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SEATTLE CONLANG CLUB



 conlang.club/zine

FOREWORD

Thanks for picking up our first ever Seattle Conlang Club Zine! We put a lot of love and effort into it and we hope you enjoy reading it!



All of the articles were submitted by club members, including write-ups for their personal conlangs and works of art using their language. We've also gotten articles in well known conlangs like Esperanto and Toki Pona, and even a multilingual crossword puzzle!

A big thank you goes out to all of our zine contributors: without you, the Zine would not have been possible!

ABOUT THE CLUB

If you'd like to join the Seattle Conlang Club, check out our website at conlang.club or join our Discord at discord.gg/wpkYCy4PQG.



Discord server QR code

We welcome members of all levels of linguistics knowledge, from absolute beginners to seasoned conlanging veterans.

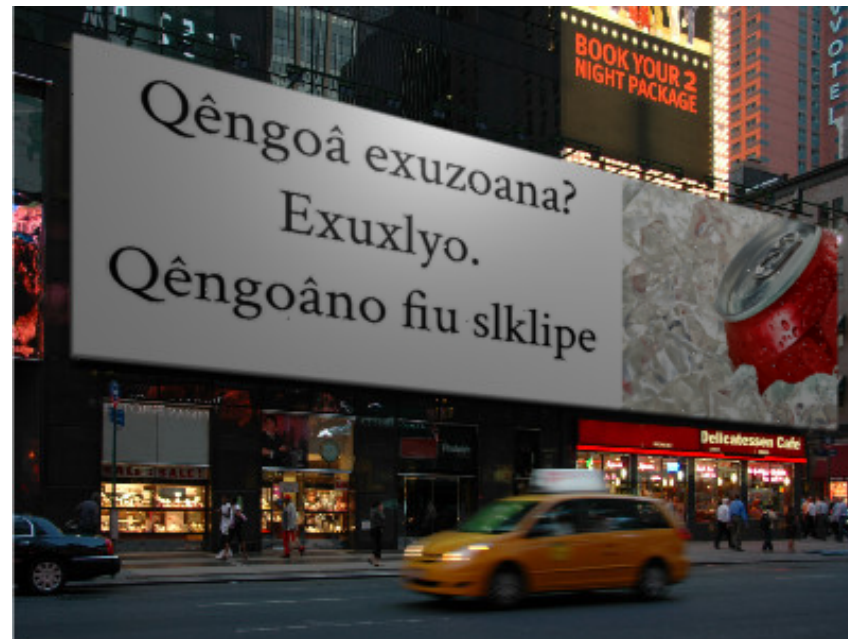
Most of our members are from Seattle or Washington State, but we have a few out-of-state members also.

We usually meet remotely over Discord, where we often discuss and create conlangs, as well as play our own pidgin-making role playing game, Pidgin Island Quest (conlang.club/pidgin). We hope to see you there!

SINCERELY, THE SCC ZINE CONTRIBUTORS: FREDERICK, DEJVID, FINN, AND ROSETTA

COMMENTS? QUESTIONS? WANT CONLANG CRITIQUES?

Join our [Discord](https://discord.gg/wpkYCy4PQG) or email Club President Frederick Chan at fredchan@conlang.club.




tILNSKAL

Iłt ilns θwλns kielnθ θelne pul siłteln!
 Iłn siłnł ı tıeθt te len te nił Iłt tıns siłlin. Lił tunkθie?
tILNSKAL tiłnkliı kielnθ nupεisθi len Lwunk Iłn!
 senst siłLwunkie ı Iłn siłLkunskliw!

θiłnθp +37 2-427 6069 tiłnktłnsk!

Cyeçyesres valesèzeh (Thanks for reading!) | Sektale





DISCOVERING ESPERANTO IN JAPAN

BY FREDERICK CHAN (FREDCHAN.ORG)

Thousands of miles away from its European origins, Esperanto has had a dedicated following in Japan since the early 1900s. Though no longer as influential in the country as it once was, Esperanto is still very much alive in Tokyo, from regular Esperanto events and library run by the Japanese Esperanto Institute to Kafejo SOJO, one of the world's few Esperanto cafés.

In mid-September last year, I went down a rabbit hole ending in my discovery of the Esperanto community in Tokyo: I started at Yokoamicho Park near my hotel where a disaster preparedness fair was being held. Booths demonstrated proper earthquake safety (Seattleites will remember the stop, cover & hold drills from school) while vendors sold shaved ice and takoyaki for just 500 yen (about \$3.50 at the time).

“o kepeken Toki Pona. sina sona ala sona e Toki Pona? o pana pona tawa mi. tenpo ni la suno li wawa. tomo mi insa li seli a. mi pilin pi seli mute. mi kama lete tan seme?”

“mi sona e Toki Pona. mi pilin pona tan ni: sina toki kepeken toki Pona!

sina toki e ni: suno li wawa li seli mute. tomo sina insa li seli mute tan ni. ni li ike tawa sina. sina wile kama lete.

nimi mi pi pona tawa sina:

1. o open e lupa tomo. kon weka li kama insa tomo.
2. o pali e kon lete kepeken ilo kon.
3. o moku e telo lete.
4. o telo e sijelo sina kepeken telo lili.
5. o len ala. len li seli e sina.
6. o awen lon poka pi tomo suli. suno li kama ala lon ni.

ni li ken pona e pilin seli sina. o awen pona!”

sona pi ilo Claude li pona mute tawa mi! ilo Claude li toki kepeken nimi pona mute. ona li sona e ike mi li pana pona tawa mi. li pana pona luka wan. pona nanpa wan luka li pona lili. mi pilin e ni: o awen ala lon poka tomo, o awen lon poka! pona nanpa ante li pona mute.

pini la: ilo nanpa li ken kepeken e toki pona.

ILO CHATGPT LI SONA ALA SONA E TOKI PONA? BY DEJVID

ilo ChatGPT li ilo pi sona mute. ona li ken toki Inli li ken toki ante. ona li ken kepeken nanpa li ken kepeken ilo nanpa. ona li ken pana toki tawa sina li ken pana pona tawa sina. taso, mi wile sona e ni: ilo ChatGPT li ken ala ken kepeken e Toki Pona?

mi toki tawa ilo ChatGPT e ni:

“o kepeken Toki Pona. sina sona ala sona e Toki Pona?”

“sina toki kepeken Toki Pona! si sona e Toki Pona lili. sina wile toki e ijo seme?”

ona li toki tawa mi e nimi “mi sona e Toki Pona lili”. ni li pona lili tawa mi. nimi “mi sona lili e Toki Pona” li pona mute tawa mi. pona. ilo ChatGPT li ken kepeken e nimi lili. ona li ken kepeken e nimi suli anu seme? mi toki e ni tawa ona:

“o kepeken Toki Pona. Sina sona ala sona e Toki Pona?”

“o pana pona tawa mi. tenpo ni la suno li wawa. tomo mi insa li seli a. mi pilin pi seli mute. mi kama lete tan seme?”

“suno li wawa, tomo sina li seli, tan ni la sina kama lete tan insa tomo tan seme seli mute. ken la tomo sina li jo ala e insa lete pona. mi toki e ni tawa sina: o open e e anpa e lawa tomo sina. ken la, o kama sin e kon lete tawa tomo sina. jan pona mi la, sina ken moku e telo mute tawa lete e sijelo sina.”

sona pi ilo ChatGPT li ike tawa mi. nimi “o open e e anpa e ...” li ike mute. nimi “o kama sin e kon lete tawa tomo sina” li ike lili. nimi “moku e telo mute tawa lete e sijelo sina” li pona lili.

ILO CLAUDE LI SONA ALA SONA E TOKI PONA?

ilo ChatGPT li sona lili e Toki Pona. taso, ilo nanpa ante li sona ala sona e Toki Pona? mi toki tawa ilo Claude. ilo Claude li sama ilo ChatGPT. taso, ilo Claude li jo e mama ante. mi toki e ni tawa ona:

Though Disaster Preparedness Day happens every September 1st on the anniversary of the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake, this September was special— 2023 marked 100 years since the magnitude 7.9 quake that claimed the lives of at least 105 thousand victims. This year, preparedness events were being held all month. Yokoamicho Park in particular is the site of the Earthquake Memorial Hall, containing the ashes of 58 thousand victims.

A TROUBLED HISTORY

At the very same park, the Niccho Kyouhai (Japan-Korea Association) holds a memorial every September 1st for the victims of the Kanto Massacre, a mass murder perpetrated by the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) and xenophobic vigilantes in the chaotic aftermath of the earthquake. Over 6,000 people were murdered, mostly ethnic Koreans, but also Chinese and Japanese mistaken to be Korean, as well as Japanese anarchists and socialists.

Among the massacre victims were Osugi Sakae¹, an influential Japanese anarchist and Esperantist, his lover and anarcha-feminist Ito Noe, and his 6-year-old nephew, Tachibana Soichi. The three were murdered by Amakasu Masahiko of the IJA and three subordinates in a highly publicized event known as the Amakasu Incident, with news even reaching Stateside due to the fact that Tachibana was born an American dual-citizen in Portland, OR.



Osugi Sakae, circa 1920

ORIGINS OF ESPERANTO IN JAPAN

Osugi started teaching Esperanto in 1906 in the wake of Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War when the country was just starting

¹ Japanese names in this article are written in Japanese order, i.e. surname first.

SAMPLE VOCAB (UNDERIVED):

to become a world power. While it may seem unusual that a conlang commonly criticized for its Eurocentric design would make its way to Japan as early as the 1880s let alone gain popularity, Esperanto—and to a lesser extent Volapük— was seen by many as a means for Japanese people to get involved in international trade and politics at a time when the country was gaining relevance internationally.

For Japanese Esperantists, Esperanto's lofty goals of uniting people with a common language wasn't a vague ideal; Esperanto was something that anyone— elites and commoners alike— could start using, and it was spreading like wildfire. Though the chances of randomly running into an Esperanto speaker were slim, Esperantists could be found in every prefecture of Japan, locally-written Esperanto literature was exploding, and even rural villages were publishing Esperanto works, up until its heyday ended in the '40s.²

ESPERANTO TODAY

Though Esperanto is no longer as influential across Japan as it once was, Esperanto retains a sizeable following and to this day, you can visit the Esperanto-Domo, the headquarters of the Japanese Esperanto Institute (JEI) founded in 1919.

When I arrived at the Esperanto-Domo, it had just started to drizzle a warm September rain. The building is unmistakable; across the third floor windows overlooking the street hangs a big sign proclaiming "Esperanto." By the front door was a display with info about the language and, at the time, a string of paper cranes in remembrance of the victims of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the USAF in August 1945.

Sreç /srɛç/ - I/me/myself
Slah /sla:/ - You/yourself
Srai /sraɪ/ - We/Us
Srel /srɛl/ - Person
Kri /kri:/ - Taking / to take (if derived)
Avèr /aver/ - Dog
Nril /nrɪl/ - Room
Kasta /kasta:/ - House
Kruvi /krʊvi:/ - Friend
Javreh /dʒavre:/ - Conversation
Saikruh /saikru:/ - Conlang
Saikruhaithah Siyatulle /saikru:aitʰɑ: sɪjatulle:/ - Seattle C.L. Club



² For more detailed history, I highly recommend Dr. Ian Rapley's article *Talking to the world: Esperanto and popular internationalism in Prewar Japan* <https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/id/eprint/92435/>

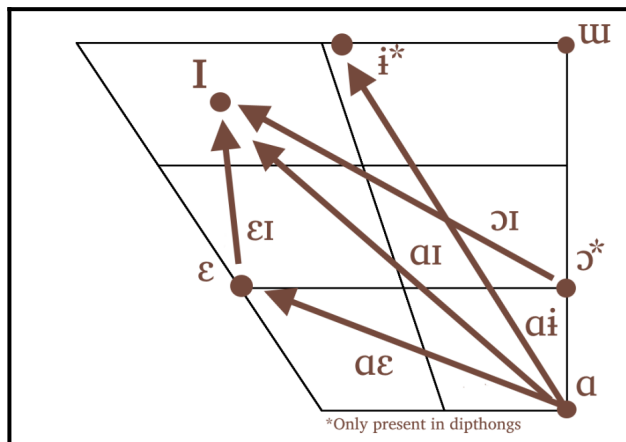
consonant clusters in spoken speech (represented by the letter è in written language).

PHONEMES

Consonants

	Labiodental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop		t		c	k	ʔ
Nasal		n				
Trill		r				
Tap		ɾ				
Fricative		s, z	ʃ, ʒ	ç, ʝ		
Approximate	v			j	ɥ	
Lateral Approximate		l				

Vowels



While there were no events or lessons that day, the Esperanto bookstore is open to the public four days a week. A few rows of Esperanto books, dictionaries, and various odds-and-ends like postcards greet you as you enter. To the left, you see the JEI offices; just a couple people were in at the time. Of course, it wouldn't be a complete Japanese experience without a sign with some anime girls on it: "The 106th Japanese Esperanto Congress," it said.



A picture of the Esperanto-Domo bookstore

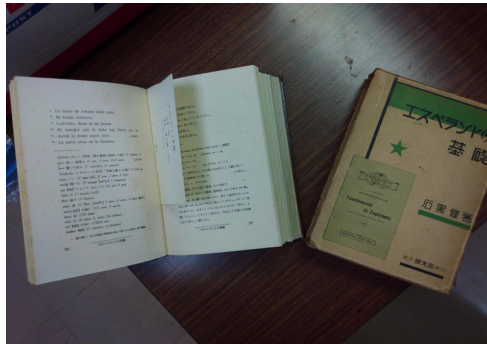
I perused the shelves a few moments before Usui Hiroyuki from the office came over to say hello. He had brought a book catalog and a few free copies of *La Revuo Orienta*, the local Esperanto magazine he is an editor for. He was surprised I'd come to the Esperanto-Domo after coming all the way from America— it's not exactly a popular tourist destination after all.

So I told him I ran the Conlang Club at my university³, and upon learning this, he invited me to check out the rare books library, normally available on request to Esperanto learners. Of course I said an enthusiastic yes, and we went upstairs to a room stuffed from floor to ceiling with books and periodicals not just about Esperanto, but also Ido, Volapük, Novial, and even Interlingua.

You can never fully appreciate the rich history of Esperanto and conlanging until you feel the delicate pages of a Volapük-Japanese dictionary from 1889 between your fingers, with Esperanto annotations penciled in the margins by its previous owner long ago.

³ At the time, the Seattle Conlang Club was still the Conlang Club at UW

Mr. Usui found a lot of books, some discussing the development and culture of International Auxiliary Languages, and even the very beginning stages of the International Phonetic Alphabet, all while telling me about the JEI. Sadly I could not stay any longer than an hour or so, as they were about to close up.



A 1933 Japanese copy of *Fundamento de Esperanto*

As I was leaving, I told him I was going to grab a bite at Kafejo SOJO, the Esperanto café just a few blocks away. To my pleasant surprise, he said he'd join me after he closed up and called ahead to tell the owner that I was coming, and was even kind enough to let me borrow an umbrella—the drizzle from earlier had become a downpour that even my Seattleite self wasn't prepared for without rain gear.

KAFEJO SOJO, AN ESPERANTO CAFÉ

The Kafejo SOJO is a charming little vegan café adorned all over with acoustic guitars and posters about Esperanto and animal rights. There's even some Esperanto pins and signs for sale, and an ample supply of pamphlets about causes the owner, Saito Yoshinori, stands for.



The interior of Kafejo SOJO

A SHORT TOUR OF THE SEKTALE LANGUAGE - ၂၀၂၀ ခုနှစ်

Finn Anton | ဝိသုဒ္ဓိ

Sektale (also spelled Sektalè or Sektal) is an a priori, polysynthetic language that uses an inventory of undifferentiated word roots which are derived into verbs, nouns, and adverbs by the addition of suffix particles. Since this is a language originating for personal use it does not have any formal worldbuilding although its native abugida script Jawan Sektal has been digitized into multiple different incarnations. As an example, here's a gloss of a sentence using two derived forms of the root "vekse" meaning "related to fire:"

ဘုရား	တုဝေဗ်ဝုလုလု	ဝိသုဒ္ဓိ	ဘုရား။
Vekse-s	waù-çante-y-eh	vril-èn	vekse-Ø
υεksə-s	υαα-çante-j-ε:	υrɪl-ən	υεksə
Burn-V	tree-top-N-directional	power-ADV	fire-TOP

"The fire burns powerfly in the treetops"

In this sentence, the root vekse is used both with the verb suffix -s to derive the meaning of "burn" as well as serving as the noun "fire." Because of the VOS word order of Sektale, the latter vekse has the sense of a noun although it doesn't take the noun derivation "yV" that the word for treetop does. When a word that could be derived as a noun has no derivation marker it is interpreted in a vocative or agentive sense—proper nouns are not generally derived. Plurality is ambiguous unless explicitly marked. Because of this system where word classes are not clearly defined, it is common to use the name of a tool, or something more conventionally a noun in most other languages, as the main verb of a sentence. In Sektale someone might say something glossed as "I bow'ed an arrow at the archery target."

The phonology of Sektale lacks any bilabial consonants or vowels, instead relying on a broad selection of palatal hisses and throaty approximants. Length is contrastive in vowels, and some consonants may be differentiated as well by aspiration. The minimum syllable is CCVC, with schwa epenthesis breaking up illegal

19. Hrazef fini akkelenak vojosori lekhmoveki
22. Wily animal
25. Butt of jokes by many home owners
27. Rentable box, usually never owned
28. Legendary were-falcon famous for his eye
31. Unpopular Russian empress, same backwards and forwards
33. Ophthalmologist best known for other work
34. Wave also appearing in the name of Peano's Interlingua
35. The Linux of Conlangs (self-described)
36. Nickname typed using adjacent keyboard keys
37. Drawn by Jack in a certain 90s film

Down

1. Coast Salish gift-giving feast
2. The most morbid diacritic
3. Word commonly misattributed to Thomas Edison
4. Jan lili li kama e ni kepeken lipu len lon tenpo mun monsuta
5. Portrayed, or backed up
6. Ale pi mani lipu lon ma Melika la mani lipu ni li lili mute
7. A former contractor for them sought asylum in Russia
9. Mára mólë! Elambelangiëlyas!
10. Local estuary named after a guy named Peter
11. Hawaiian lava flow whose name you'd scream if caught in one
13. Jan esun li kama tan lape lon tenpo esun la ona li tawa tawa ni
15. Lo prenu poi ke'a baupli la lojban ku'o rirci le namcu lo'i prenu poi ke'a baupli lo runbau ku'o
17. Cancer's eastern neighbor
20. Try clothes here, then climb rocks in them in the same place
21. Kiam multaj Esperantistoj kunvenas, oni nomas ĝin ĉi tion
23. Our American football team is named after these
24. ISO 639-1 kodo de ĉi tiu lingvo
26. Past, present, and future
28. Saying 29 Down was banned in movies following this code
29. 1993 anime featuring Verđandi whose acronym is also text message slang
30. Often made of wood and done to tears
31. Official language in Ethiopia, a faraway country
32. Assistant to a more senior officer

He primarily runs the café by himself, cooking and serving food from the menu written in three languages: Japanese, English, and of course, Esperanto. You can even buy some frozen soy meat to cook at home. I ordered a tasty chickpea curry and an ice cream affogato for a very reasonable 1,150 yen (about \$8 at the time).

Kafejo SOJO actually fills an important niche in Tokyo. As he was cooking I asked him how many customers of are able to speak Esperanto. "Just about 5%, mainly people from the Esperanto-Domo. Actually, most people come for the vegan food," he explained, "compared to American cities, there are very few vegan places in Tokyo, though the number has slowly been rising."

ESPERANTO IN JAPANESE GAMES

When Mr. Usui arrived, we started talking about Esperanto in popular media. Occasionally, the JEI gets requests to consult on Esperanto in video games, like the 2017 visual novel *The Expression Amrilato* from the developer SukeraSparo. It turns out the anime sign I saw in the bookstore was an illustration from this game!



A signed copy of The Expression Amrilato at the café

The plot revolves around a girl named Rin who is whisked away to a parallel universe where everyone speaks Esperanto. As she adjusts to her new surroundings, Rin learns Esperanto from a native of this universe, Ruka, who speaks just a smattering of Japanese and with whom Rin slowly develops a deep bond.

Though you won't become a fluent Esperantist by playing, it has raised a lot of awareness for Esperanto from its fans. Years after its

original release, fan meetups are still held where players can be heard saying "Bonan vesperon!" to each other.

"It's pretty rare to see Esperanto being talked about this much among non-Esperantists these days," Mr. Usui said, "I think there's some synergy to be had by collaborating [with game developers]."

AFTERWORD

I've only scratched the surface of Esperanto in Japan here. The Japanese Esperanto Congress has been held since 1906 (the earliest American Congress took place two years later in 1908).⁴ There's even a second Esperanto-domo in Yatsugatake that includes a dorm Esperantists can stay in!

While I didn't know much Esperanto before I visited the Esperanto-domo in Tokyo, discovering that there are places where you can literally eat, sleep, and breathe Esperanto has made me discover an interest in the language that I didn't know I had.

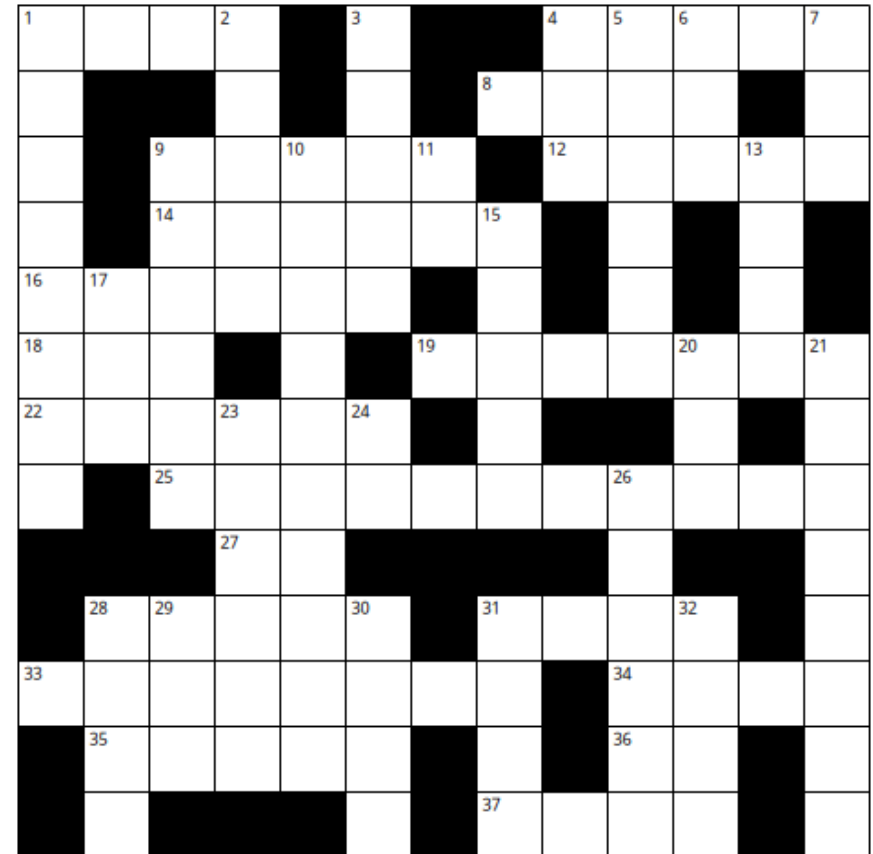
Though we can't all travel to Japan, if you're interested in getting involved in the Seattle and American Esperanto communities, check out my friend Dejvid's list of Esperanto meetings on the next page! 🐼

⁴ In Chautauqua, NY: <https://impofthediverse.blogspot.com/2015/04/americas-first-esperanto-congress.html>

SEATTLE CONLANG CLUB CROSSWORD #1

By Frederick Chan (fredchan.org)

Electronic version, with answers: 🌐 conlang.club/crossword/1



Across

1. Atari's most popular sports game
4. Sina li sewi lon utala la sina li kama jo e ni
8. Serious oversleeping
9. ghobDaq 'oH DatultaH
12. Jan pona lukin li kama jo e ni lon tomo pi telo nasa
14. Prominently displayed trill on Team Rocket uniforms
16. Rara vorto por vojoj kiu estas orientitaj de nordo al sudo
18. Biggest number on a metric clock



Bwéf bwé sùh blèrf bleinúh.
Zé tùhru dganá var kàrikar
pùhmeiz!

Cihbihdúh, dgi kuhn
pùhmeiz.

Urúh za chòrib òmuf leihnúh!
Blihklók var sùna blash
wanafésh?

Blihklók dgi wanafésh!

Bwéf bwé sùh blèrf bleinúh.
very low my-no.inter surroundings-no.inter read
My environment need is very low.
This place is filthy.

Zé tùhru dganá var kàri-kar pùhmeiz!
this.nointer with.flies dishes 2nd.single.member optative-nointer.object clean
Clean the dishes that have flies!
Clean up this mess!

Cihbihdúh, dgi kuhn pùhmeiz.
yeah yeah, 1st.single immediate.future clean
Yeah yeah, I will clean next.
Yeah yeah, cleaning is the next thing I'll do.

Urúh za chòrib òmuf bleihnúh.
four in morning clock reads
It's 4 in the morning.
It's 4 in the morning.

Blihklók var sùna blash wanafésh?
Blicblock 2nd.single.member evening from play
Did you play Blicblock since last evening?
Have you been playing Blicblock all night?

Blihklók dgi wanafésh!
Blicblock 1st.single play
I'm driven to play Blicblock!
I can't help but play Blicblock!

ESPERANTAJ KUNSIDOJ VERKITA DE DEJVID

Ĉu vi volas praktiki la Esperantan lingvon? Ĉu vi volas amuziĝi kun samideanoj? Ĉu vi serĉas senton de frateco? Ne serĉu plu! Ĉi tiuj lokaj Esperantaj renkontiĝoj estas la perfekta solvo por viaj lingvaj kaj amikumaj bezonoj.

SEATLA ESPERANTO-SOCIETO

Ĉu vi konis ke Seatlo havas lokan Esperantan klubon? La Seatla Esperanto-Societo kunsidas ĉiumonate, kaj ĝi estas malferma al iu ajn kiu interesiĝas pri la Esperanto-movado, aŭ pri lernado de Esperanto. Ĝi bonvenigas membrojn je ĉiuj kapabloniveleoj en Esperanto.



Kontaktu ĝin per Meetup, Facebook, aŭ retroŝto.

ALIAJ AFEROJ EN ESPERANTUJO

NASK

La Nord-Amerika Somera Kursaro de Esperanto (NASK) estas ĉiu-somera studprogramo kiu okazas ĉiujare en Raleigh, Norda Karolino. Ĝi havas kaj klasĉambran instruadon kaj eksterkursajn programojn.



La venonta renkontiĝo de NASK okazos dum la somera de 2025. Uzu la Rapidresponda (QR) kodo por lerni kiel ĉeesti.

INTERNACIA JUNULARA KONGRESO

Se vi volas vojaĝi pli for kaj renkonti junajn Esperantistojn el la tuta mondo, la Internacia Junulara Kongreso (IJK) estas perfekta okazo. Ĝi estas la plej granda junulara Esperanto-renkontiĝo de la jaro kaj okazas ĉiusomere en malsamaj landoj.

ALIALANDAJ ESPERANTAJ KOMUNUMOJ

Oni povas trovi la influon de Esperanto en preskaŭ ĉiu lando. Ĉu vi volas ekzemplon? Legu Angle pli pri la historio de Esperanto en Japanio sur paĝo 1.

ESPERANTO MEETUPS WRITTEN BY DEJVID

Do you want to practice your Esperanto? Do you want to have fun with like-minded people? Are you looking for a sense of brotherhood? Well look no more! These local Esperanto meetups are the perfect solution for your linguistic and social needs.

SEATTLE ESPERANTO-SOCIETY

Did you know that Seattle has a local Esperanto club? The Seattle Esperanto-Society meets monthly, and it is open to anyone who is interested in the Esperanto movement or in learning the language. It welcomes new members of any skill level in Esperanto.



meetup

Contact them at Meetup, Facebook, or by email.

OTHER ESPERANTO HAPPENINGS

NASK

The North American Summer Courses (NASK) are an annual study program which happens every summer in Raleigh, North Carolina. It has both in-class instruction and extracurricular activities.



The next meeting of NASK will be in the summer of 2025. Use the QR code to learn how to attend.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONGRESS

If you want to travel farther and meet young Esperantists from around the world, the International Youth Congress (IJK) is the perfect opportunity. It is the largest youth Esperanto meetup of the year and it occurs every summer in different countries.

ESPERANTO COMMUNITIES OF OTHER COUNTRIES

It is possible to find the influence of Esperanto in almost every country. Want an example? Read about the history of Esperanto in Japan on page 1.

