

# **The Esperanto Advantage**

**An Easy To Learn Language  
For Building Commercial, Political  
And Cultural Connections Worldwide  
In Our Information Age**

**This language was developed to be easily learned  
by people with no special talent for languages.  
Not associated with any nation or ethnic population  
this language is also politically correct to adopt  
and implement by all peoples of the world.**

**With the globalization of the world economy and the global  
outreach made possible by jetliners, television and most re-  
cently the Internet, the need for effective interpersonal com-  
munication between peoples of all regions and continents has  
never been greater.**

**By Francis M. Ardi**



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### A Need to Maximize Global Outreach

For those fortunate to be living in the Western Hemisphere, being fluent in English and Spanish would provide access to half the globe, with the exception of Brazil and Quebec and a few Caribbean islands.

In Europe, you can imagine most people being fenced in their small portions of the continent, being unable to communicate with people beyond borders. The former Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact nations are no longer set apart from the West. This presents our world with even more languages.

Whatever part of the world, the global outreach possibilities of the Internet will never be fully realized using only the national languages spoken by people today.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was assumed that peoples of the world would learn English or French as a second language. However this has not become as widespread as hoped for since the two languages are not really easy to learn.

In the late nineteenth century, someone had a vision of creating a language that would break down barriers among different peoples of the world. It would be an easy language to learn, developed to provide consistency in its form and usage of the various parts of speech.

A language that takes less than two years to learn to read, write and understand even by individuals who have no special gift for languages.

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The Western Hemisphere has relatively few spoken languages.

Fluency in English and Spanish gives you access to many countries in North and South America



Europe by contrast is a patchwork of languages.

Fluency in even three languages would be restricting in where one can communicate effectively with the local population. Europeans would certainly benefit from adopting a global language.

### Easy to Learn and Politically Correct to Implement

This language would not be associated with any nation or region, overcoming the reluctance of people to learning another language. Besides being a means of communication, a language is also an expression of one's national identity.

With Esperanto, you would not be imposing your culture on other peoples. Since you too had to learn this language, you would also not be asking other people to do what you yourself had not done

This report examines current difficulties of communication between peoples and nations, both on a personal level and by using information systems.

### The Need For an International Language

In this day and age of television, jetliners, long-distance telephone, satellites and most recently the Internet, people have easier access, physically and virtually, to our world's distant regions and continents than in times past.

Now more than ever, language barriers present a major obstacle to social and commercial interactions between peoples in different regions of the world. There will be need for a global language, easy to learn and not having to do with any nation or ethnic population.

Imagine a university professor of medicine having made numerous discoveries about the various factors that trigger the release of insulin. Studies were conducted on individuals unable to control their appetite, thus making them unable to reduce weight. He set out to publish his findings in hope of receiving feedback from researchers at other institutions conducting similar studies in other countries.

The problem is this university is in the Czech Republic. Now where else do people speak Czech except in the Czech Republic and Slovakia?

Another case would be a Danish consulting engineering firm specializing in wind power generating and distribution systems. This firm uses a web site to provide information to electric utilities in other European countries. With the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the Iron Curtain, Western Europe has expanded and includes more different spoken languages.

How can such a company reach out to its potential markets?



## **Advantages of Adopting an International Language**

Include  
but are not limited to:

UN General Assembly  
sessions

Instruction Manuals for  
computer software and  
industrial equipment

Discussions between  
heads of state

Web Sites and Infor-  
mation distributed on  
the Internet intended  
for international  
audiences

Publications of interest  
to all peoples of the  
world, for example:  
The Wall Street Journal

Science and education

International  
commerce

Travel and Tourism

High tech items like computers come with user's manuals. To effectively market high-tech devices worldwide, a user manual needs to be written in a language the customer can easily understand. Multi-lingual manuals are the norm these days. Translation efforts in preparing these manuals are expensive and time consuming.

With developing countries becoming prosperous and more individuals in growing economies becoming wealthy industrialists, Swiss banks are finding it harder to conduct business in English, French and German. Some banks now employ Arabic translators.

In the political arena, it is becoming increasingly important for heads of state and delegates to communicate directly, without the risk of being misunderstood when working with translators.

General assembly sessions at the United Nations require many participants to wear earphones to hear the discussion translated into their own languages. The cost of employing translators is a large part of United Nations' operating costs.

And let's not forget about leisure travelers, like someone in Lithuania wanting to spend winter on Spain's Costa del Sol. At present time, he'll have a lot of communication problems.

### **Introducing Esperanto, a constructed language developed to overcome the problems of learning most present-day national languages.**

Considering present day problems it would behoove the educators of the world to consider implementing this language, at least on a voluntary basis. This language would definitely be of interest to people who look at our world as a global village.

#### **Where and How Esperanto Originated**

Esperanto was the brainchild of Lazar Zamenhof, who grew up in the town of Bielovstok in what is now Poland. During the 1860's and 1870's the region was part of the Russian Empire. Bielovstok's population consisted of Russians, Germans, Poles and Jews. Each of the four ethnic groups had its own language and customs.

Lazar Zamenhof himself was Jewish. He grew up speaking Russian and attended services in Hebrew at the synagogue.

Zamenhof was dismayed by how people of the four ethnic groups did not get along mainly because of their different languages. He realized a language was more than just a way for one to interact. It is also part of a person's ethnic identity.

Zamenhof reasoned if the peoples of Bielovstok could adopt a language that was not part of a nation but was for all mankind, there would be more harmony and cooperation and less



**Esperanto was developed towards the end of the nineteenth century.**

**It was an idea ahead of its time.**

**Mass communication was almost non-existent at the time.**

**There was much less travel between countries back then.**

**Users of Esperanto were persecuted during World War 2 by Hitler and Stalin.**

**Stalin considered Esperanto to be the language of spies.**

**Yet the language was kept alive among select groups and there has been a renewed interest in the language.**

discord among the peoples of the region.

At age fifteen, Zamenhof began work on developing a new language, keeping in mind the difficulties of various national languages. It took more than ten years to develop a usable, working language. He published a proposal for an international language as a brochure under the pen name of Dr. Esperanto.

In 1905, a Universal Congress was held in Boulogne, a French city on the English Channel. Zamenhof delivered a speech in Esperanto to individuals from 20 different countries who came together to talk to each other in this new language.

### **Why Esperanto hadn't become popular.**

This new language was developed in the late 1800s. It was an idea ahead of its time. With few exceptions, someone had to travel for days to reach a land where people spoke a different language. There were no telephones or broadcast media. Communications between distant lands was at the speed of a horse or a sailing ship.

There was also political opposition to Esperanto. Both Hitler and Stalin persecuted users of this new language. Stalin labeled Esperanto as "the language of spies." Consequently the use of Esperanto never reached a significant level of popularity. However the language was somehow kept alive and slowly spread among select groups.

### **Why Choose Esperanto?**

With an ever increasing need for individuals and organizations to communicate across borders and oceans, why consider a "synthesized" language? Why doesn't everybody learn English? That apparently seems to be the trend. Heads of state of many countries like Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates are conversant in English. There seems to be an English-speaking person at every nation's capital or international airport.

For countries like India, formerly under British rule, English has become a uniting language where people of different parts of India from Kashmir to Madras speak several native tongues like Hindi and Gutaraji, derived mainly from Sanskrit, the ancient language upon which the languages of India are based.

In fact people from different parts of India communicate in English when they get together. Many school classes in India are conducted in English, particularly the sciences.

### **Why Not English?**

Aside from the fact that English is an ethnic language, the English peoples no longer play the dominant role they once did during Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Many developing countries of the Twentieth century have grown economically.

### **English is not the easiest language to learn.**

Aside from ethnic and political sentiments, English is one of the more complex languages. In the first grade, pupils



## Why Not English?

English is not an easy language to learn.

If it were, it would be a lot more widely spoken, especially with the influence of the British Empire and the economic prominence of the United States of America during the Twentieth Century.

Many immigrants to the United States never became conversant, let alone fluent in English.

English is full of inconsistencies between the way it is spoken and the way it is written.

learned that every vowel has more than one sound. Usually two sometimes three. An example is the vowel sound u as in mule, put and cut. The sound of A in art, act, and ace. The u sound is sometimes represented by o as in move or oo as in loose. Even the consonant combo gh is complex sounding like an f as in enough, or it can be silent as in through, thorough.

Certain words like viscount, quay, queue, Chloe, Sean, McLeod... speak these as they are written and people will look at you funny.

Many foreigners, despite studying English for years, never become conversant let alone fluent. This is particularly true amongst Asian immigrants to the United States. Far eastern languages share nothing of the roots of English.

In summary, English is fraught with double consonants, silent letters, a single letter representing multiple vowel sounds and vice versa, and numerous inconsistencies not easy to define. If English is not that difficult to learn, it would already be the international language and there would be no renewed interest in Esperanto.

## A Language Developed for Learning

Zamenhof carefully analyzed the difficulties of learning another contemporary language as a second language, giving special attention to French and English, with their numerous inconsistencies between spoken and written words.

He examined German with its radically different syntax where the main verb comes at the end of a sentence. In the ideal international language, each vowel and consonant sound is represented only one way in the written word.

The basic feature of the Esperanto language is that words are pronounced as they are written in all instances. Each sound is represented alphabetically in only one way. There are no double consonants and no silent letters in Esperanto words.

Esperanto uses the Latin alphabet with all vowels and without the letters Q W X Y. The five vowels, a e i o u have only one sound. These vowels are pronounced in the Continental and not the English sounds. For example, a as in Mark, e as in men, I varies between feet and fit. O varies between polish and Polish. U as in Sue.

Complex vowel sounds are written as diphthongs using, for example, the semi-vowel j (pronounced as y) -oj -> oy as in boy. aj -> ay as in hay. There are other vowel combinations that are pronounced as written. Some consonants are modified by adding a ^ on top to indicate an alternate sound.

An example would be g is g as in get, and ĝ is the g in gem. This is in keeping with the fundamental principle of each literal sound be represented only one way. Another would be s, the s in sit, and ŝ, the sh in she.





Since current computer keyboards do not have the capacity to type circumflex accented letters such as  $\hat{c}$   $\hat{g}$   $\hat{h}$   $\hat{j}$   $\hat{s}$ , it was suggested to the Esperanto Convention to represent these as ch, gh, hh, jh, and sh, respectively ( $\hat{c}$  is pronounced ch as in church) so one can type Esperanto with a standard computer keyboard and not use the awkward insert feature of MS Word or have to learn new typing maneuvers if there was a way to type these characters.

### **Consistency is key to easy learning**

**Consistency is key to easy learning.**

**Esperanto makes full use of the human mind's ability to form patterns.**

**There is only one way plurals of nouns are formed, only one way to express present, past and future tense,**

**There are no masculine and feminine genders of nouns.**

**There are no irregular verbs.**

Some of the features of Esperanto based on consistency in form include: All nouns end with the letter o. All adjectives end with an a. Personal pronouns end in the letter i. (mi, vi, li, ŝi, ĝi, ni, ili, meaning I, you, he, she, it, we, they, respectively) There's only one way to form plurals of a noun. You add the letter j at the end (sounds like a y) viro – man, viroj – men. libro – book, libroj – books.

Note how two different ways English plurals were formed in the example above. The accent of multi-syllable words always falls on the penultimate syllable, i.e. the next before last, e.g. Es-per-an-to, fen-es-tro (window).

### **Some additional features of Esperanto**

Like English, Esperanto has no genders (masculine, feminine, neuter) and there is only one definite article to use with all nouns. It was surprising to learn that German has three genders, masculine, feminine, and neuter, and it would sound ignorant amongst Germans to say "der Haus". (it's "das Haus").

In other languages, especially the Romance and Semitic nouns are either masculine or feminine. Genders of Italian nouns are easy to tell, masculine vowels end in o, feminine in an a. This is not so clearly defined in other languages, an additional burdensome learning task.

As with Latin, the ending of a noun can be modified to indicate that it is the object of a sentence rather than the subject. This helps to avoid ambiguous sentences so common in English, e.g. "John loves Mary more than George." Could this mean "more than George loves Mary" or "more than John loves George?"

There is no conjugation of verbs and only one way to express present, past, and future tenses of verbs. There are no irregular verbs in Esperanto.

### **Esperanto Vocabulary**

Words in Esperanto are derived from a variety of contemporary European languages as well as from Latin. This reinforces the idea that Esperanto is a language for all peoples. People from diverse nationalities see "part of them" in this new language.

The majority of words derive from Latin, either directly or from French or Spanish. Some examples are shown at left:



## **Esperanto's Vocabulary is derived from multiple languages.**

*Here are a few examples*

### **Latin**

patro - father:  
frato - brother.  
filo - son.  
forta - strong.  
floro - flower.  
vero - truth.

### **French or Spanish**

chambro - room.  
pomo - apple.  
tre - very.  
amiko - friend.  
estas - is, are, am.  
plumo - pen.  
blanka - white.

### **Anglo-Germanic**

birdo "beard-o" - bird.  
stono - stone.  
suno - sun.  
tajloro - tailor.  
hundo - dog.  
jaro - year.  
knabo - boy.  
tago - day.

## **Why Esperanto is Easy to Learn – and English Difficult.**

The reason Esperanto is much easier to learn than English is the consistency in its forms of words lends itself to the natural logical processes of the human mind. A common mistake made by children would be to say "This lasted me two months but it costed a lot of money." or "I see ducks and geoses in the pond."

That there is only one way of forming plurals, past tenses, nouns, adjectives, etc. makes learning Esperanto a lot more intuitive.

In English, there are so many different ways of altering words to suit their context that each has to be learned individually. In Esperanto, you basically go with what logically follows.

### **Looking Ahead**

Having made the case for a second or auxiliary language that is easy to learn, let's look at some of the practical, information-age applications and implications.

Conversations between heads of states need not take twice the time because they have to work with translators. Besides, they would be communicating directly.

Esperanto would become the official language of the United Nations.

There would be Esperanto newspapers and periodicals. Even the Wall Street Journal, USA Today and Pravda could someday have Esperanto editions.

### **The Internet Language of the Future?**

Since so many forms of information are available over the Internet for the whole world to access, it would behoove information providers to make their documents also available in a global language. In doing so, new markets would be open to companies in all parts of the world.

Documents distributed via the Internet that could also be available in Esperanto include but are not limited to:

- Web Pages
- Emails
- eBooks
- Newsletters
- Ezines
- White Papers
- Visitor Data Capture Forms
- Multimedia (streaming audio and video components of web pages)

You can indicate on your English web page that the page is also available for viewing in Esperanto.





**Web sites  
intended for  
international  
audiences  
will have  
a duplicate  
set of pages  
in Esperanto.**

Documents  
distributed via the  
Internet that could  
also be available in  
Esperanto include:

- Web Pages
- Emails
- Free Ebooks
- Newsletters
- Ezines
- White Papers
- Ebooks
- Multimedia

Downloadable document pages for items such as eBooks and white papers could include links for downloading Esperanto versions of the documents.

Product literature and owner's manuals, both printed and downloadable, can be made available to non-native speakers in Esperanto.

### **You Can Start Learning Esperanto For Free**

Since it is possible to learn the language by reading and writing first, there are web sites that offer free learning resources. There is a list on the last page of this report.

With a shift of economic focus to the eastern part of our world and the emergence of more nations into the global economy, there will be more interest around the world in a language that everybody can understand.

Right now few people scattered across the continents are aware there even exists such a language known as Esperanto. Then again, prior to 1990, very few people knew about the Internet and this so-called "information superhighway". In only a few years, the popularity grew exponentially to where email and web site have now become household words, and just about every good sized company has a web site.

Who's to say that Esperanto won't experience a similar explosion in popularity?

### **Just fifteen minutes a day**

It's been often said that if you would spend fifteen minutes a day on a subject, you can acquire a working knowledge of the subject in about a year's time. Using some of the online resources listed below and in the left column of this page will enable someone to at least be able to read and write and perhaps perform tasks like translating a web page into Esperanto in about a year's time.

**Go to the next page for online resources for learning the Esperanto Language.**



***If you devote just  
fifteen minutes a day  
to learning  
Esperanto,***

***You'll be able to  
translate a web site  
into Esperanto in  
about a year from  
now.***

## **Learn Esperanto Online Free**

There are lots of learning resources online offering eBooks, video tutorials, individual lessons, etc. Some are free.

Here's one I recommend:

Visit

[www.esperanto.com.au/learn-esperanto/learning-online/](http://www.esperanto.com.au/learn-esperanto/learning-online/)

Scroll downwards to where you see the green icons (thumbnail images) of books.

I suggest you start with

***An Elementary Esperanto Primer by Daniel M. Albro***

This is one of the original ebooks on the Esperanto Language. It covers the basics for anybody wanting to learn Esperanto.

Feel free to explore the other resources on the page, like some of the other textbooks.

### Organizations

<http://www.esperanto.org> - a gateway page to numerous regional Esperanto societies in cities and countries around the world.

Universala Esperanto Asocio (Universal Esperanto Association)

<http://www.uea.org/index.html>

For white paper writing service, visit

<http://www.francisardi.com/whitepapers>.

