

Over 1 Million Items Studied at Lingt; Leaderboard Released

FEBRUARY 16, 2010 (CAMBRIDGE, MA) -- After a brief 7 weeks in public beta, users have studied over 1 million items with Lingt, a Chinese language learning site. The Y-Combinator backed startup is celebrating this achievement with a new feature released today: the Lingt Leaderboard. The Board displays users' scores and allows comparison to other users, bringing Lingt closer to becoming the most addictive way to learn on the web.

In 2009, social games like Foursquare, Zynga, and Gowalla became immensely popular. But what if you could play a game that would actually help you learn something useful? This is the idea behind Lingt, which combines gaming elements, proven learning principles, and self-tracking to make it fun to learn a new language. Co-founder Justin Cannon, a recent MIT graduate, hatched the idea for Lingt when he began studying Chinese. "There is so much memorization involved in learning a character-based language. Lingt makes a mundane task enjoyable."

Lingt's innovative approach to language study integrates aural and visual memorization in an online learning game. It uses smart spaced repetition to personally schedule term review for each user for maximum retention and efficiency. Instead of blindly studying whenever you feel like it, Lingt tests words when you're about to forget them, to effectively facilitate the transition to long-term memory.

The site also contains achievement features like "Don't break the chain," which records your daily logins in a "chain." Logging in reminds users of their commitment to learning Mandarin. "We're all so busy. It's easy to forget about goals we have, even there's a deadline ahead, like a visit to China this summer," says co-founder and head developer Chris Varenhorst, who is, not coincidentally, visiting China this summer.

Lingt facilitates peer motivation. Soon when users add to their "chain" or win badges, they will be able to broadcast this information to their friends via Facebook and Twitter. "The goal is to make Lingt a social project," says Cannon. "We learn languages to communicate and share experiences. Here at Lingt, we just want to make the process of learning efficient and fun."

Lingt plans to add support for other languages, particularly English, in the future.