

# Esperantic Studies Foundation Annual Report 2009

Humphrey Tonkin  
President

For the Esperantic Studies Foundation the year 2009 was a year of choices. Unable to sustain the rate of spending to which it had become accustomed in previous years, the Foundation, responding to the sharp decline in the stock market, was forced to decide on its priorities, dropping funding for lower-priority activities and concentrating its diminished resources on its highest priorities. In several cases these high-priority items were programs in which the Foundation had already made significant investments in previous years and which it needed to maintain. As a result, there were few resources for new initiatives.

In fact, even before the markets fell, the Foundation had already initiated a process to limit spending and to generate new resources in the form of gifts and grants. These efforts continued in 2009 with mixed results: this new way of thinking about the Foundation's resources will take time to become fully operational and part of the culture of the Foundation.

The broad objectives of the Foundation have not changed. They include: (1) improving the visibility and prestige of Esperanto as a research topic and teaching subject, (2) focusing attention and academic resources on the study of Esperanto and of interlingual communication generally, (3) establishing an intellectual community of teachers and researchers in higher education committed to the above goals, and (4) improving and expanding the operational capacity of the foundation itself.

Each of these objectives was addressed in a number of ways in the course of the year, with varying levels of success.

**(1) Improving the visibility and prestige of Esperanto as a research topic and teaching subject.** Among its activities during the year, the Foundation established a presence at the International Society for Language Study's (ISLS) national conference and at various other events during the year, and it sponsored a symposium at the United Nations in New York in celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the founder of Esperanto. It continues to underwrite the CED Research Fund, which provides small grants to scholars and researchers.

**(2) Focusing attention and academic resources on the study of Esperanto and of interlingual communication generally.** The foundation supports the annual North American Summer Courses in Esperanto (NASK) at the University of California San Diego, which in 2009 celebrated their fortieth anniversary. It also

supports web-based learning initiatives such as Lernu.net. The ongoing support of ESF has allowed lernu.net not only to attract a considerable following (in terms of sheer numbers, it is now the most active Esperanto activity in the world) but also to take advantage of unanticipated opportunities, such as the recognition by Google of Zamenhof's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the sudden surge of interest in Esperanto that that recognition produced (see Appendix).

**(3) Establishing an intellectual community of teachers and researchers in higher education committed to the above goals.** The participation of ESF in the conference of the ISLS (see above) helped raise the visibility of the Foundation in scholarly circles, as did ESF's support for a panel at the Economic Forum in Krynica (Poland) in September, and its hosting of the *Informilo por Interlingvistoj* (newsletter for interlinguists) on its website.

**(4) Improving and expanding the operational capacity of the foundation itself.** Efforts to raise the visibility of the Foundation in circles that could lead to the generation of new funds included a reception at the World Esperanto Congress in Poland in July. Efforts are also underway to streamline the finances of the Foundation to reduce time spent in routine administration. In 2008 ESF revamped its website; in 2009 the website has been translated in to Esperanto and is therefore available in both English and Esperanto.

The projects and activities identified below are each tied to the relevant section of the ESF Medium-Term Plan, 2007-2010, as approved by the ESF Board in November 2006. In 2010, the Foundation will make a decision on whether to renew the plan for a further period or develop a new planning process.

## PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

### EDUCATION

Many of the activities in this area were continuations of activities initiated in previous years.

#### **lernu!** ([www.lernu.net](http://www.lernu.net))

The free, web-based, language-learning environment "lernu!" continued to receive support in 2009. Lernu! is an example of an educational project that supports the improvement of the teaching and learning of Esperanto (Strategic Area 2), and is explicitly identified in Objective 2.4.

**edukado.net** ([www.edukado.net](http://www.edukado.net))

The teaching support site “edukado” received ongoing support in 2009 to help with the continued expansion of its teaching materials and its web-based interface that enables subject matter experts to easily edit and upload content from anywhere in the world. Edukado is an example of an educational project that supports the improvement of the teaching and learning of Esperanto (Strategic Area 2), and is explicitly identified in Objective 2.4.

**NASK (North American Esperanto Institute)** ([www.esperanto.org/nask](http://www.esperanto.org/nask))

ESF has been supporting this unique 3-week immersion program since 1998 and it has become a core educational priority for the foundation. NASK’s 2009 session took place in July in San Diego, California (at the University of California San Diego) – the third year of its return to the West Coast after several years of operation in Brattleboro, Vermont. The NASK program is another example of an educational project that supports the improvement of the teaching and learning of Esperanto (Strategic Area 2), with a specific North American focus, and is explicitly identified in Objective 2.4.

**Interlinguistics Certificate Program**

ESF continued to provide scholarship support in 2009 for students enrolled in the Interlinguistics certificate program at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland, now in its eleventh year. Although the Interlinguistics Certificate Program is an educational project, and hence falls under Strategic Area 2 (Strategic Area 1), it also has clear implications for the building of an intellectual community (Strategic Area 3).

**Conference of Universities Teaching Esperanto and Interlinguistics**

This major conference, held in July 2008, financed by ESF and hosted by the University of Amsterdam, led in 2009 to a meeting on the same subject as part of the Esperanto Teachers World Conference held in Krakow, Poland, in July. Additional discussions also took place during the World Esperanto Congress in Bialystok, Poland, also in July. This project supports both Strategic Area 2 (education) and Strategic Area 3 (scholarly community building).

**Springboard to Languages Project**

The Springboard to Languages Project is an effort to introduce Esperanto in selected primary schools in the UK as part of the country’s new language policy. An important component of the project is the evaluation of students’ language learning, with an emphasis on the propedeutic effects of Esperanto language study preceding French language study. ESF continues to provide funding to support the evaluation of this four-year project. A further grant to Springboard was made in 2009 and another is planned for 2010. Board member Timothy Reagan is providing the benefit of his expertise in the area. This is an educational project, and hence falls

under Strategic Area 2, but it also relates to the building of research on the propedeutic value of the study of Esperanto.

### **Documentary Film Project**

In 2006 ESF agreed to provide limited funding to support a documentary film project on Esperanto produced by Sam Green, whose earlier documentary on the Weather Underground was nominated for an Academy Award. A second grant was awarded in 2007. Mr. Green and his team visited the 2006 World Congress in Florence and the 2007 Congress in Yokohama. *Utopia in Four Movements*, the first of two planned documentaries, premiered recently at the Sundance Film Festival and was very well received. Mr. Green's project is an example of how public discourse on Esperanto and interlingual communication can be encouraged and improved, and is thus an activity that falls under Strategic Area 1.

## **INTERLINGUAL RESEARCH**

### **Interlinguistics Support Fund**

This fund was established, under the leadership of Detlev Blanke (Germany), in 2007 to support small grants for publications, conferences, and similar activities. The sum of \$7,000 was approved for this fund in 2009. Proposals are reviewed and recommended by a three-person committee consisting of Dr. Blanke, Dr. Christer Kiselman (Sweden) and Mr. Osmo Buller (Netherlands). Grants awarded in 2009 included funding to Useni Radjabu (Tanzania) for a comparative study of English and Esperanto, to Heidi Goes for research and teaching in Indonesia, and to Petr Balazs to set up a web-based archive and library, [www.bretaro.net](http://www.bretaro.net), with the aim of preserving in digital form important literary and other works of the Esperanto language community.

A grant in 2008 to Alexander Korzhenkov (Russia) for his biography of Zamenhof helped bring about its publication in 2009, to excellent critical acclaim. ESF has continued to take an interest in the biography, and an abridged version, translated by former ESF board member Ian Richmond, will appear in New York in 2010, published by Mondial. The translation can also be read on the ESF website at <http://www.esperantic.org/en/communications/articles>.

The Interlinguistics Support Fund was established as an alternative way of commissioning and supporting research (Strategic Area 1).

### **The Nitobe Process**

In 2009 there was relatively little activity. The 5<sup>th</sup> Nitobe Symposium took place in Tokyo in August, 2007, with funding from ESF. This symposium explored the linguistic dimensions of Asian integration and globalization, a further step in the

ongoing Nitobe process. Discussions were carried on late in 2008 on the possibility of establishing a regular seminar or symposium every second or third year at the University of Geneva, with some support from ESF, the balance being sought through grants. At present the Foundation is not in a position to guarantee the funding needed to underwrite a regular program, but the idea remains active. The Nitobe Process is relevant with respect to the Medium Term Plan in terms of its implications for Strategic Area 1 (Scholarship and public discourse on Esperanto and interlingual communication), as well as for Strategic Area 3 (Building an Intellectual Community).

### **Research Grant Awards**

(1) In 2008 the Foundation provided a grant in the amount of \$10,000 to the Center for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia University for a residency by Afrikaans poet Antjie Krog in connection with the Center's interest in translation. Shortly before her return to South Africa, Ms. Krog, along with Rosalind Morris (anthropology, Columbia) and Humphrey Tonkin, participated in a recorded conversation on the South African language situation that will appear in *The Translator as Mediator*, a volume in the series Studies in World Language Problems, to be published in 2010. This was its fourth award to the Center.

(2) Nancy Schweda Nicholson (University of Delaware), having completed work on her project on interpretation at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague, will publish some of its findings in *The Translator as Mediator* (see above).

(3) The Foundation provided partial funding for research connected with a project for translating children's books into Bengali and several European languages, using Esperanto as a bridge. Project leaders Probal Dasgupta, Spomenka Štimec, and Zlatko Tišljak completed the project early in 2010. Probal Dasgupta is in the process of publishing several articles derived from his work on the project.

(4) In 2008 the Foundation awarded a grant to the Italian Esperanto Federation to support publication of an Italian translation of Humphrey Tonkin's *Lingvo kaj socio* (2006). The translation, *Una lingua e un popolo: Problemi attuali del movimento esperantista*, was published by Edizioni Eva in 2009. The book was edited by Carlo Minnaja and translated by Elvia Belluco.

(5) A travel grant was provided to Dr. Probal Dasgupta to assist him in further work on the grammar and syntax of Esperanto.

(6) The Foundation provided 1450 euros for the purchase of copies of Andreas Künzli's encyclopedia on planned languages in Switzerland, for distribution to major research libraries in Europe and North America.

## **Conferences**

(1) ESF organized a panel at the conference of the International Society for Language Studies in Orlando, Florida, in June. The papers given at this session, along with others, will form a volume on Esperanto and planned language to be edited by board member Timothy Reagan. The volume will be part of a publication series of ISLS.

(2) ESF continues to fund an award presented at the annual conference of CALICO (Computer-Assisted Language Instruction).

(3) ESF provided support to the European Esperanto Union for a panel at the Economic Forum in Krynica, Poland.

These activities can be identified with Strategic Area 3 (Building an Intellectual Community).

## **Interlinguistics Bulletin**

The Foundation continues to support publication of the hardcopy version of the *Informilo por Interlingvistoj*, published by CED under the editorship of Detlev Blanke (a web version appears on the ESF web pages). Plans are progressing for the publication of an English-language version, similar to that published in German by the Gesellschaft für Interlinguistik. The publication activities of ESF are concerned primarily with Objective 1.4, although they are also relevant with respect to the overall concerns of Strategic Area 3 (Building an Intellectual Community).

## **Esperanto Aktuale**

To assist in the development of a comprehensive website on all aspects of Esperanto and its context, the foundation has provided support to the team E@I, which is developing the site. Esperanto Aktuale is intended to be a multilingual information portal about Esperanto and the global Esperanto movement. The website will focus on providing news and information to the non-Esperanto public. The conceptual design and building of the website continued throughout the year and into 2010. Progress on this project is documented on the Aktuale Wiki at <http://aktuale.info/>.

## **Universal Esperanto Association, Rotterdam**

The Foundation partnered with UEA to move the stock of volumes in the Ludovikito series of works by and on Zamenhof from Tokyo to Rotterdam. The death of the editor of these volumes has led to the dissolution of their publishing organization. Plans call for continued sale of the books through UEA and the distribution of some titles or groups of titles to research libraries.

## **Language and People**

The Foundation awarded a small grant to the Italian Esperanto Federation to support publication of an Italian translation of Humphrey Tonkin's book in Esperanto *Lingvo kaj popolo* (2006). The translation, entitled *Una lingua e un popolo - Problemi attuali del movimento esperantista*, will be published by the Italian-language publisher EVA in May 2009.

## **OPERATIONS**

### **The Board**

At the beginning of the year, board membership consisted of Wallace DuTemple, Mark Fettes (V. P.), Bonnie Fonseca-Greber (Sec.), Grant Goodall (V. P.), Timothy Reagan, Ian Richmond, and Humphrey Tonkin (Pres.). After many years of exemplary service, Ian Richmond (Canada) resigned from the board following his recent retirement. Two new members were elected to the board in the course of the year: Derek Roff and Geoffrey Greatrex. Roff is responsible for technology and pedagogy at the University of New Mexico's Language Learning Center; Greatrex is Associate Professor in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa. Both were previously members of the Foundation's Advisory Board.

### **Operations Committee**

An Operations Committee consisting of Mark Fettes, Timothy Reagan and Humphrey Tonkin was established by Board action in May 2008, and is in telephone contact on a regular weekly basis with Jason Clark, who has continued to administer the finances of the foundation and to conduct other administrative business. He, in turn, works closely with the foundation's Treasurer, Wallace Du Temple, to manage accounts payable and receivable and the organization's financial reporting requirements. At the end of the year, Du Temple was added as a regular member of the Committee.

### **Finance and Administration**

- (1) In a move to cut expenses, Osborne Watts, of Victoria, BC, was engaged to provide accounting services, replacing Raffa PC (Washington, DC).
- (2) At the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010, management of the Foundation's portfolio was moved from S. R. Schill and Associates (Seattle) to the more conveniently located TD Waterhouse (Vancouver). A similar process is underway to transfer the Foundation's banking from Seattle to Victoria, BC, for similar reasons.
- (3) The Foundation has adopted a new formal spending policy, which guided it in building the budget for 2010. This policy calls for a gradual reduction in the percentage of Foundation resources expended in a given year. It will remain in place until the Board judges that spending is once again well within the means of the

Foundation, at which point the percentage will remain constant unless changed by Board action.

### **Prospects**

While the resources available to the Foundation have declined over the past two years, relative stability has now returned. In 2009 the Foundation took many of the steps needed to live within the somewhat straitened circumstances in which it found itself: it reorganized its portfolio management and banking arrangements to make them more responsive to Foundation needs, it strengthened its board, it introduced much tighter spending and budgeting procedures, and it began an effort to augment its resources by new gifts and contributions. A few such gifts have already been received and more will be solicited. The Foundation is also making an effort to become better known and more transparent in its operations. In the course of 2009 it prepared two reports – one on the operations of the Schulze Endowment, which supports the NASK program, and the other, entitled “ESF at Work,” describing its activities. The later can be viewed at [http://esperantic.org/dosieroj/file/ESF at Work 121109.pdf](http://esperantic.org/dosieroj/file/ESF_at_Work_121109.pdf). ESF remains one of the very few organizations providing material support for the study of Esperanto, interlinguistics, and related fields. It continues to play a vital role in the promotion of research and teaching.

Appendix 1: ESF’s Goals for 2009

Appendix 2: The Foundation’s Advisory Board

Appendix 3: The Google doodle on Zamenhof Day and its aftermath.

## Appendix 1: ESF's Goals for 2009

### ESF Goals for 2008-2009

#### Adopted in Program Review Meeting (Sep. 26, 2008)

1. **Develop and implement a fundraising / development strategy.** We got off to a good start with the receptions in Montreal and Rotterdam, but we need to follow those up by developing a fundraising database (starting off with the people who came to our receptions), an initial annual appeal (perhaps timed for the Christmas season/Zamenhof-Tago), a list of prospective major donors, and a strategy for approaching the latter. The strategy would also encompass plans for events in 2009, visibility in the Esperanto media, and use of the website to attract potential donors.
2. **Build on the Amsterdam conference to strengthen university-level collaboration on interlinguistics and Esperanto studies.** The concluding document from Amsterdam identified a number of worthwhile projects that ESF could play a decisive role in making a reality. This focus would help strengthen the relationship with CED, and could complement ongoing work to build on the Nitobe process in Geneva and elsewhere (see next point). ESF's redesigned web pages, together with the website edukado.net, would be important tools in this process.
3. **Work with François Grin and others to advance global/interlinguistic perspectives in language policy.** The Nitobe process may be continued in a number of ways, including the proposed series of conferences in Geneva, a possible symposium in Eastern Europe, and the further development of a web presence. We should try to involve more people actively in this process, and consider how existing resources such as LPLP might contribute.
4. **Develop strategic goals for our collaboration with Esperanto@Interreto and edukado.net.** The Lernu and edukado projects have gained a lot of credibility for ESF within the Esperanto community, and offer a lot of potential for new initiatives (such as Esperanto aktuale, now underway). We need to sit down with the key players and explore how ESF can best work with them to meet our strategic priorities, in place of our current primarily reactive role.
5. **Develop and strengthen NASK.** The NASK summer program at UC San Diego has run smoothly and received very positive reviews from students, both in terms of the location and in terms of the quality of instruction, and it has attracted a relatively large number of full-time university students, which was not often true in the past. Nonetheless, several important challenges remain. The overall number of participants has not risen significantly above the levels at the previous NASK

location in Vermont. There is also a sense that NASK still does not have the international visibility that it could, and that it does not dovetail as closely with other ESF projects and goals as we would like. These concerns need to be addressed as the plans for NASK in 2009 and beyond are developed

- 6. Rationalize ESF's spending policy, financial reporting, and project management.** Next year (2009) will mark the tenth anniversary of the Schulze bequest which helped to transform ESF. In those ten years our activities and ambitions have grown by leaps and bounds, but our administrative procedures have not kept pace. We are also confronting the possibility of a shrinking endowment and significant continuing costs for some projects. We need to set things on a sounder administrative footing to ensure that we can continue to function effectively and, potentially, to grow.

## Appendix 2: The Foundation's Advisory Board

### Advisory Board

**Duncan Charters**, Ph.D. Professor of Foreign Languages, Principia College. Areas of interest: Spanish language and literature, teaching culture and listening comprehension, developing proficiency in language skills, and using technology in teaching

**Probal Dasgupta**, Ph.D. Professor of Linguistics, Indian Statistical Institute; President, Universal Esperanto Association.

**John Edwards**, Ph.D. Professor of Psychology, St. Francis Xavier University. Areas of interest: social psychology of language; language and group identity.

**Alvino Fantini**, Professor Emeritus of Applied Linguistics, SIT Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont. Areas of interest: language education, intercultural communication.

**François Grin**, Ph.D. Professor of Economics, University of Geneva, Switzerland. Areas of interest: language economics, education economics and policy evaluation in these areas.

**David K. Jordan**, Ph.D. Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, University of California San Diego. His academic interests center in cultural and psychological anthropology, sociolinguistics, and the cross-cultural study of religion. Regional interests focus on Chinese society, especially in Taiwan, with a secondary interest in pre-Columbian Mexico.

**Katalin Kovats**, language educator, director of the program edukado.net, holds a doctorate in Esperanto and applied linguistics from Eötvös Lóránd University, Budapest, and now lives in the Netherlands.

**Jonathan Pool**, Ph.D. President of Utilika Foundation & Co-Founder of ESF. Areas of interest: universal interactivity; obstacles to human-human, human-machine and machine-mediated human communication and collaboration arising from the diversity and limitations of languages.

**Ian Richmond**, Ph.D. Professor Emeritus, Université Sainte-Anne. Areas of interest: second language learning, computer-assisted language learning, literary studies, translation.

**Klaus Schubert**, Ph.D. Professor at Universität Hildesheim, Germany; specializes in preparation of technical translators and specialists in international communication. Particular interest in technical translation and machine translation.

**Nancy Schweda Nicholson**, Ph.D. Professor, Dept. of Linguistics & Cognitive Science, University of Delaware. Areas of interest: sociolinguistics, language planning, language and the law, court interpretation, interpretation theory and practice.

## Appendix 3: The Google doodle on Zamenhof Day and its aftermath

### The Google doodle: Challenging Esperanto on the Internet

Some people have called it “the biggest mass recruitment in the entire history of Esperanto.” But it was not a campaign by an Esperantist organization, nor did it involve printing huge numbers of posters or spending thousands of euros. All that was needed was a suitable occasion, a little planning, and the favorable attention of a single somewhat large company. Thus it was that on December 15, 2009, almost two million people across the entire world, driven simply by their own desire to know, sought out information about Zamenhof and Esperanto. The extraordinary result of this Zamenhof Day was due largely to a single event: the appearance of the Esperanto flag on the front page of the most popular internet search engine, Google. On the occasion of Zamenhof’s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary it featured Esperanto. For free.

Dennis Hwang, a 30-year-old Korean American, is perhaps the most famous unknown artist in the world. As chief webmaster at Google, he designs the emblems that the search engine displays on special occasions. Google honors selected anniversaries by modifying its multicolored logo, generally substituting some of its letters with a graphic of similar appearance that relates to the topic. This emblem (known as a “doodle”) appears afterwards on the day in question in place of the regular logo, where it easily catches the attention of users.

Several times a year, Dennis gets together with a small group of Google team members to decide which events to honor with a special emblem. Since 1998, there have been more than 700 of them. By holding their mouse over the emblem, the curious can discover what the doodle means, and if they click on it they are taken to the Google search page where they can learn more. Many of the emblems are shown only in a specific country (for example the “e” changed to “€” to celebrate the acceptance of the euro in Slovakia on January 1, 2009), but some are international and aimed at all countries and all language versions of the website. The most recent such celebrations marked the birthday of Isaac Newton (January 4, 2010), the New Year (January 1, 2010), Christmas (a brief series of emblems from December 21 to 25), and the “150<sup>th</sup> birthday of L. L. Zamenhof, founder of Esperanto (December 15, 2009).

In the Zamenhof Day emblem, instead of the letter “l” of “Google” an Esperanto flag appeared. According to the service Doodlewatch, it appeared in some 33 of Google’s national websites: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Moldova, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and the United States. However, it did not appear in the principal international website [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), and also in a few countries where Google is available in several languages, only certain languages used it (in Canada, the French website ran it, but the English website didn’t). It’s impossible to know why, for example, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Hungary or Lithuania were excluded, but it’s at least possible that the descriptive text was simply not translated into the local language.

Clicking on the emblem took one to the search results for “Zamenhof” and “Esperanto.” At the head of the list were generally national-language articles about Esperanto and Zamenhof from Wikipedia. To one side, an ad for the *lernu!* website of E@I was frequently displayed. And when during the day the press began to report on the anniversary, links to those articles also turned up in the results.

Google does not publish concrete numbers, so we can only guess that the emblem with its flag was seen by some tens of millions of people. Other statistics, however, allow us to measure the effects of the display more precisely.

The Wikipedia statistics are breathtaking: while on an average day around 330 people read the English-language Wikipedia article on “L. L. Zamenhof,” on the occasion of the recent Zamenhof Day it was read 850,000 times! The same was true of “Esperanto,” which received 170,000 visits. All told, in the thirty largest language versions of Wikipedia, there were 1,175,000 visits to the articles on Zamenhof and 650,000 to those on Esperanto. The largest increases were registered by the Italian-language “Lingua esperanto” (100,000 visits) and the Spanish-language “Lázaro Zamenhof” (440,000 visits). The effects were also felt even among more peripheral topics such as “Bialystok,” “Neutral Moresnet,” “Petr Ginz,” “Persone,” “Volapük” or “George Soros.” Not all of this success can be attributed solely to Google: in specific countries a role was also played by initiatives in the press.

Given this massive attention on December 15, some surprised Esperantists received greetings from their non-Esperantist friends on “Esperanto Day.” And quite a lot of people decided to learn the language: the *lernu!* website had a difficult day: its server was suddenly visited by 29,000 people from 114 countries, instead of the 5000 daily visits to which it was accustomed. Because of the extraordinary traffic, the pages opened very slowly, but the website didn’t crash. The following day, when things quieted down, evidently numbers of people came back to start their studies, because on that day, although there were only 9000 visitors, they visited a record number of 171,000 pages. Also individual Esperanto organizations reported big increases in sign-ups for courses; for example, visits to the website of the national Esperanto organization UFE increased tenfold, as did registrations for online courses; and visitors to the website of the international organization SAT, based in Paris, went up by a factor of seven.

The huge impact of the Google doodle clearly shows the power of the Internet as a means of getting the word out about Esperanto. The situation is somewhat similar to the one behind the success of the Esperanto Wikipedia: if in an important web project there happens to be someone sympathetic to Esperanto and if there are enough additional “ordinary” Esperantists who support it, it’s sometimes possible to achieve unimagined successes. Nonetheless, further resources are still necessary: recent events clearly indicate the extreme necessity of high-quality national-language information about Esperanto and Zamenhof in Wikipedia – though at present only the articles on Esperanto in the Czech, Italian, Japanese and Catalan languages meet that standard, and even they contain some outdated information; none of the articles on Zamenhof can be described as outstanding. A focused international effort led by a few specialists could make a big difference here.

A detailed analysis of the Google event, including precise figures and sources, can be found at the E@I blog: <http://blog.ikso.net>.

*Adapted from an article by Marek Blahus*