

ЭСПЕРАНТО И ЕГО ЗНАЧЕНИЕ В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ КУЛЬТУРЕ

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Статья посвящена языку эсперанто, его истории, особенностям и роли в современной культуре. Акцентируется внимание на значении эсперанто как инструмента международного общения, способствующего взаимопониманию между представителями разных культур. Указаны примеры применения языка в науке, литературе, переводах и Интернете, а также подчеркнуто его влияние на культурное разнообразие и развитие искусственных языков.

Ключевые слова: *эсперанто; искусственный язык; международное общение.*

ESPERANTO AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN MODERN CULTURE

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The article is dedicated to Esperanto, its history, characteristics, and role in modern culture. The significance of Esperanto as a tool for international communication, fostering understanding between representatives of different cultures, is emphasized. Examples of the language's application in science, literature, translation, and the Internet are provided, highlighting its influence on cultural diversity and the development of constructed languages.

Key words: *Esperanto, constructed language, international communication.*

Esperanto is currently the most widespread constructed (artificial) language in the world. It was created in 1887 by L. M. Zamenhof, a Warsaw ophthalmologist, and its name comes from a romantic root meaning "the one who hopes." The relevance of studying this language lies not only in its role in global linguistic culture but also in the growing popularity of artificial languages in the modern world. This article aims to explore the history of Esperanto and its active spread across different countries and communities. The creation of artificial languages has long been driven by the desire to establish a universal means of communication among people of different nations and cultures. Despite the existence of around 5,000 languages worldwide, the efforts to create an auxiliary international language mainly emerged in the 19th century with the invention of Volapük, Ido, Esperanto, and others [1, p. 75]. Of these languages, Esperanto has been the most successful and widespread. The Creation of Esperanto

Ludwig (Lazar) Zamenhof (1859–1917), the creator of Esperanto, was born in Białystok, which at the time was part of the Russian Empire. The city was home to a variety of ethnic groups, including Poles, Belarusians, Russians, Germans, and others. Zamenhof, growing up in such a multicultural environment, recognized the communication barriers caused by linguistic differences and sought to create a universal language that could facilitate understanding and peaceful interaction among diverse peoples.

The vocabulary of Esperanto is primarily based on Romance languages, and its structure was designed to be simple and regular. Esperanto's alphabet consists of 28 letters derived from the Latin script. The language's grammar is intentionally simplified compared to natural languages, using only 11 grammatical endings and two cases (nominative and accusative). The ease of learning Esperanto — its logical construction, word formation system, and regular phonetics — contributed to its quick adoption.

Spread and Development

After its creation, Esperanto quickly gained recognition among linguistic scholars and the public. Zamenhof's textbook was translated into several languages, including German, French, Polish, and English, within the same year. In 1889, the journal *Esperantisto* was launched, further spreading the language's influence. By 1891, the textbook had been published in 17 languages. Zamenhof envisioned Esperanto as a tool for international communication, and he even planned a World Literature Library in Esperanto, with works like Shakespeare's *Hamlet* being translated as early as 1894.

In Russia, Esperanto was highly regarded by scholars, including I.A. Boduen de Courtenay, a prominent linguist, who praised it as a complete and practical language. This recognition extended to the scientific community, where many scholars, including V.V. Vinogradov and A.I. Korolevich, engaged with Esperanto. Over the next few decades, Esperanto spread to countries such as the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Its appeal was especially strong among intellectuals, businessmen, athletes, and artists, leading to the formation of Esperanto societies across the globe.

The Academy of Esperanto was founded in 1905, with its first president being the French philosopher Émile Boirac. It played a key role in standardizing and promoting the language, organizing annual congresses that continue to this day. By 1906, Esperanto had spread to Japan, where it gained popularity among scholars, socialists, doctors, and ordinary citizens looking to connect with the international community.

Esperanto Today

Today, Esperanto is spoken and written by millions of people around the world. The Universal Esperanto Association (UEA), which consists primarily of Esperanto organizations and activists, has over 30,000 members across more than 100 countries. While it is difficult to pinpoint the exact number of speakers, it is clear that the language remains vibrant. Esperanto has found a home in global libraries, with large collections of books written in or about the language. The British Esperanto Association, for example, holds over 30,000 works in its library. Esperanto is also actively used on the internet, with Google providing a search engine in Esperanto, and various radio stations, including Vatican Radio, broadcasting in the language [2].

In addition, Esperanto continues to be a medium for cultural and artistic expression. Films, songs, and even academic research are produced in Esperanto. The language is taught in universities worldwide, including in China, and is increasingly used for international conferences, including over 100 annually. The Esperanto community continues to grow, demonstrating that the language has not only survived but thrived in the modern world.

Conclusion

Esperanto's creation was driven by the ideal of overcoming linguistic barriers and fostering international communication. Over more than a century, it has grown into a global language spoken by millions. It plays a significant role in fostering understanding between different linguistic and cultural groups, as evidenced by its use in academic, artistic, and social contexts. While it may not compete with global languages like English or Mandarin, Esperanto continues to evolve and maintain its relevance, offering

unique advantages due to its neutral, integrative nature. Its continued development in the digital age ensures that it remains an important tool for global communication, highlighting the enduring vision of its creator, L.M. Zamenhof, for a world united by a common language.

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