



# ESF (Esperantic Studies Foundation)

## Annual Report for 2015

### Contents

|  |   |
|--|---|
| PRESIDENT'S LETTER .....   | 2 |
| PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES.....   | 3 |
| ESF-enrete & lernu! ( <a href="http://www.lernu.net">www.lernu.net</a> ).....  | 3 |
| edukado.net ( <a href="http://www.edukado.net">www.edukado.net</a> ) .....   | 3 |
| NASK (North American Esperanto Institute) ( <a href="http://www.esperanto.org/nask">www.esperanto.org/nask</a> ) ..... | 3 |
| Interlinguistics Certificate Program .....   | 4 |
| Esperanto "Access to Language Education" Award .....   | 4 |
| Interlinguistics Support Fund .....  | 4 |
| Research Grants .....  | 4 |
| Conferences and events.....  | 5 |
| Newsletter Information for Interlinguists.....   | 5 |
| OPERATIONS .....   | 6 |
| Administration .....   | 6 |
| ADVISORY BOARD .....   | 6 |



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The Esperantic Studies Foundation is increasingly recognized as a significant source of support and leadership for research and scholarly activity in the field of interlinguistics. Several of its programs have been in operation for a number of years, among them the web-based learning communities Lernu, for the study of Esperanto, and Edukado, designed to assist teachers and learners of Esperanto. But the Foundation also supports activities covering a wider range, among them conferences on language issues and awards for language teaching.

The year 2015 saw continued progress on several fronts. We strengthened our links with the broad range of talented individuals on our advisory board, reached out to scholars in interlinguistics and related fields, and improved our international outreach.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated and well-connected Board of Directors, all of whom contribute in numerous ways, above and beyond the management of the Foundation's programs. I would like to pay particular tribute to these remarkable individuals and to thank them all, and particularly my predecessor as President, Dr. Grant Goodall, for another impressive year in the progress of the Foundation.

Humphrey Tonkin  
President

## PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

### ESF-enrete & lernu! ([www.lernu.net](http://www.lernu.net))

Priority was given to the major redesign of [lernu.net](http://lernu.net), ESF's highly successful language learning website, which continued during 2015. Author Anna Lowenstein and Esperanto educator Birke Dockhorn continued their work on a new story for the course, accompanied by exercises for practice. The new course will be calibrated to meet the requirements of the Common European Reference Framework for Languages, and its linguistic accuracy will be aided by cooperation from the Academy of Esperanto. Meanwhile, the old [lernu.net](http://lernu.net) site, simplified on 2014 to improve its operation on its present server, continued to function satisfactorily. The Foundation is fortunate to have such a committed group of collaborators in the Lernu team, headed by Yevgeniy Gaus. Erin Piatetski continued to serve as the link between the Lernu team and the Foundation Board of Directors.

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

Under the skilled leadership of Katalin Kovats, Edukado.net, the second major web community supported by ESF, serves the needs not only of teachers of Esperanto, but also of people learning the language or perfecting their knowledge, providing them directly with usable educational content. In 2015, 354 new members joined the Edukado community (a number comparable with the previous year), and at the end of 2015 the website had 4138 users from 128 countries. It recorded 3.2 million page views in 2015, almost a million more than in the year 2014.

As we emphasized in our report last year, the website continues to offer exceptional quality content through its library (Katalogo), which lists and reviews nearly 500 books, DVDs and other materials for teaching and learning Esperanto; a searchable, edited collection of more than 750 downloadable teaching materials; an up-to-date registry of Esperanto courses around the world; a searchable database of nearly 300 university projects and theses on Esperanto; a collection of around 300 educational videos.

The most popular part of the site continues to be the game RISKO. Every day around 120-130 people log on to play.

In collaboration with the Universal Esperanto Association, the website organizes and manages the accredited tests within the Common European Reference Framework for Languages -- the most widely used international standard for testing linguistic competence. As a part of this effort, in 2015, for the fourth time, Edukado.net organized the World Esperanto Exam Day, with 116 participants in 10 countries, and the website's administrator helped to organize the exams and train assistants

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

NASK, the Foundation's flagship educational activity in North America, is an annual residential program in Esperanto for students with an elementary knowledge of the language or above. In recent years, the program has been held at the University of California San Diego, the University of Dallas, Texas, the University of Victoria, Canada, and twice at William Peace University in Raleigh, North Carolina. In 2015 the program returned to William Peace University, where it was joined by the Kino-Teatro-Festivalo (Film and Theater Festival), enabling each group to participate in both programs. This arrangement attracted 57 students from North, South and Central America.

The instructional team included Paul Gubbins (UK), Tim Westover (Georgia), Lee Miller (Missouri), and Jennifer Bondelid (Washington State). Hoss Firooznia (New York) organized the extracurricular program and edited the newsletter *NASKa Fasko*. The KTF team led by board member Derek Roff, with Charles Mays (North Carolina) and George Baker (California), helped the participants create a short Esperanto film using students from both groups. The script was written by Tim Westover.

## Interlinguistics Certificate Program

The interlinguistics certificate program at Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland, continues to attract an impressive group of graduate students and remains the best-known and most successful graduate program for the study of Esperanto and interlinguistics. Primarily non-residential in nature, this three-year program requires attendance by all students for short periods of intensive study in Poznan in February and September. In 2015 the Esperantic Studies Foundation continued to underwrite tuition and travel scholarships for the program, allowing the University to bring students to Poznan from other parts of Europe and beyond.

The program accepts new students every three years, as one cycle is completed and a new one begins. The year 2015 saw the beginning of the second year for the current cohort of students: twenty six new students from 14 countries (Brazil, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain, Belgium, Iran, DR Congo, Russia, Serbia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland) began their studies in September 2014.

## Esperanto "Access to Language Education" Award

In 2004, ESF began sponsoring an annual award for an outstanding language-learning website. Criteria include ease and range of access, versatility, and breadth. Inspired by the success of Lernu, the award has become a fixture at CALICO, the major North American conference on computer-assisted language learning. In 2015, as in most previous years, the award was presented in person by Board member Derek Roff. The 2015 recipient was Ayamel (ARCLITE Lab, Brigham Young University), a language learning tool that allows users to watch video content and interact with the subtitles <http://arclite.byu.edu/main/?q=node>

## Interlinguistics Support Fund

The Interlinguistics Support Fund provides small grants to scholars for publications, conferences, and similar activities, and is administered on behalf of the foundation by the Center for Research and Documentation on World Language Problems. A three-person committee makes recommendations on awards under the program. In 2015 the committee was made up of Nikola Rašić (Croatia/Netherlands), Detlev Blanke (Germany) and Christer Kiselman (Sweden). Three grants were provided in 2015: \$1560 to Zbigniew Galor (Poland) and Jukka Pietiläinen (Finland) for publication of their sociological study of the Esperanto movement *UEA en konscio de esperantistoj*, \$2000 to Aleksandro S. Melnikov (Russia) for the publication of *Gvidlibro tra Esperantio*, a reference work on the culture of Esperanto, and \$2000 to LF-koop (Switzerland) for the distribution to research libraries of Minnaja and Silber's newly-published *Historio de Esperanto-literaturo*.

## Research Grants

While no new research grants were awarded in 2015 under this program, the Foundation continues to support research and research-related activities through its own programs.

## Conferences and events

**Symposium on Language and Equality.** The Study Group on Language at the United Nations, in cooperation with the Centre for Research and Documentation on World Language Problems and the University of Hartford, with funding from the Esperantic Studies Foundation, organized yet another successful symposium in New York, at the UN Church Center (777 United Nations Plaza) on May 7, 2015. The topic of the symposium was “language and exclusion”.

The keynote address, entitled “Language, Exclusion, and Human Rights at the United Nations”, was given by Fernand de Varennes (University of Pretoria and University of Hong Kong). Speakers included: Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir (University of Iceland), Lisa J. McEntee-Atalianis (University of London, UK) Alisher Aldashev (Kazakh British Technical University, Kazakhstan) Nkonko Kamwangamalu (Howard University, USA ), José Manuel Ferreira (Lancaster University, UK), Izadora Xavier (Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Seine, France), Zhiguo Zhang (Shanghai Maritime University, China), and Rosemary Salomone (St. John’s University, USA). Opening remarks were made by Esther Schor (Princeton University), with closing remarks by Björn Jernudd (Washington DC).

The conference was dedicated to the memory of noted sociolinguist Joshua Fishman, to whom Ofelia García (City University of New York) paid tribute in the opening meeting.

Papers from the 2014 symposium, also underwritten by the Foundation, appeared as a special issue of the journal *Language Problems and Language Planning* (vol. 39, number 3, 2015), under the title *Linguistic Equality*, edited by ESF board member Humphrey Tonkin.

**Course at Macaulay Honors College, City University of New York.** In May and June 2015 a course in Esperanto was sponsored by ESF at the City University of New York (CUNY), Macaulay Honors College (where the top 0.33% of the university’s students study). The Foundation provided support for the ten participating students. The 10-day direct method intensive course was organized by Dr. Esther Schor of Princeton University, who provided instruction along with well-known Esperanto teacher Bill Maxey. Film-maker Sam Green produced a short film on the course, and guests included Humphrey Tonkin, board member of ESF, and Ulrich Becker, ESF advisory board member.

**World Esperanto Congress.** The Foundation organized an information meeting at the 2015 World Esperanto Congress in Lille, France, in July. ESF was represented by Humphrey Tonkin, who chaired the meeting, Joel Amis, and Yevgeniya Amis.

## Newsletter *Information for Interlinguists*

As in previous years, ESF provided a small grant to support publication of the hardcopy version of the newsletter *Informilo por Interlingvistoj* (Ipl), published by the Center for Research and Documentation on World Language Problems under the editorship of Detlev Blanke. ESF also hosts the newsletter’s web archive: <http://www.esperantic.org/en/communications/ipi/archive>.



## OPERATIONS

### Administration

In 2015 Joel Amis completed his fifth full year as ESF's part-time administrator, working an average of 80 hours/month. He worked closely with the Board's Operations Committee, which met twice a month by phone. His responsibilities included organizing and documenting meetings, ensuring implementation of Board decisions, keeping track of expenditures and revenue, managing the website, and writing and issuing press releases.

Yevgeniya Amis continues to manage the fundraising efforts and promotional materials. In 2015, \$9,733 was collected as donations for ESF and Lernu.net.

As noted in our 2014 report, linguistics scholar Dr. Asya Pereltsvaig has joined our team as academic coordinator. She continues to work on a database of university faculty and graduate students in North America who have research interests in Esperantic studies, including researchers in sociology, history, linguistics, education, literature and many other fields. In the course of 2015 she prepared an overview of the field of Esperanto studies which will help guide ESF's activities in the future.

Plans were made for a major overhaul of the ESF website to be carried out in 2016-17.

## BOARD

In 2015 Humphrey Tonkin (USA) was elected to the ESF presidency. Derek Roff (USAS) continued as Secretary, and Anna Bennett (USA) as Treasurer. The other board members were Wallace Du Temple (Canada), Mark Fettes (Canada), Grant Goodall (USA), Geoffrey Greatrex (Canada), Charles Mays (USA), and Joel Amis (ex officio). Erin Piateski attended board meetings in her capacity as CEO of ESF's web projects subsidiary ESF-enrete.

In addition to monthly teleconferences, the Board met in Boulder, Colorado, for its annual Board Retreat. The timing and location of the Board Retreat coincided with the 2015 CALICO conference. As noted under "Administration," the day-to-day management of ESF was delegated by the Board to its Operations Committee, consisting of Tonkin, Bennett, Du Temple and Roff, plus Amis and Piateski ex officio.

## ADVISORY BOARD

In 2015 the ESF Advisory Board consisted of:

Ulrich Becker (publisher, Mondial, NY, USA)

David Gaines (composer)

Duncan Charters (Principia College, USA)

Probal Dasgupta (Indian Statistical Institute, India)



John Edwards (St. Francis Xavier University, Canada)  
Alvino Fantini (School for International Training, USA)  
Normand Fleury (arboriculturist, Canada)  
Bonnie Fonseca-Greber (University of Louisville, USA)  
François Grin (University of Geneva, Switzerland)  
David K. Jordan (University of California San Diego, USA)  
Sho Konishi (Oxford University, UK)  
Katalin Kovats (edukado.net, Netherlands)  
Lee Miller (ASL interpreter, USA)  
Arika Okrent (author, USA)  
Jonathan Pool (Utilika Foundation, USA)  
Timothy Reagan (University of Maine, USA)  
Ian Richmond (Université Sainte-Anne, Canada)  
Martin Schäffer (Mondo Foundation, Germany and Mexico)  
Klaus Schubert (Universität Hildesheim, Germany)  
Nancy Schweda-Nicholson (University of Delaware, USA)  
Alan Simon (computer specialist, Canada)  
Sebastian Tonkin (software specialist, USA)

