Queen's University, Belfast

The EU and the Irish Language: Identity and Linguistic Diversity[1]

Seán Ó Riain

This article expresses the personal view of the author.

Is cuimhin liom agus mé i mo pháiste go ndúirt m'athair liom tráth gur chainteoir dúchais Gaeilge a sheanathair féin, a fuair bás sa bhliain 1934 in aois a 87 mbliana dó. Is minic, mar sin, a chuala m'athair an teanga á labhairt ina óige, cé gur beag tuiscint uirthi a thóg sé leis. Ach fanfaidh go deo i m'aigne an méid a dúirt sé liomsa faoin nGaeilge: "It was a beautiful language. Pity we lost it." Níorbh amhlaidh domsa, toisc an Ghaeilge a bheith go líofa ag mo mháthair agus nár leasc léi a heolas a roinnt linn. Cúis aoibhnis domsa i gcónaí ab ea mo chuid eolais ar gach gné den Ghaeilge a dhoimhniú. Ach ní fada gur thugas faoi deara nárbh ionann an blas a fhaigheann a lán páistí eile ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge, agus gur ró-mhinic gur crá croí gan tairbhe leo í. Chaitheas na blianta ag iarraidh teacht ar leigheas na faidhbe seo, agus is dóigh liom gur éirigh liom, in áit nach mbeifeá ag súil lena leithéid. Sin í ábhar na cainte seo, ach sula bpléifead leis sin, ba mhaith liom an t-ábhar a shuíomh sa chomhthéacs Eorpach is gá, dar liom.

[I remember as a child when my father told me that his grandfather was a native Irish speaker who died in 1934 aged 87. My father therefore had often heard Irish spoken as a youngster, although he understood little of it. One remark he made to me about Irish, however, made an indelible mark on my attitude to it: "It was a beautiful language. Pity we lost it." Because of my mother's fluency, and the amount of Irish she spoke to us, I was in the fortunate position of not having lost it. Deepening my knowledge of Irish became a life-long pleasure. I soon realised, however, that other children's experience of Irish was far from being a pleasure, and that all too often it meant years of toil with no apparent reward. I subsequently spent long years searching for a way to change this, and I think I finally found one, in a most unlikely place. That it the subject of my talk today, but before dealing with this point, I would like to situate this discussion in its essential European context.]

How does European identity relate to the Irish language? A common feature would appear to be equity or equal treatment, expressed in Irish as "cothrom na Féinne", the fair play characteristic of the ancient Irish band of heroes, the Fianna. The Irish language lacked this equitable treatment for many centuries, and its absence today for most European languages may imperil both Europe's identity and its linguistic diversity. Although the present international language order pays lip service to the importance of human rights, and to the equality of individual rights irrespective of language, in practical terms it rejects them by perpetuating linguistic injustice. This presentation looks at a radically different system, which would give Irish equal status with all other national languages in the EU, while immeasurably improving the teaching and learning of Irish. The present EU communication system is compared on a number of criteria to three other systems (Annex I).

The EU Communication System

> "The majority of Europeans unfortunately do not yet give consideration to the language problem, because they believe that *it can easily be solved by the use of English. I completely disagree*: the international use of an ethnic language implies significant problems of learning and, above all, of cultural colonialism and political inequality." (Bonino 1996:42).

EU Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, *Emma Bonino*, March 1996

Although little discussed, Europe does have a language problem - how to balance the needs of efficient and effective communication with the equally vital need to protect and promote cultural and linguistic diversity. The topicality of this problems will be apparent from the following paragraphs. Current policy gives us a translation

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1 The present article is an update of a bilingual, Irish-English, pamphlet (Ó Riain 2001) which was launched by Minister of State Mary Hanafin, T.D., on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Brian Cowen, T.D., at Iveagh House, Dublin on 11 July 2001. The Northern Ireland launch of the pamphlet took place on the occasion of the Symposium *Language and Politics* at Queen's University, Belfast, on 23 August 2001.

bill of over *Euro 2 billion per year* (Alterman 1997: 7). The costs are set to increase exponentially with EU enlargement (in 1994 with 9 official working languages the possible combination of languages for translation/interpretation was *72*; now, with 11 languages, it is *110*; following EU enlargement, if all present candidates join, with 23 languages, it will be 506).

In 1995 the French Minister Lamassoure put forward the idea of limiting the number of working languages to the five "most often used" (French, English, German, Italian and Spanish). The suggestion was rejected by the European Parliament by a huge majority (Ó Riain 1997:520). The Franco-German summit of May 2000 agreed that each country would support the language of the other, as both feel under pressure from English. French Foreign Minister Védrine decided in September 2000 that all French diplomats should learn German. However, Spain often opposes the use of German as a working language, and demands that Spanish be given equal status to German.

On 19 March 2001 French President Jacques Chirac called for "an alliance of the Latin-based languages, to counter the dominance of English." In July 2001, accordingly to *Die Zeit* of 5 August 2001, EU Commission President Prodi decided that initial drafts put to meetings of the Commission should be in English only, "to increase efficience". He soon received letters from the French and German Foreign Ministers, Hubert Védrine and Joschka Fischer, strongly opposing his proposal, and pointing out that it ran the risk of weakening the Commission's legitimacy be making it more distant from many EU citizens. Finally, in August 2001, a congress of 1,600 teachers of German in Luzern, Switzerland, passed a resolution "criticising the EU authorities for paying insufficient attention to the promotion of multilingualism."

The process of European integration will clearly have profound implications for all European languages. The effective disappearance of physical frontiers will increase the importance of language as a mark of identity, and this may benefit Irish. But what of language use in tomorrow's Europe? The present tendency of increased use of English as a lingua franca, without any formal decisions on the matter, is viewed by many as a solution. This "solution" however, leaves a number of fundamental questions unanswered. (Fettes 1991: 201-213).

English as a European lingua franca?

First, the use of English gives a considerable advantage to the 16 % of EU citizens who are native English speakers, and to speakers of closely related languages (German, Dutch, Danish and Swedish), over all other Europeans (Héraud et al.1995: 39). How can this be reconciled with the concept of equal opportunity (1), which is fundamental to long-term political stability?

Second, how can the use of one ethnic language as a European lingua franca be reconciled with the EU policy of supporting and promoting linguistic diversity? How does it contribute to linguistic diversity that over 90% of young Europeans study English in preference to all other European languages, even those of their closest neighbours? (Chiti-Batelli 1987: 106).

Third, how can the use of a language, the vast majority of whose native speakers live outside Europe, contribute in any way to the strengthening of a *European identity*, a sine qua non of European unity? Is it not more likely that the use of English would further strengthen American cultural dominance in Europe? (some 80% of films on European cinema screens are American; 2 % of films on US cinema screens are European, according to Phillipson 1996:1). The use of French, German, or Italian as an EU lingua franca would be less objectionable from this perspective, as a large majority of their users actually live in Europe.

Fourth, learners need years of residence in an English-speaking country, or unusual linguistic talent, to reach the standard of native English speakers. Would the further anglicisation of Europe not confer increased privileges on the European élite who are rich enough, or talented enough, to reach this standard of English?

English is a beautiful language, with a superb literature, much of it produced by my fellow-countrymen. It may be likened to a red rose, which is an almost universally popular flower. But the popularity of a garden full of red roses, where there is no other flower, is at least questionable (Bormann and Frank 1994: 137), and we Irish are familiar with the tendency of English to displace other languages. In addition, some recent publications (Cushing 1994: 1-16; Piron 1994: 82-88) question how many aircraft crashes may be due to misunderstandings caused by the inherent ambiguities of English (2), and the difficulty of its complex sound-system for non-native speakers (Wells 1987: 779), based on its position as the sole working language of international aviation.

Human Rights, language rights?

In the past half century the Council of Europe (and at the global level, the United Nations system) has created a system of international law, based on individual human rights and fundamental freedoms. There has been a radical move away from all previous practice, towards a recognition of what are essentially the equal rights of all human beings. Progress in the general human rights area has, however, not been parallelled by progress in the area of language use in international communication, which continues to be regulated by the "might is right" principle: the dominant languages are used and the concept of equal rights and opportunities is ignored.

In present-day Europe it seems natural to some that 63 million native speakers of English, or 64 million French speakers, should always have the right to use their native language for international communication and that 40 million Poles, and the majority of Europeans, should never have this right. Multinationals unashamedly impose English, irrespective of the language dignity of the 93% of humanity whose native language is not English. This has been described by one linguist as "language fascism"(Piron 1994: 313), as it gives one further advantage to an already privileged minority.

It must be stressed that the above considerations apply to the imposition of any national language, not only to English. A century from now those very arguments may be used by English-speakers in a world whose dominant language is Chinese (it may be noted in passing that the Chinese Foreign Ministry ended interpretation into English of its regular press briefings from September 1996 - *The Economist*, 31 August 1996.).

An inter-ethnic language

Many tolerate a situation which they recognise as far from ideal because they think that there is no alternative. **The concept of an inter-ethnic language as a viable option is as taboo in our society as was that of the market economy in the former Soviet Union.** Without any serious scientific study of its vitality, current use in creative writing and scientific conferences or easy learnability, they exclude a living language (Lo Jacomo 1981: 23-4) which was born in 19th Century Poland -- the neutral international language, Esperanto (3), launched by the Polish oculist, Dr L. Zamenhof (Boulton 1960; Centassi and Masson 1995) in Warsaw in 1887. Controversial from the beginning, Bakonyi described it "cette langue plus précise que la pensée" (*this language more precise than thought*) (4), whereas Boirac saw in it "le latin de la démocratie" (*the Latin of democracy* (5) - Burney 1966: 94, 95). It is likely that the negative connotations of the word owe much to Nazi and Stalinist propaganda against this "language invented by a Jew" (Lins 1988: 90).

Claude Piron of Geneva University, likens this *a priori* rejection to the rearguard battle by the supporters of Roman numerals, who succeeded in delaying for several centuries the adoption of the numerals we now use, even though a few minutes study is sufficient to show which system is superior (Piron 1994: 334). The political option of a language which would permit non-hierarchical interaction is not one that tends to appeal to speakers of dominant languages (Phillipson 1996: 15). Professor Humphrey Tonkin, President of Hartford University, Connecticut, points to the threat posed by larger ethnic languages to their smaller neighbours:

> "The linguistic imperialism of a few major powers has denied most nations their own adequate means of expression, forcing English and French on them, along with their respective cultures" (Tonkin 1993: 131).

International Recognition

Already in 1928 the well-known linguist Antoine Meillet could write: "All theoretical argument is beside the point: Esperanto works"(Martinet 1989: 5). PEN International, the international association of poets, essayists and novelists, gave its formal seal of recognition to Esperanto as a literary language when it accepted an Esperanto writers' branch in 1993. The Scottish Esperanto poet, William Auld, was nominated for the Nobel Prize for literature in 1998 (Ertl 1998: 161), and in saying this I am conscious of addressing many Scots speakers here this morning. Janton (1989: 213) writes that literary translations into Esperanto are normally closer to the original than translations to other languages. Such translations are almost always prepared by native speakers of the languages concerned, whereas translations into, for instance, English are normally carried out by native speakers of English (Auld 1991 contains translations by native speakers of 73 languages).

Esperanto quickly became a community language and today is no more "artificial" (6) than a test-tube baby. It is in daily use in some 1,000 families (Corsetti 1996: 265). Richardson (1988:18) cites Mario Pei: "Esperanto is an

artificial language about the same way an automobile is an artificial horse." The language is used by a small but worldwide diaspora of some 3 million people (Tonkin 1993: 132), and its contribution to the promotion of international understanding has been recognised by UNESCO resolutions of 1954 and 1985.

The European Parliament, and the Pope, show support

Some 20% of MEPs, including *16 of the 18 Irish MEPs* (Pirlot 1997: 3), have signed a document calling for serious consideration of the use of Esperanto in EU institutions. The language has over 45,000 titles, 200 regular magazines, is used daily on radio from Warsaw to Beijing; its use on the Internet (7) is rapidly growing (Fettes 1997); and over 1,100 streets in 54 countries bear the name "Esperanto" or "Zamenhof" (Röllinger 1997: 12). Nobel Prize winner for Economics in 1994, Professor Reinhard Selten of Bonn University, has published in Esperanto and has edited a scholarly book on "The Costs of European [Non-] Communication" (Selten 1997).

In 1994 the Pope began to use Esperanto in his Christmas and Easter blessings, *Urbi et Orbi*, thus becoming the first Head of State to accord it official recognition. The Vatican published the official text of the Mass and Lectionary in 1995 (IKUE 1995). Chiti-Battelli (1987) considers that Esperanto could have the role of Latin in the Middle Ages, without the threat to national languages implied by the ceaseless expansion of English. Esperanto is taught in 125 universities throughout the world (Tonkin 1993: 124).

Language Learning

I now come to my central point: how to relate what I have been saying to the learning of Irish and other languages. Not only is Esperanto easier to learn than other languages, but it is quite difficult for anybody who has not learned Esperanto to understand how incredibly easy it is. For instance, it is possible to reach the same level in a *month* of Esperanto study as in a year's study of English or French (Piron 1994: 189), and this actually understates the difference. Perhapd a better example is the following: to master the French verb, one need to become thoroughly familiar with over 2,500 verbal forms (variations for person, tense, mood, etc.). To do the same in Esperanto, one needs to learn just 6 endings (see Annex 2 below). Eichholz (1982: 604) shows that English-speakers with no previous knowledge of Esperanto may recognise up to 70% of a given text (8). Perhaps the most interesting point relates to the so-called "propedeutic" ("lernfaciliga") use of Esperanto, as made in a report by the Finnish Ministry of Education (Opetusministeriön: 59):

> "The results of teaching experiments show that *an introductory Esperanto course considerably improves the success of students in the study of foreign languages.*"

This conclusion is supported by research conducted by the Cybernetic Faculty of Paderborn University (Frank and Lobin 1998): in one experiment (Frank 1982), group A were taught English for 800 hours over 5 years, group B were taught Esperanto for 104 hours, and subsequently needed only 635 hours of English tuition to reach the standard of group A *in English*, i.e. group B reached a working knowledge of both languages, while saving 61 hours. Further experiments showed that the time saved in this way may be up to 50% more than the time taken by the Esperanto course. **Possibly the most significant finding was that the less linguistically talented a student was, the more he/she benefited from the preparatory Esperanto course. The potentially radical implications for the teaching of Irish in English-medium schools in Ireland are worth exploring, as it could give their first taste of success in language learning to thousands who have known only failure and discouragement.** It would be of most benefit to the c. 70% of English-medium primary school pupils who do not reach their Irish language learning objectives, according to research by Dr John Harris of ITÉ (The Linguistics Institute of Ireland).

Corsetti and La Torre 1995 provide numerous references to such experiments worldwide since 1921. The preparatory Esperanto course appears to contribute to improved acquisition of other languages for at least two reasons: 1. Esperanto's regularity and lack of exceptions encourages learners, particularly the majority who do not have exceptional language-learning ability. Rapid progress in Esperanto, and its practical use in correspondence, on the Internet, etc. tend to increase interest in other languages and cultures. 2. As less than 1% of Esperanto's vocabulary is truly artificial, every other Esperanto word learned brings with it a word in another language (usually the most-studied languages, such as English, French, German). The preparatory Esperanto course is therefore an excellent preparation for the study of French, Spanish, Italian or German. Pinto and Corsetti 2001 describe a recent experiment with two groups of Italian secondary school student which confirm Esperanto's propaedeutic value. See also Tišljar 1997.

Esperanto's Irish Connections

Esperanto is clearly not closely related to Irish, but it was first popularised in Britain by two Irishmen, Richard Geoghegan and J.C. O'Connor. Geoghegan wrote the first Esperanto textbook for English-speakers in 1888. He was also responsible for the green colour on the Esperanto flag, and for the five-point green star worn by its speakers to recognise each other (the Esperanto "fáinne"!). The first Esperanto group in Ireland was set up in 1907, and Joseph Mary Plunkett, executed in 1916, was a member of its committee (Lapenna et al. 1974:467). There are occasional references to Esperanto in Irish literature, Mac Carráin (1982:45-6), for example. There is an Esperanto version of *Chúirt an Mheán-Oíche/The Midnight Court* (Merriman 1980), and of some of Ó Ríordáin's poetry (Ó Ríordáin 1998).

The Euro - "Esperanto money"?

In 1994 a Bavarian politician referred to the proposed common European currency as "Esperanto money" (Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 23 February 1994). Today the EURO has been adopted by 11 EU member states. At no stage during the negotiations leading to its adoption was there a serious proposal to accept the D-mark, the strongest EU national currency, or the American dollar, as a common EU currency. It was clear to all that the new currency should be seen as their own by all Europeans, not only by a section. Why then should it be acceptable that one national language, whether it be English, French or German, become the *de facto* common European language? The new Euro notes will further exemplify the lack of a common language, since, apart from the work "Euro" in the Latin and Greek alphabets, they will bear no other word. A further illustration: the inscription on the Council of Ministers building in Brussels does not appear in any of the 11 official working languages, but in Latin alone, CONSILIUM (close to Esperanto Konsilio)!

European, national and local identities

The Croatian writer, Zlatko Tišljar, founded the Association for a European Identity ("Asocio por Europa Konscio") in Maribor in 1996 to promote the concept of a European identity in harmony with national and local identities. Tišljar is convinced that Europe needs an identity deeply felt by the majority of Europeans. In his view, this can only come about through the use of a neutral (therefore non-discriminatory), language such as Esperanto, which would be easy to learn (therefore non-elitist, potentially within the reach of the average citizen). In his words "even if the economy functions well (like sex in a marriage), but a feeling of identity (love) does not develop, Europe will not be lasting" (Tišljar 1998: 62).

The whole complex topic of communication within the EU, for which the Esperanto option is one alternative, merits objective, scientific and intellectually-thorough analysis. The EU may of course refuse the Esperanto option, but its decision to do so should be based on such analysis, not on prejudice, subjective opinions or lack of information. We have seen that present practice costs *over 2 billion Euro* per year. **It has been estimated that those who know English and a Romance language, such as French or Latin, need only some 25 hours of study to gain a passive knowledge of Esperanto** (Piron 1994: 316). Can it be the case that the EU prefers to spend astronomic sums of taxpayers' money on a system which fails to give linguistic justice to the majority of Europeans, rather than giving all involved in European affairs 25 hours of work?

A More Democratic European Union

Interpretation to Esperanto only at EU meetings would be a radical change, but would at a stroke introduce equality of communication, while allowing everybody to speak in their mother tongue, so that the use of Irish, Catalan, Welsh etc. could be permitted. For the first time ever all national languages would have equal status, in fact as well as in theory. An important step would have been taken in eliminating the democratic deficit, which privileges some EU citizens at the expense of the majority, and makes "Brussels" seem like a remote, incomprehensible Tower of Babel. It would reduce current costs by up to 70% (110 "translation pairs" reducing to 22; adding about 4 minority languages, would bring the total to 30), and avoid the huge increase in costs which enlargement will bring. In other words, fairness guaranteed, national identities and a European identity strengthened, a radically more efficient communication system for the EU, and an appreciable reduction in costs.

European Year of Languages 2001

Realistically, it would not be politically possible for the EU to take so radical a step while public knowledge of Esperanto remains so meagre. But why not concentrate on the idea of using an introductory Esperanto course to improve the teaching of foreign languages in general, as outlined above? This would be a step in the right direction, and would be in the realms of the possible. Apart from substantially improving language competence among the citizens of Europe (including the teaching of Irish in Ireland), it would, as a by-product, begin a process of gradually increasing knowledge of and respect for Esperanto. And when could be more appropriate to launch such a process than the European Year of Languages 2001?

I end with three practical suggestions:

1.   That pilot projects aimed at the improved teaching of Irish and other languages through preparatory Esperanto courses be considered for selected primary schools.

2.   At EU level, that consideration be given to a recent proposal by Italian academics, that the EU set up a standing conference on "language, communication and identity", where politicians, linguists, political scientists, etc. can regularly focus on Europe's language problems, and give thorough consideration to all solutions which may be put forward, either by participants or members of the public.

3.   That an experiment be organised to check whether Esperanto or a European national language is more efficient as a "bridge language" for interpreting between languages which will present practical difficulties for direct interpretation following EU enlargement, such as Estonian/Greek or Slovenian/Finnish.

END

Comparison of 4 Systems of International Communication

1) The UN System - use only some languages, simultaneous translation, translation of documents.
2) The Multinational System - all use the same ethnic language, usually English.
3) The EU System - the languages of all member states used; simultaneous translation, translation of documents.
4) The Esperanto System.

The points assigned for each criterion are rated on a ten-point scale according to the level of disadvantage they bring, as follows:
0 - none, 1- minimal, 2- negligible , 3 - small, 4 - moderate, 5 - medium, 6 - considerable,
7 - large, 8 - very large, 9 - enormous, 10 - extreme, maximum.

	UN	Multi-nationals	European Union	Esperanto Organisations
a) duration of language study (for participants)	8	8	0	3
b) prior investment by states	9	9	5	0
c) prior investment by institutions	8	0	10	0
d) inequality and discrimination	6	5	0	0
e) cost of session due to language	7	0	10	0
f) cost of document production due to language	6	0	10	0
g) waiting time for documents	6	0	6	0
h) loss and distortion of information	5	4	6	0
i) frequency and severity of linguistic handicap	5	6	0	1
j) linguistic handicap in reading	3	4	0	1
k) limitations and annoyances	8	3	8	0
l) probable increase in disadvantage over the next 20 years	5	0	10	0
Total level of disadvantage	76	39	65	5

Esperanto at a Glance (9)

A, E, I, O, U have approximately the vowel sounds heard in Are thEre thrEE Or twO.
C like ts in tsetse-fly, bits; **j** like y in yes. The sounds of

ĉ,	**ĝ,**	**ĥ,**	**ĵ,**	**ŝ** and	**ŭ**	are heard in
lee**ch**,	he**dge**,	lo**ch**,	lei**s**ure,	lea**sh**, and	lee**w**ay.	

A circumflex is normally used on those letters, but a *h* is also permissible.

ESPERANTO is PHONETIC All letters sounded: one letter one sound.

ACCENT or STRESS falls on the last syllable but one.

No IRREGULARITIES.   No EXCEPTIONS.

THE GRAMMAR is based upon 16 FUNDAMENTAL RULES, which have no exceptions.
THE PARTS OF SPEECH are formed from Root-Words by the addition of appropriate Letters.

O is the ending for all names of things (NOUNS)
fakt**o** glu**o**

ADJECTIVES (descriptive A words) end in
evident**a** fresh**a**

NOUNS and ADJECTIVES form PLURALS by adding J

evident**aj**	long**aj**	grand**aj**
fakt**oj**	distanc**oj**	pian**oj** (**aj**, **oj** sound as in **my boy**)

THERE IS ONLY ONE DEFINITE ARTICLE, LA, AS IN ENGLISH.

Chu **la** bel**a** virin**o** achet**is** pilk**on** por la infano**j** char shi varm**e** am**as** sia**jn** infano**jn**?
Did the beautiful woman buy a ball for the children because she warmly loves her children?

THE SIMPLE <u>VERB</u> HAS ONLY 6 <u>ENDINGS</u> (but has 6 participles)

INFINITIVE	PRESENT	PAST	FUTURE	CONDITIONAL	IMPERATIVE
I	AS	IS	OS	US	U
ESTI	estas	estis	estos	estus	estu
LERNI	lernas	lernis	lernos	lernus	lernu
HELP	helpas	helpis	helpos	helpus	helpu

N marks the ACCUSATIVE (direct object).

Mi (I) helpas li**n** (him)
Li (he) helpis mi**n** (me)
Shi lernos Esperanto**n**
Fal**onta** arbo:
Jes**ota** propono:

ADVERBS end in E

energi**e**
entuziasm**e**
diligent**e**
"a tree which is about to fall"
"a proposal which is about to be accepted"

Word-building (endings plus 40 prefixes and suffixes)
skrib**i** *to write*   bela *beautiful*   amori *to make love*   domo *house*

skrib**a** *written* **mal**bela *ugly* bovo *bull* dom**et**o *cottage*

skrib**e** *in writing* ami *to love* bov**in**o *cow* dom**eg**o *mansion*

skrib**o** *writing* **mal**ami *to hate* bov**id**o *calf* dom**ach**o *shack*

A Note on Esperanto Etymology (Vilborg 1989)

According to Pettyn (1973: 226) the following proportions of Esperanto vocabulary are new to speakers of: French, 13%; English, 30%; German, 32%; and Russian, 60%. Szerdahelyi (1987:138) describes the sources of Esperanto vocabulary as follows (SAT 1987):

1. International words from Latin and Ancient Greek, c. 40%, e.g. *situacio, fantazio, tragedio, demokratio, nacio, fenomeno, etimologio, imperio, teatro, televido, telefono, geografio, historio, biologio, elektroniko, politiko, kulturo, meriti, rezisti, parlamento*.

2. From two languages: 20% (65% from both French and English), e.g. *afero, blua, fantomo, vojagho, fini, problemo, ministro, surprizo, komenco, admiri, diferenco*.

3. From one language: 40% (35% from French; 33% from Latin; 32% from German, English, Italian, Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, Ancient Greek e.g.

    French: *sur, bela, seka, granda, fari, diri, iri, doni, tre, tro, chevalo, lundo, soifo*.

    Latin: *tamen, dum, post, inter, preter, sub, apud, urso,erinaco, amo, ansero, vespero*.

    German: *nur, nun, knabo, jaro, monato, tago, hela, shafo, shteli, trinki, hauto,hundo..*

    English: *helpi, kisi, flirti, strechi, pushi, rajdi, fajro, boato, rusto, shipo, birdo, suno, lasta*

    Polish: stress always on the penultimate syllable, the interrogative particle *chu* (<czy), *vi* (<wy, you), *pra*avo (<pradziadek, great-grandfather), *pilko* (<pilka, ball), *celo* (<cel, goal), *klopodi* (<klopotac sie, to try hard).

    Russian: *nepre* (without fail), *cherpi* (to extract), *krom (except)*.

    Italian: *tavolo* (layer), *korto, mezo*.

    Lithuanian: *tuj* (immediately).

    Ancient Greek: *kaj* (and)

4. Words invented by Zamenhof: 0.8%, e.g.
kio?, tio, io, chio, nenio: what?, that, something, everything, nothing.
kia?, tia, ia, chia, nenia: what kind of?, that kind of, some kind of, every kind of, no kind of.
kie?, tie, ie, chie, nenie: where?, there, somewhere, everywhere, nowhere.
kiu?, tiu, iu, chiu, neniu: who?, that person, somebody, everybody, nobody.
kiel?, tiel, iel, chiel, neniel: how?, thus, somehow, in every way, in no way.
kiam?, tiam, iam, chiam, neniam: when?, then, once, always, never.
kial?, tial, ial, chial, nenial: why?, therefore, for some reason, for every reason, for no reason.
kies?, ties, ies, chies, nenies: whose?, that one's, somebody's, everybody's, nobody's.
kiom? tiom, iom, chiom, neniom: how much?, that much, some, every amount, no amount.

Notes

1. See Fettes and Bolduc 1998, Phillipson 1992, Schulz 1979, Erasmus 1997.

2. Piron's main point is that English was selected not on any linguistic criteria but due to the international position and influence of the United States.

3. For a linguistic description of Esperanto, see Wells 1978, Gledhill 1998, Haupenthal 1985, Jordan 1992. For the life and murder of the next Zamenhof generation, see Heller 1985. For Esperanto literature, see Auld 1984 and 1991, Rossetti and Vatré 1989, Hagler 1971, Berveling 1998. For Esperanto used in a diplomatic career, and on an eight-year world tour respectively, see Harry 1994 and Robineau 1995. For the sociology of the Esperanto community, see Rašic 1994, Stocker 1996. For the history of Esperanto, see Lins 1988, Tonkin 1993, Sirjaev 1979, Maizen et al. 1994, Mullarney 1989. For Esperanto "folklore", see Zamenhof 1974. For the use of Esperanto as a family language, see Corsetti 1996, Csiszár 1995, Tišljar 1995. For Esperanto and ecumenism, see Matthias 1999.

4. Three examples (Cherpillod 1995:142): 1. *tablo*/table, *tabulo*/blackboard, *tabelo*/table of contents, *tavolo*/layer; 2. *trinki*/drink, *drinki*/"consume alcoholic beverage"; 3. *sola*/alone, *gesola*/a couple alone ("*ge-*" < German *Geschwister*, means the presence of both male and female, *gedormi*/to sleep together).

5. Latin would of course fulfil the criterion of neutrality, but would not fulfil the criterion of democracy, as it is too difficult to be mastered by a majority.

6. Janton 1989:211 deals effectively with the artificiality argument, which is oftern used against Esperanto: "The opponents of artificial languages do not explain ... why English *bishop*, French *éveque*, and Spanish *obispo* should be less deformed than Esperanto *episkopo* compared with Greek *episkopos*." For artificial changes which became natural, see Ó Riain 1994:2. For economic use of Esperanto, see Munniksma 1990.

7. For information on Esperanto in 41 languages (now 62), see *www.esperanto.net*.

8. Try it: *Inteligenta persono lernas la internacian lingvon rapide kaj facile. Esperanto estas la moderna, kultura lingvo por la internacia mondo. La simpla, praktika, fleksebla Esperanto estas la solvo de la problemo de ghenerala interkompreno. Esperanto meritas seriozan konsideron.*

9. I deliberately avoid using the International Phonetic Alphabet here, as Zamenhof frequently re-iterated that Esperanto is not only for linguists, but for everybody.

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