the men's 4×10,000 cross-country relay yesterday, I was cheering for the German team, the Swedish team, and the Norwegian team (especially the Norwegians), but it was all for naught as the Italians proved too much for all of them.

(Yes, I haven't started studying Norwegian yet, but, as my Swedish readers already know, it was the Lillehammer Olympics that reinforced my interest in the Scandinavian languages, and with it, my affinity for the Norwegian cross-country team.)

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