



LEX Language Project

Anyone Can Speak 7 Languages!



Mission

LEX is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded with the mission of assisting individuals to develop their full human potential through multilingual and multicultural activities. To meet this goal, LEX provides unique immersion-style multilingual language learning programs, cultural exchange programs and educational publishing. To make these programs available to as many people as possible, LEX offers the Paros Membership Scholarship and the Kumi Greissman Travel Scholarship.

LEX Language Project

Multilingualism is the norm in the world, monolingualism is an exception.¹ Both adults and children can learn to speak any number of languages when they use the same process they used to acquire their own native languages. Just as a baby in a multilingual country begins to understand and speak several languages before ever seeing a textbook or vocabulary list, LEX Language Project members acquire more than one language naturally through immersion.

The president of LEX, Mr. Yo Sakakibara, has been researching how humans acquire languages for over 30 years, first working with researchers at Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and then at his own research institute in Tokyo, Japan. In 1981, he formed the LEX Institute to continue his investigation of the natural language acquisition process. Based on this research, LEX

has developed LEX Language Project (known as Hippo Family Club in other countries), a network of community-based language clubs in which people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy the successful acquisition of multiple languages in a fun, casual environment.

Currently, there are 30,000 LEX members playing games, singing songs, and speaking up to 19 different languages in Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan and the United States. In the U.S., clubs are located in Massachusetts, with plans for gradual expansion in North America.

No Teachers, No Tests, No Classes

LEX Language Project clubs have no teachers, no tests, no dictionaries, and no grammar drills. Speakers of various fluencies enjoy all languages together. Research on language acquisition suggests that “language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill... The best methods are therefore those that supply ‘comprehensible input’ in low anxiety situations.”² Our members provide a supportive atmosphere where everyone is encouraged to speak without fear of making mistakes. Members foster confidence in each other in the same way that parents and other people around them reinforce babies’ attempts at speech.

The Whole to the Parts

We call the natural process of language development “from the whole to the parts.” When babies babble in baby-talk, they are mimicking a broad approximation of the sounds around them. Later, they begin to speak, but may only pronounce some parts of phrases while “babbling” through the rest. They are speaking the rhythm and melody of the “whole” language. Eventually, they become more and more precise in making sounds, clearly speaking the “parts,” the individual words, until they are mature speakers. Children and adults who are exposed to new languages in a similar way will go through the same natural process.

¹ Verma, Dr. Mahendra K. “Multilingualism.” <http://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/goodpractice.aspx?resourceid=634> July 5, 2007. ² Krashen, Dr. Stephen D. 1981. *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. English Language Teaching series. London: Prentice-Hall International (UK) Ltd., p. 6-7.

CDs and Tapes

Our language CDs are recorded by native speakers and include stories about everyday life. We create a natural immersion environment for ourselves by listening to these CDs like background music as often as possible while doing other activities - at home, in the car, etc. We also spend some time listening more intentionally and mimicking along with the stories, catching the natural rhythm and melody of the language.

As we listen to the CDs, we absorb the sounds and patterns of the languages in context. Our ears gradually become accustomed to the new sounds, and it becomes possible to mimic these sounds. They become a part of us, unlike vocabulary words memorized and soon forgotten. Little by little, and with support from other club members, our own speech becomes like that of the native speakers on the CDs.

See insert for more information on CDs.

Singing the Sounds

The activity of “singing the sounds” is important at LEX. This is a process of mimicking the CD and is similar to humming or singing, or even the babbling of a baby. Emphasis is placed on maintaining the rhythm, melody, and natural patterns of a language. As we absorb the sounds through repeated listening, mimicking, and interaction with other members, we will acquire more and more language.

Club Meetings

Language is nurtured in people-to-people connections. In addition to listening to LEX CDs, members get together in community-based clubs at least once a week to share the sounds of language we are internalizing from the CDs. We engage in activities including playing games, dancing, singing, listening activities, and speaking in various languages. We absorb new language at the club meetings, while encouraging each other to speak in a fun and supportive environment.

Listening to the CDs and participating in the club meetings are both equally important in the natural process of language development.

Science & the Immersion Environment

Research shows that anyone - at any age - can acquire new languages, given time, motivation, and an immersion environment. Dr. Laura-Ann Petitto of Dartmouth College, a noted expert on language acquisition says, “The architecture of the human brain is not set to learn only one language. The brain is not a closed system. It was not etched to learn one thing. Neural tissue is sensitive to patterns. We love patterns and we love seeking patterns. We have multiple ways and multiple lan-



guages. The brain can handle that.”³

“With 19 languages and more on the way, LEX has shown an

implicit belief in the vast “reserve potential” of the mind and brain. The language learning methods developed by Yo Sakakibara help build receptivity to languages in a way that produces neuroplastic changes in the brain. These changes then make additional language learning progressively easier... LEX learning methods induce neuroplastic changes that support both specific and general receptiveness to language acquisition by:

“1) Increasing specific receptiveness to a particular language by recognizing and comprehending how the sounds, words, tones where applicable, sentence structure and grammar fit together to produce meaningful sound patterns in that language (this does not imply any necessity for direct study of sentence structure or other elements of grammar.)

“2) Increasing general receptiveness to new languages. Additional languages become easier to learn and learning several languages at the same time has a synergistic effect because it builds more robust and complex neural circuits that support both specific and general language learning. This is why those who learn multiple languages as children find additional language learning as an adult much easier than those who brain has been wired for one language.”⁴

³“The Brain’s Capacity to Learn Multiple Languages: Dr. Laura-Ann Petitto Discusses Her Work.” <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/summit/Petitto.htm> July 5, 2007. ⁴Oleski, Dr. John M. “Neuroplasticity and Language Learning.” 2006.

Unique Features and Benefits of the Program

Exposure to Several Languages

- ✦ Develop hearing sensitivity to foreign languages
- ✦ Improve and recover known languages while adding new ones
- ✦ Acquire a single language more fully through exposure to many
- ✦ Maximize learning time
- ✦ Develop brain/aptitude for languages
- ✦ Stimulate intellect and preserve memory

Immersion

- ✦ Intuitive learning
- ✦ More native accent and rhythm
- ✦ Greater fluency and fluidity
- ✦ Natural emergence of speaking ability
- ✦ Better listening comprehension

Physical Activity & Movement

- ✦ Stimulate both sides of the brain
- ✦ Increase blood flow to the brain
- ✦ Release endorphins, create fun
- ✦ Promote relaxation, open your mind
- ✦ Make mistakes without worry
- ✦ Experience a sense of success
- ✦ Stay stimulated, alert and interested

Intergenerational Groups

- ✦ Whole families benefit
- ✦ Families bond across generations
- ✦ Children interact with non-familial adults
- ✦ Community relationships support learning
- ✦ Progress exceeds expectations

Original CDs

- ✦ Lifetime of use
- ✦ Easy to listen to, richer than lessons
- ✦ More economical than most language CDs
- ✦ Context of story aids retention

Exchange Program

- ✦ Travel to other countries
- ✦ Explore cultures from the inside
- ✦ Share your home and culture
- ✦ Become a global citizen

Scholarships

- ✦ Membership and travel scholarships available
- ✦ See page eight for more information



Scientists on Multilingualism

Language Acquisition in Children<<<<<

- ✦ Is there a critical period for language learning, in general? *Maybe.*
- ✦ For subsequent language learning? *No.*
- ✦ Is the simultaneous acquisition of two or more languages the same as learning one first language? *Yes.*
- ✦ Is there an ideal time to learn a new language(s)? *Not really, but the earlier the better.*
- ✦ Should I wait to introduce a third or next language? *No.*
- ✦ Are there detrimental effects to learning two or more languages simultaneously? *No!*

Dr. Suzanne Flynn, MIT Professor of Linguistics and Language Acquisition in the department of Linguistics and Philosophy

Language Acquisition in Adults<<<<<<<<<

- ✦ Does bilingualism and multilingualism provide cognitive benefits to adults as well as children? *Yes.*

A recent study by Dr. Ellen Bialystok, York University Professor of Psychology, found that “speaking two languages throughout one’s life appears to be associated with a delay in the onset of symptoms of dementia by four years compared to those who speak one language.”⁵ In previous publications, Dr. Bialystok and colleagues demonstrated that bilingualism enhances attention and cognitive control in both children and older adults.

⁵“Bilingualism has Protective Effect in Delaying Onset of Dementia by Four Years, Canadian Study Shows.” <http://medicalnewstoday.com/articles/60646.php> February 8, 2007.

Transnational Homestay Program

Homestay exchanges offer the ideal means for you and your family to learn about a new country, to examine your own culture through new eyes, and to build lifelong friendships. There are opportunities to host, as well as to travel to Japan, Mexico, and other countries.

Anyone Can Host

Host families vary greatly in size, background, occupation, and interests. What makes a good host family is a willingness to share your life with a new family member and a taste for the adventure of mutual discovery. Share your heart and home, and find out how much fun hosting can be!

Hosting: Why Host?



- ◀ Increase your own and your family's interest in the world around you.
- ◀ Prepare for life in an increasingly global society.
- ◀ Experience another culture and value system, while sharing your own.
- ◀ Develop a lasting relationship with a new friend & country.

Who Is Your Visitor?

LEX offers the opportunity to host teens and adults from Japan, Korea, Mexico, and other countries on short-term homestays of ten days to one month. We also offer the chance to host a Japanese teen for a high school academic year. Delegates are eager to learn about life in North America by becoming part of a family like yours.

Travel to Japan

Youth, ages 12-18, live as a member of a Japanese host family for one month, absorbing the customs and characteristics of the host culture by taking part

in the activities of daily life and by spending time with a host brother or sister.

Host families are carefully selected. Hosts are members of Hippo Family Club (the name by which LEX Language Project is known in Japan, Mexico, Korea, and Taiwan), which they have joined in order to enjoy foreign languages and to meet people from around the world. Our hosts will do everything possible to make you feel like a part of the family from helping you make a phone call to showing you the intricacies of the Japanese tea ceremony.



Intern in Japan

Interns in the LEX office in Tokyo help to coordinate our short-term and yearlong exchange programs, make cultural presentations in Japanese schools, and study Japanese culture. This unique one-year opportunity is open to qualified youth, ages 18-25 (familiarity with 4-H strongly preferred.)

LEX members are encouraged to participate as families, to host delegates of many different nationalities, and to enjoy many languages along the way to new friendships. LEX programs emphasize acceptance of others and communication with people from all over the world.

The Transnational Homestay Program is open only to LEX Language Project members and 4-H members, or people who become members.

From Languages to the Natural Sciences

Using LEX's unique learning method, students at the research institute Transnational College of LEX (TCL) in Tokyo approach mathematics, physics, biology, and other subjects from a viewpoint that transcends disciplines. *What Is DNA?*, *Who Is Fourier?*, and *What Is Quantum Mechanics?* record just a few of their adventures of discovery.

These books are easy to understand because they are written by students going through the learning process themselves, yet sophisticated enough for professionals. The books have been adopted at universities, such as Cornell University, Dartmouth College, and Boston University, technical schools, high schools, and companies in the U.S. and Japan, such as Sony.

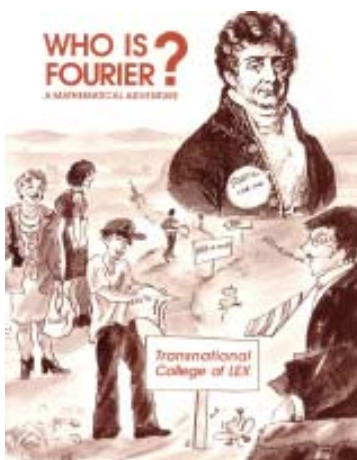
The Adventure Series

Who Is Fourier?

A Mathematical Adventure

ISBN 978-0-9643504-0-3 \$29.95 paperback 436 pages

The student authors take the reader along on their adventure of discovery of Fourier's wave analysis, creating a work that gradually moves from the basics to the more complicated mathematics of trigonometry, exponentiation, differentiation, and integration. This is done in a way that is not only easy to understand, but actually fun!



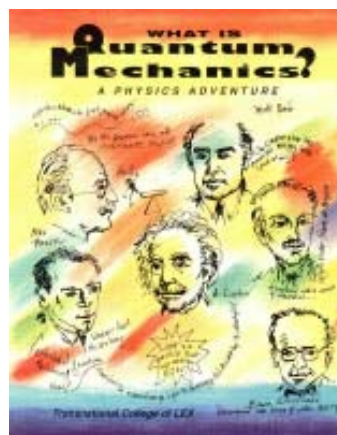
The largest percentage of our readers are professors and engineers, with business people and students following closely. It is a must-have for anyone interested in music, mathematics, physics, engineering, or complex science. Over 100,000 copies have sold worldwide since the original publication.

"An approach to the teaching of elementary Fourier series that is innovative, conceptual, and appealingly informal."

John Allen Paulos, Professor of Mathematics at Temple University and author of the bestselling book *Innumeracy*

"Excellent, wonderful, very clear, lucid, a shining example of how teaching should be."

An Electronic Engineer



What is Quantum Mechanics? has been on best-seller lists in the United States, Japan and other countries.

What Is Quantum Mechanics?

A Physics Adventure

ISBN 978-0-9643504-1-0 \$29.95 paperback 567 pages

The book comprehensively traces the historical development of quantum mechanics, treating a complex subject in a lighthearted, user-friendly manner. It not only introduces the reader to the concepts of quantum mechanics, but also tells the story behind the theories. It is easy to understand for beginners because it was written by people going through the learning process themselves. Yet, even the seasoned scientist will enjoy the controversy and drama as the development of physics unfolds in the book.

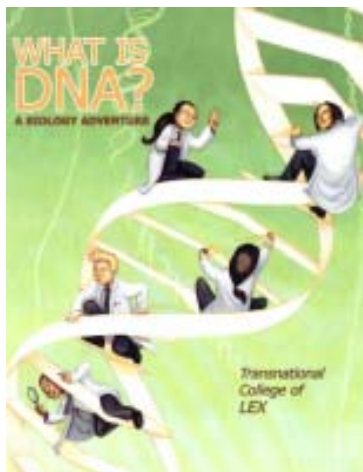
"What Is Quantum Mechanics? comes alive with the historical references throughout the book. Its innovative approach presents the heroes of quantum mechanics as if they are talking directly to the reader, which makes a sometimes forbidding topic appealingly personal, and engages the reader. Complex mathematical concepts are explained with unusual clarity, making them easy to understand... What Is Quantum Mechanics? is a physics adventure, and fun to read at that!"

Dr. Matthias Nolte, Crystallography, Harvard University

What Is DNA? A Biology Adventure

ISBN 978-0-9643504-2-7 \$29.95 paperback 597 pages

In *What is DNA?* the student authors at the Transnational College of LEX explore one of the most fascinating fields in science today: molecular biology. With the humorous and abundantly illustrated style that is their hallmark, the students quickly draw the reader into an adventure that is both educational and fun! The students also discuss how the process of the development of living things (for example, from a single cell to a human being) seems to be similar to the process of acquiring language in a natural learning environment.



Curious minds of all ages and backgrounds will find the authors' enthusiasm contagious as they tell the remarkable story of DNA, genetics, and evolution.

"This book is billed as "a DNA adventure" and I find it a very fitting description. Because the readers actually go through the same thought process as the writers in coming up with answers to their questions, it is more likely that the readers will retain the knowledge and make use of it for the rest of their lives. Despite the appearance of casualness, the scientific content of the book is accurate and up to date. I wish I had this book when I first studied genetics."

Machi F. Dilworth, biochemist, Ph.D., UCLA

Japanese Books

The Code Series

The Code Series, including the major nonfiction Japanese best-seller *Hitomaro no Ango (The Code of Hitomaro)*, reexamines the earliest Japanese literature starting from the revolutionary assumption that 8th century Japan was a multilingual country where Japanese, Korean, and Chinese speakers all used the same Chinese characters.

The Code Series and the Adventure Series are both available in the original Japanese. Please inquire.

Fun with Language!

Anyone Can Speak 7 Languages!

ISBN 978-0-9643504-5-8 \$9.95 Paperback 61 pages

Anyone who has struggled to learn languages in a classroom, tried in vain to memorize verb conjugations or felt at the mercy of a foreign language dictionary will welcome the revolutionary new approach to language acquisition described in *Anyone Can Speak 7 Languages!*

As these authors immerse their families in a sea of language, they describe how their attitudes towards so-called "foreign" languages are transformed. Along this journey, they regain their childlike sense of wonder lost during years of traditional classroom learning, and discover the fundamental similarities shared by all languages and human beings.



Kanji with Hippo Letter System

\$20.00 CD-ROM

The Hippo Letter System CD-ROM introduces *kanji* (Chinese characters used to write Chinese and Japanese) in a fun and very accessible format. Through the association of images, meaning is presented in way that fosters retention. Images on the CD-ROM are coordinated with our 7+language audio CD stories. With this introductory program, you'll be on your way to using *kanji!*



Kanji Playing Cards

\$9.95

Effortlessly learn 25 basic Japanese *kanji* characters while playing games like Concentration, Solitaire, or any regular card game.

Member Voices

Chris

It's possible to have lunch with seven people from three countries and have a conversation in four languages.

Sean

The LEX method recognizes that gaining familiarity with the sounds and natural rhythms of a language is an essential part of language acquisition. In the playful and low-pressure LEX club environment, the experience of new languages is always fun, and there is a simple confidence that we can trust the human mind's natural ability to learn language from exposure and experience.



Clara

Before I traveled to Mexico on an *intercambio*, I thought that LEX was about learning languages.



Now I understand that it's about breaking down barriers – barriers in the world, and barriers within ourselves. Anyone can learn seven languages. And anyone can travel the world among friends.



Jessica

I really enjoyed singing, dancing and playing games in Japanese and

18 other languages with my



language club very much. What impresses me the most about LEX is its larger mission. By putting impor-

tance on creating a multilingual environment, we can have a new understanding of cultures and people around the world.

John

Language learning through LEX turns on many lights, yet it can be easy to forget that the purpose of learning languages is to allow us to communicate and relate to people who would other-



Scholarships

LEX is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded with the mission of assisting individuals to develop their full human potential through multilingual and multicultural activities. LEX welcomes members of diverse backgrounds. LEX offers the Paros Membership Scholarship, a need-based scholarship for language club membership, a work fellowship, and the Kumi Greissman Travel Scholarship, which is available to any active member meeting the eligibility requirements.



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