

ESPERANTIC Studies



ISSN 1084-9831

Number 16
Spring 2005

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Newsletter of the Esperantic Studies Foundation

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An Applied Experiment In Interlingual Communication: INTERKULTURO

Interkulturo (www.interkulturo.net) was first established as a global forum or virtual school for intercultural and interlinguistic communication and education in 1998. The project was born in the laboratory for experimental pedagogy at the Third University of Rome, Italy and was nurtured into a working project with the support of the International League of Esperanto Instructors (ILEI) and the Esperantic Studies Foundation. Since its inception, Interkulturo has been designed as something of an educational laboratory that allows schools and classes of children and youth from around the world to communicate with one another, exchange information on a broad range of topics and work through a shared curriculum. Essentially, it has been designed to permit students from diverse cultures and language groups to learn together.

Some readers may immediately feel inclined to question how students from disparate language groups can communicate easily and efficiently with one another. Some might assume that English is used as a common language within the program. Others might wonder whether the project utilizes state-of-the-art, "universal" translation technology capable of accurate, real-time translations of text or verbal utterances across languages. As it turns out, Interkulturo utilizes neither

English nor a one-of-a-kind universal translator system.

Interkulturo has, indeed, broken the interlingual communication barrier through its use of two innovative technologies. However, the chosen technologies reside firmly within the bounds of reality and are, potentially, available to all: one is known and used the world over; the other remains little known despite having been available for more than 100 years. The former is, of course, the Internet and the latter is the planned language Esperanto.

The Interkulturo project utilizes popular Internet technologies to create online learning environments, or virtual classrooms, where teachers and students can exchange information and communicate with one another in real-time. Esperanto was chosen as a bridge language to facilitate intercultural and interlinguistic communication for several practical, political and philosophical reasons.

The foremost practical reason for selecting Esperanto has to do with the fact that individuals can achieve relative fluency in the language much faster than they can with any of the world's major languages. Esperanto was originally designed to be very easy to learn. It has a relatively simple grammar based on 16 fundamental rules;

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Esperantic Studies Foundation: Annual Report 2004

The past year was a very productive one for ESF. The Foundation better defined its mission and vision for the future and proved to have one of its most active years in terms of lending guidance and/or financial support to a broad range of interlinguistic projects. The new mission statement reads as follows: "The Esperantic Studies Foundation promotes research and teaching on Esperanto and on related issues of interlingual communication, especially in the context of higher education in North America." To achieve this mission, the directors of ESF have established the following four strategic priorities for the foundation:

1. Improve the visibility and prestige of Esperanto as a research topic and teaching subject in the North American scholarly community;
2. Help to focus attention and academic resources on the study of interlingual communication, including but not limited to Esperanto;
3. Foster an intellectual community of North American teachers and researchers in higher education who can contribute to both of these objectives;
4. Continue to expand the operational capacity of ESF itself.

Operating within this framework, the foundation was able to support several noteworthy projects which included the expansion of a number of innovative websites focused on interlingual learning and teaching; the continued development and expansion of an electronic corpus of nearly five million words of Esperanto texts; support for a number of innovative Esperanto teaching initiatives; the issuance of grants for compelling interlingual research projects; as well as the development of a multi-featured administrative portal for the foundation that will enable it to expand its operational capabilities. Overall, 2004 saw the foundation achieving all of its goals for the year. ESF has set an ambitious agenda for itself in 2005 and we look forward to capitalizing on the momentum established in 2004.

PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

EDUCATION

lernu! (www.lernu.net)

The free, web-based learning environment "lernu!", whose development was initiated by ESF, came online in December 2002, and by September 2004 had attracted

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Interkulturo con't

nouns, verbs, adverbs, and so on have very simple, easy to recognize word-class endings; and many words in the language have easily recognizable roots stemming from Romance, Germanic, Slavic and other source languages. In addition to the above, Esperanto morphemes are invariant and may be recombined more-or-less indefinitely into different words. This capability gives the language much in common with isolating languages like Chinese, while its internal word structure bears some affinity with agglutinative languages such as Turkish, Swahili and Japanese.

A more political reason for its use in the program stems from the fact that it was originally designed to be a neutral, auxiliary language: owned by none, yet available to all. Participants in the Interkulturo program begin to learn Esperanto in their respective classrooms and are capable of communicating with other students around the world in a relatively short period of time. Since no students can be said to be native Esperanto speakers prior to the program, all have a more-or-less equal opportunity to gain some mastery in the language and communicate on a more equal footing with their peers. The same could not be said if a language such as English, for example, was chosen as the official program language. Native English-speaking participants would have a distinct advantage over their ESL-speaking peers.

In its initial phase, the Interkulturo project established 97 classes in 28 countries around the world and has brought together more than 2000 students between the ages of 4 and 18. In 2003, ESF supported the piloting of a new phase of the program, involving the redesign of its web-based "virtual school" environment and its expansion into less formal educational settings. The project was presented at international conferences on intercultural learning in Finland and Italy and has received support from a variety of organizations including the Council of Europe and European Commission as well as ESF.

The Interkulturo program's pedagogical approach involves having students in international "virtual classes" explore a variety of intercultural themes, pose questions to one another about the discussion topics and share their own unique cultural experience or understanding of the topics with their fellow classmates. The program method can be summarized within the following framework:

1. Election of an intercultural theme/topic.
2. Discussion and approval of the theme by the class.
3. Creation of study tasks and assignment to participants.
4. Creation and approval by the group of a detailed study plan.

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roughly 9,500 registered users and 42,000 site visitors. Lernu's development in 2004 focused on redesigning its website architecture to accommodate greater numbers of concurrent users. Improvements were also made to site security and many of the unique multimedia teaching and entertainment features. Near the close of 2004, the ESF Board of Directors resolved to commission an independent research evaluation of the Lernu technology system. This evaluation will be conducted in 2005 and will be focused on assessing the site's effectiveness as a teaching and learning tool as well as comparing its design and approach with other Internet-based language learning tools. The results of this independent review may be featured in future issues of this newsletter. Lernu continues to expand its user base at an impressive rate and we look forward to its gaining greater market awareness in 2005.

edukado.net (www.edukado.net)

The teaching support site "edukado.net", continued to increase both its range of materials and its community of users over the course of the year. In addition, 2004 saw much of the site programming updated and enhanced to better accommodate

a growing user base. Edukado.net provides reviews of over 160 published textbooks and other teaching materials, and now offers over 300 exercises, games, tests and other classroom materials formerly unavailable to Esperanto teachers. The edukado.net team is also actively involved in promoting the site's resources worldwide. The group attended the 2004 World Esperanto Congress in Beijing, China in an effort to increase Asian awareness and usage of the site.

Interkulturo (www.interkulturo.net)

In 2004, ESF continued to support the Interkulturo project by providing financial resources to assist with its expansion efforts to enlist participants from new schools and countries throughout the world. Part of the support was also used to update and enhance the Interkulturo web portal for increased global usage. Interkulturo is profiled elsewhere in this newsletter.

Summer Esperanto Institute (NASK)

(www.esperanto.org/nask)

The 35th North America Summer Esperanto Institute (NASK) was again held in July at the School for International Training (SIT) in

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Interlinguistic Events

March 23 – 29, 2005

International Esperanto Youth Festival

Where: Italy. For more information see: <http://iej.esperanto.it/iej/ijf/2005/>

April 21 – 23, 2005

2nd Language & Technology Conference

Where: Poznan, Poland
For more information see: <http://www.ltc.amu.edu.pl>

July 07 – 09, 2005

Language & Global Communication Conference

Where: Cardiff, Wales, UK
For more information see: www.global.cf.ac.uk

July 23 – 30, 2005

90th Universal Esperanto Congress

Where: Vilnius, Lithuania.
Organized by: Universal Esperanto Association. For more information see: www.uea.org/kongresoj/index.html

July 30 – August 01, 2005
4th Annual Nitobe Symposium

Where: Vilnius, Lithuania.
Organized by: University of Vilnius; Lithuanian Academy of Sciences; Lithuanian Parliament & CED. Symposium Focus: Language policies in the EU and consideration of equitable and efficient linguistic planning alternatives. For more information see: www.uea.org/index.html

Research News

Esperanto Corpus Available Online To Researchers

ESF, together with Bertilo Wennergren, are pleased to announce the online posting of a research corpus for Esperanto. In this first phase of development, a corpus of approximately 2 million words has been produced, including the major part of Zamenhof's work and a selection of literary and journalistic texts. Plans are also presently underway to expand the corpus significantly and incorporate a wider range of genres and authors. Feedback from interested individuals is welcome.

To access the corpus, go to: <http://bertilow.com/tekstaro/>
For more information, contact ESF: admin@esperantic.org



Annual Report con't

Brattleboro, Vermont. The faculty for 2004 included Dr. Duncan Charters (USA), Lee Miller (USA) and Dr. Katalin Kovats (HUN). The NASK curriculum features a three level program of study which emphasizes the active use of Esperanto in intercultural communication, and the creative application of the language in literature, theatre and song. The 2004 Institute was held from July 7 - 23. A special seminar for Esperanto teachers featuring the most modern instructional methods in teaching languages was also offered.

The 2005 program will be held from July 4 -22 at SIT in Brattleboro, Vermont. The instructors for this session include Paul Gubbins (UK), Birke Dockhorn (Germany), and Lee Miller (USA). A three level program of study which emphasizes the active use of Esperanto in intercultural communication, understanding and cooperation has been prepared. A special seminar in Esperanto grammar will also be led by Bertilo Wennergren (Sweden). The course fees are US \$995; shared lodging is available at \$700 and single rooms are available at \$820. Accomodation fees include 3 full meals per day. Scholarships for course fees and lodging are available. Interested individuals are encouraged to register online at www.sit.edu/esperanto/index.html or contact the program administrator, Ellen Eddy, at eddyellen@aol.com.

Berkeley Student Program

Last year marked the sixth year of ESF support for the student-taught Esperanto course at the University of California at Berkeley. This free

program continues to thrive and is led by a new instructor, Mr. Josh Brandt-Young. ESF support provides funds for teaching materials as well as a modest scholarship for the teachers.

Interlinguistics Certificate Program

ESF continued to provide scholarship support in 2004 for students enrolled in the Interlinguistics certificate program at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland. Awardees come from Russia, Germany, Lithuania, France and Iran.

INTERLINGUISTIC RESEARCH

Esperanto Corpus

(<http://bertilow.com/tekstaro/>)

ESF continued to support the development of the Esperanto research corpus in 2004. By year's end, the corpus had grown from two million words at the end of 2003 to approximately five million words, encoded following the guidelines of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI). ESF plans to continue supporting the expansion of the corpus and has set a target of ten million words as the next phase in the project's development.

Nicholson Research Proposal

ESF recently approved a research grant to Dr. Nancy Nicholson for an investigation of linguistic human rights at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and language policy and planning in multinational judicial systems. The research project will commence in spring 2005 and be concluded by summer 2006. The

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New Releases

Books

Educating English Learners: Language Diversity in the Classroom.

Author: Crawford, James
Published: Los Angeles: Bilingual Education Services. 2004.
Languages: English. pp. 442.
ISBN: 0-89075-999-5.

Language of Environment: Environment of Language. A Course in Ecolinguistics.

Author: Muhlhäusler, Peter
Published: Brattlebridge. 2003.
Languages: English. pp. 345.
ISBN: 1903292077.

Sed Homoj Kun Homoj.

Author: Sikosek, Ziko Marcus
Published: Rotterdam: UEA. 2005
Languages: English. pp. 197
ISSN: 0024-8215

This work documents the roughly 100 years of Universal Esperanto Congresses that have taken place throughout the world. At the same time, the author traces the history of the Esperanto movement to the present day.

Europäische Einheit in Babylonischer Vielfalt.

Author: Ross, Andreas.
Published: Frankfurt/M et al.: Peter Lang. 2003. Languages: German.

Journals

Journal of Universal Language

Published: Sejong University, Seoul, South Korea: Institute for Universal Language.
For more information see:
www.sejong.ac.kr
www.unish.org

Articles

Language and Society: Issues In Global Education 178.

Author: Tonkin, Humphrey.
Published: New York: American Forum For Global Education. 2004.
Languages: English.

Journal Feature:



ISSN: 0272-2690

Language Problems & Language Planning

Language Problems and Language Planning is published in cooperation with the Center for Research and Documentation on World Language Problems. This international multi-lingual journal publishes articles primarily on political, sociological, and economic aspects of language and language use. The journal also features sections on Interlinguistics and publication reviews.

Featured Articles in Issue 29(1)

- Problemas de comunicación derivados de la lengua en el ámbito marítimo. *Rosa de la Campa Portela*
- The medium-of-instruction debate in Malaysia: English as a Malaysian language? *Peter K.W. Tan*
- Many calls, little action: Global illiteracy in the United States. *Robert A. Scott*

For more information see: www.benjamins.nl



Interkulturo con't

5. Collection of study materials and dissemination to the group(s).
6. Analysis of exchanged information/commentary.
7. Consideration of questions from group members.
8. Review and editing of the information exchanged and documentation of the exercise in a report.
9. Publication of reports on the Interkulturo website.
10. (Optional) Quiz participants on the study themes.

The Interkulturo program administrators have formulated a detailed evolutionary plan for the project throughout 2004 and 2005. The program's public webpages—currently accessible only in Esperanto—will be translated into a variety of languages. English, Russian, German and French translations will be made available first with others to follow. The Interkulturo team will also seek to generate further awareness and recognition of the program within the non-Esperanto speaking academic community. Fundraising efforts will continue throughout 2005 in order to help ensure the continued longevity of the program. Finally, one of the program's chief goals for 2005 is to conduct an independent, third party evaluation of the project and its virtual learning environment. Further information about Interkulturo may be obtained from its website or by contacting its program administrator Radojica Petrović (radp@ptt.yu).

Annual Report con't

results will likely be published as a monograph in 2006 as well as summarized in *Esperantic Studies*.

OTHER INITIATIVES

Hodler Library

In 2004, ESF continued to assist the Universal Esperanto Association in developing a comprehensive plan for the safeguarding of the invaluable holdings of the Hector Hodler Library and for ways to make them more readily available to researchers. The Hodler Library is one of the foremost sources for documentary research on Esperanto and planned languages.

New ESF Administration Website

ESF recently completed the development of a multi-featured, website administration portal. The new portal was designed to improve the foundation's operating efficiencies and better facilitate the exchange of information between members of the Board of Directors and foundation administrators. This new site was designed by J. Clark, ESF's Executive Administrator.

By Mark Fettes, Executive Director
(mfettes@esperantic.org)

Interlingual Links

Around the Globe

Esperantic Studies Foundation
www.esperantic.org

Lernu.net
www.lernu.net

Cinema Esperanto
www.ifrance.com/senlime/kino/kino.htm

Site devoted to Esperanto cinema

CALICO
www.calico.org/

Computer Assisted Language
Instruction Consortium

Year of Languages
www.yearoflanguages.org/

Foundation For Endangered
Languages
www.oqmios.org/home.htm

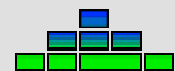
Scattered Tongues
www.ifi.ntnu.no/~hannemo/sc/
Site devoted to constructed languages
& multilingualism

We are interested
in receiving information
about interesting websites,
new books, articles, courses
or other media pertaining to
Esperanto & Interlinguistics.
Send us your latest
discoveries.

All contributions and reactions to
the newsletter are welcome at
newsletter@esperantic.com

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www.esperantic.org

To request additional free print
copies, write to
admin@esperantic.org



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N·A·S·K 2005



North American Summer Esperanto Institute / Nord-Amerika Somera Kursaro

July 4 – July 22, 2005

School for International Training (SIT), Brattleboro, Vermont, USA

Three levels of instruction: post-basic • intermediate • advanced

Three international instructors:

- Birke Dockhorn (Germany), well-known European Esperanto instructor
- Paul Gubbins, Ph.D. (England), Esperanto teacher and author of books, plays and the video series "Esperanto - Pasporto al la Tuta Mondo"
- Lee Miller (USA), Esperanto teacher and American Sign Language interpreter

3 College Credits are available
Course fees: \$995 USD
Scholarships are available.

Housing (inc. 3 meals per/day):
\$700 Dbl. / \$820 Single
Contact: Ellen Eddy (eddyellen@aol.com)

www.esperanto.org/nask/

www.sit.edu/esperanto