



The Top Five Reasons to Learn Lojban

A language for linguists – A Language for the creative – A Language for you

Lojban is an invented language. Originally called "Loglan" (short for "logical language") by project founder Dr. James Cooke Brown, who started the language development in 1955, it has been built over three decades by dozens of workers and hundreds of supporters, led since 1987 by The Logical Language Group. Why should you learn it?

1. Think differently.

Learning Lojban is a mind-expanding experience. Lojban was initially designed for the purpose of supporting research on a concept known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: "the structure of a language constrains the thinking of people using that language." Lojban allows the full expressive capability of a natural language, but differs in structure from other languages in major ways. Unique features of Lojban remove constraints on language in the areas of logic, ambiguity, and expressive power, opening up areas of thought that have not been easily accessible by human language before. Meanwhile, the formal rigidity of the language definition allows speakers to carefully control their expressions (and therefore perhaps their thought processes).

2. It just makes sense.

Lojban's pronunciation, spelling, word formation, and grammar rules are fixed, and the language is free of exceptions to these rules. Each Lojban sound is uniquely assigned to a single letter, or combination of letters. Lojban is simple and sensible. Its grammar is based on the principles of logic. It's unambiguous. It's regular and phonetic. It's everything that language should be.

Lojban has completely unambiguous grammar, pronunciation, and morphology (word forms). The person who reads or hears a Lojban sentence is never in doubt as to what words it contains or what roles they play in the sentence. Lojban has no words that sound alike but have different meanings (like "herd" and "heard"), that have multiple unrelated meanings ("set"), or that differ only in punctuation but not in sound (like the abominable "its" and "it's"). There is never any doubt about where words begin and end ("cargo shipment" can be heard as 2, 3, or 4 words). There is only one letter or combination of letters for a particular sound (c and k are always different sounds). The function of each word is clear (no ambiguity between verbs and nouns in a sentence).

3. Be expressive.

Lojban is a beautiful language. Lojban has a smooth, rhythmic sound, somewhat like Italian. However, its consonants create a fullness and power found in Slavic languages like Russian, and the large number of vowel pairs impart a hint of Chinese, Polynesian, and other Oriental languages, though without the tones that make many of those languages difficult for others to learn.

Original poetry has already been written in Lojban, and some has been translated into the language. Lojban's powerful 'tanru' metaphor structure allows you to build concepts into words easily, as you need them, and has been used to create colorful images and to convey moving emotions. A Lojban speaker doesn't need a dictionary to use and understand the millions of words that can potentially exist in the language. The absence of cultural constraints makes consideration of new ideas and relationships easier than in natural languages, spurring creativity. Lojban aids in communicating abstractions by identifying their nature explicitly. Lojban is thus a very powerful language, not only for poetry, but for discussing such abstract fields as philosophy, physics, metaphysics, and religion.

Lojban poets are already experimenting with new (and old) forms of poetry that seem especially well suited to the rhythm, sound, and flow of the language. Rarely do poets have such an opportunity to affect the development of a new language as they do now with Lojban. Lojban is rich and powerful. Lojban unleashes the full potential of poetic expression to communicate both concrete and abstract ideas.

4. It's easy.

Lojban is actually much simpler than natural languages. Lojban text can appear more complex due to its lack of idiom, its complete explicitness of logical structure, and most importantly, its unfamiliarity. On the other hand, conversational speech uses less than half of the possible grammatical structures, leaving the rest for writing and for other circumstances when one is likely to take time to carefully formulate exact logical phrasings. Lojban is free of exceptions to the rules of pronunciation, spelling, word formation, and grammar. Such exceptions, which are present in other languages, are the bane of learning to speak a natural language correctly. Without the burden of ambiguity, Lojban users can be precise and specific more easily than in other languages.

5. Have fun.

You needn't learn Lojban for any practical purpose. Many of those learning Lojban are doing so because it is fun. Learning Lojban is intellectually stimulating, and provides human interaction and mental challenge. Lojban has all the benefits of games designed for entertainment, with the added prospect of developing useful skills as a side benefit. Learning Lojban as an 'intellectual toy' means that you can get enjoyment from learning Lojban without nearly the effort needed to benefit from studying other languages. While becoming fluent in Lojban will probably take hundreds of hours over several months, you can feel some sense of accomplishment in the language after just a few hours of study. You can use Lojban immediately for fun, while gaining skill with greater experience.

Even better, learn to write it with tengwar (a logical writing script)!

Really, there is way too much to sum up here, but i promise you, if you are the creative type or the logical type (hopefully you fall into at least one of these), lojban will appeal to you more and more as you learn more about it and start to learn it yourself.

<http://www.lojban.org/>