

New Association Joins The World Esperanto Movement

119 national associations, nearly 2 million speakers. Who speaks the international language Esperanto and why?

The youth wing of the World Esperanto Association recently welcomed the 55-member Esperanto Association of Burundi (JEBUO) onto its partnership list.

This inclusion brings the total number of national youth affiliates to 45. The figure for full national associations that are linked with the Universala Esperanto-Asocio is 119.

Professor Sidney S. Culbert, chronicler of "Principal Languages of the World" for the World Almanac for 30 years, reported that 1.6 million people speak Esperanto to level three ("professionally working proficient") on the scale used by the US government's Foreign Service Levels. By that estimation more people speak Esperanto proficiently than do Scots, Irish, Welsh, Estonian ... in fact, five times the number that are conversant in Iceland's native tongue.

Esperanto-speakers have varied reasons for learning the language. Some are idealists, wishing to be able to communicate with people from other linguistic backgrounds on a neutral footing, without one having an inherent advantage over the others, as is the case when conversation takes place in one of the people's native language. Others are language hobbyists, attracted by the ingenuity that sees an artificial language work as well as any other, a somewhat paradoxical finding considering Esperanto's designed simplicity. Still more arrived by other means, be it word of mouth from a friend, chancing upon a book or report, hearing about some large-scale Esperanto event occurring near them, or lacking confidence from their unsuccessful attempts to learn other languages and so seeking to try out one that has "relatively easy" and "no exceptions included" stamped on the tin.

They stay because they all see the same things: Esperanto *is* relatively easy to learn; people *do* learn to speak it to a much better degree than they ever could national languages, and

in a shorter period of time; and there are plenty of opportunities to use Esperanto throughout the year, enriching one's holiday experiences by making it possible to stay in countries that would normally remain outside one's travel plans, and opening the door to meet



2006's Universal Congress of Esperanto, attended by 2209 people, took place in Italy

people from backgrounds and cultures that would otherwise prove accessible.

It would be possible to spend every day of the year at some Esperanto event or another, such is the frequency with which events take place. These range from small one-day meet-ups amongst people from the same city, to many full-blown, week-long international get-togethers,

which take place in every corner of the globe.

The most well-known of these, the jewel in Esperanto's crown, is the Universala Kongreso, an annual



"One world, one promise." The World Organisation of the Scout Movement produced a badge in Esperanto for their 2007 World Jamboree, attended by 88,000 people from 158 countries.

event which is held in late July or early August, always in a different country. There is always a varied turn-out, an average 90 countries being represented at each turn in an average attendance of 2000. (The number of people present varies with location: Australia, relatively isolated, drew 1224 visitors in 1997. Warsaw, in Esperantoland's heartland, attracted 5946 in 1987.)

Contrary to natural misperceptions, Esperanto is fully functional. William Auld's original work in Esperanto was nominated for the Nobel Prize for literature in 1998. A

plethora of musicians write and perform in the language, most notable amongst whom is the Frenchman JoMo, who holds the world record for the greatest number of languages used in a single concert. Esperanto-speakers in Brazil run an orphanage and school called Bona Vespero ("Good Hope"), staffed by people from a number of countries, many of which don't speak Portuguese. The German city Herzberg am Harz officially changed its name to

Herzberg - die Esperanto-Stadt ("Herzberg - the Esperanto City") in 2006, and has made a twinning link with Góra in Poland, where Esperanto is used as the common language between the two cities.

Perhaps most surprising of all to those who are unacquainted with Esperanto is that it is the family language for hundreds of people, particularly those who met (or whose parents originally met) during Esperanto events and who share no other common language. There are examples of this in Britain at this very moment, couples where one partner is from the UK and the other from Serbia, Slovenia, Russia, the Netherlands, and more.

Esperanto is more than an artificial language. It works, as well as any other language. For some it is their mother



The Esperanto flag flies proudly in Rotterdam during 2008's Universal Congress of Esperanto, attended by 1845 people

tongue, the language of the household. Esperanto-speakers are a diverse bunch, coming in all shapes, colours and sizes, from diverse backgrounds, with various interests, likes and dislikes. They laugh and joke, fall in and out of love, enthuse, debate, argue, then have a drink together, write books and compose music. They do all this on a level playing-field in one language common to them all. It is a language that is living, fully expressive, and equal.

That language belongs to them all, and its name is Esperanto.



A Quick Recap Of Esperanto

Where it came from, by Tim Owen, president of Junularo Esperantista Brita

As a teenager growing up in the divided city of Białystok in the Russian-ruled Poland of the 1870s, student Ludwik Zamenhof observed mournfully that the accident of birth that decided in which area of the city you were born (and, thus, your religious, ethnic, and linguistic background) determined the people that you would consider your friends, and those from whom you shied away.



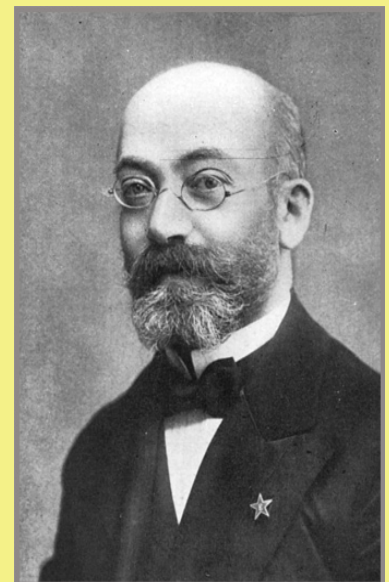
All around him others thought in terms of labels: Jew, Russian, Pole. It filled him with dismay to see that an errant foot in the wrong neighbourhood would see a man assaulted on account of his being an outsider. Observing the prejudice and discrimination that characterised his city, he thought to himself that a principal barrier that separated these groups was that of language. If people could greet one another, express regret or gratitude or verbalise pain, maybe then they would be able to see each other as fellow human beings.



He theorised that Białystok would cease to be so volatile if its people had access to an additional language that could commonly be spoken by all of them. Himself a speaker of a number of tongues, he put his mind to deciding what that common language could be.

In the first instance, he had to rule out one of the languages native to the ethnic groups of Białystok, since the perception there would be that one of the groups' languages (and, by extension, culture) was superior to the others'. It's common sense; imposing A's language on B and C not only resembles imperialism, but also poses a greater burden on the two groups who have to learn the other's native tongue. Hardly the ideal solution to a problem spawned of perceived inequality.

This being the case, he had to extract a suitable language from outside of those spoken in his home city. I daresay it's likely that others would have done just that. Young Ludwik didn't. Just as it was not his wont to distinguish himself from non-Polish-speaking Jews in Białystok, nor was it his inclination to do so with people from outside of Białystok. Ludwik was thinking of all people, everywhere. For this reason, there was no national language that could be a fair and just common second language, since it would always be someone's native tongue.



The solution, then, was to plan a second language. To create one.

Ludwik was not the first person to have tried to create a language. The first on record appears to have been penned in the twelfth century, and no lesser a respected figure than René Descartes (he of "I think, therefore I am" fame) had recognised the need for a neutral tongue and tried his hand at inventing one.

The youngster spent the next several years crafting his language. His first draft of his lingwe universala was prepared in 1878. By 1887, now in his mid-20s, he had finished his third draft, and printed books of his Internacia Lingvo.

Interestingly, that was the language's name, rather than that by which we know it. Ludwik used the pen-name "Doktoro Esperanto" when writing about his creation. In the language itself "Esperanto" means "one who hopes" (so "Doctor Hopeful"), and adherents soon applied this name to Ludwik's gift itself.

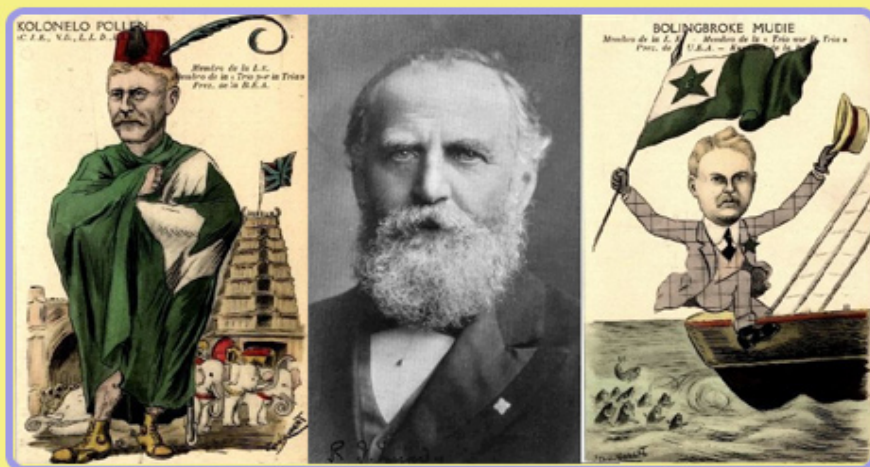


Junularo Esperantista Brita: Young Brits Using Esperanto To Make Friends All Over The World

Esperanto In Britain

The Brita Esperanto-Asocio was created in 1904, during the early years of the Esperanto Movement. Interest in the planned language was high, witnessing so swift an increase in membership that Cambridge was able to host the third Universala Kongreso de Esperanto in 1907, 1317 visitors making the journey for the week-long stay in the university town. Guests of honour were, of course, Mr & Mrs Zamenhof.

Eminent people in contemporary British society were chief organisers at the time, including the judge Colonel John Pollen, the journalist W. T. Stead, and the stockbroker Harold Bolingbroke-Mudie.



Pollen, Stead, Mudie: Three big names in the early Esperanto Movement

After receiving charity status in 1976, BEA became the current Esperanto-Asocio de Britio. EAB celebrated its centenary in 2004 and is based in Esperanto House in the Staffordshire village of Barlaston.

The organisation runs several events per year, including theatre workshops and educational projects that create language-awareness.

There is also a spin-off group of EAB for people under the age of thirty.

JEB (Junularo Esperantista Brita) was founded in the 1960s by a group of students at Cambridge University.

Now approaching its fifties, JEB shows no sign of slowing down, maintaining a strong net presence and often sending around a dozen of its members to various international events.

Produktita por la tuta mondo
Trovata en Britio

Esperanto
La internacia lingvo

Junularo Esperantista Brita jeb.org.uk



Another year, another Language Show!

If you attended the event in 2007, you may have met some members of JEB or even received a copy of our newsletter, 'Saluton!'. But what have we been up to since then? Read on, to find out how JEB members having been using Esperanto during the last twelve months...

Practising Esperanto

Esperanto may be a relatively simple language to learn, but attaining spoken fluency can still be a daunting prospect.

For that reason, JEB organises several meetings in Britain each year, where members can get together and speak as much or as little Esperanto as they feel comfortable with.

One of the benefits of being an informal organisation is that we can arrange our get-togethers to suit those who are interested in attending.

In Autumn 2007 a group of us met up in Leicester, and in Spring 2008 we all travelled to Peterborough. Both occasions were a great opportunity for us to get to know other young Esperantists living in Britain whilst having a laugh and a drink.

We've also been on days out to Buxton and Worcester, fully appreciating the beautiful scenery and history that Britain has to offer.

Having fun in Britain

JEB members have been taking advantage of the opportunity to participate in events organised by the Esperanto Association of Britain.

In January, Tim and Clare attended 'Ni Festivalu', an annual theatrical event held at Esperanto House in Barlaston. Those with acting ability read through and performed Esperanto-language plays, whilst those somewhat lacking in talent took part in a series of discussion groups. We talked about a whole host of subjects, ranging from Artificial Intelligence to humanism... completely in Esperanto, of course.

The British Esperanto Congress took place in Southport during a sunny weekend in May, with a strong attendance from JEB members.

It was an exciting weekend, with opportunities to attend presentations on themes as diverse as the Scouse accent and Esperanto music.

There was also chance to purchase new books from the EAB stall, and explore the beautiful surroundings of what surely must be one of Britain's most elegant seaside resorts. JEB members particularly enjoyed their visits to the local theme park!

Travelling with Esperanto

Esperanto is, of course, the international language, and members of JEB take every opportunity to travel abroad and meet new people. During summer 2008, Daniel and Brendan attended the Universal Congress of Esperanto in Rotterdam, whilst Rolf and Petra attended MIRO, a relaxed holiday for young Esperantists which takes place in a different part of Croatia each year. A grand total of nine young Esperantists from Britain travelled to the Hungarian town of Szombathely, which at the end of July hosted the Internacia Junulara Kongreso, the biggest annual meeting of young Esperantists in the world. In excess of three hundred people from at least thirty different countries participated in a week of courses, excursions and partying. From language lessons to concerts, Bible study to drinking games, cross-stitching to water fights - there really was something for everyone. In fact the program was so exciting that we hardly found time to sleep, with most of us staying up until the early hours of the morning, chatting to new-found friends.

Another major event of the Esperanto calendar is the Internacia Seminario,

a week-long event which takes place in Germany each New Year. Despite the fact that the meet-up is officially organised by JEB's German counterpart, our very own Rolf Fantom has taken on the role of chief organiser for the past



Clare & Tim involved in a debate ranging from citizenship to the global financial crisis, via the Mona Lisa

couple of years. An awful lot of planning and hard work goes into trying to make the IS as professional and successful as possible, and Rolf is assisted in his efforts by several other JEB members. Whilst Gavan is in charge of lighting and similar technicalities, Tim concentrates on designing imaginative posters to promote the event, as well as the T shirts which will be on sale during the week. Meanwhile the rest of JEB just sit back, relax, and enjoy the festivities!

Promoting Esperanto

Back in Britain, the JEB committee are always coming up with new ideas for how to promote Esperanto. Having given up printing a quarterly newsletter in favour of maintaining an online blog, we have spent the year developing our website and ensuring it is always kept up to date with the latest JEB news. Much of our activity takes place online in the JEB forums, where we chat on an informal basis and help each other out with questions of grammar.



JEB meet-ups occur on four occasions a year. Clare writes here about one from Buxton, in which we had a little drink, climbed in the peaks ... and got caught up with a bridal party?!

The weekend of 19th - 20th January, five JEBanoj travelled to the beautiful Peak District town of Buxton for the second annual JEB Summer Meet-up. The event was somewhat more sparsely attended than I had hoped, but whether this was my fault for accidentally arranging it to clash with the first weekend of the Universala Kongreso, or Tim's fault for vetoing the funky piece of Wordart I tried to put in the flyer, is a matter open for debate Nevertheless, five's company, six is a crowd, and those of us who attended had a very enjoyable weekend indeed.

The original plan had been to meet in Buxton around two pm. Congratulations are due to Daniel White, the only person to achieve this aim. Marteno can be forgiven for arriving around three on account of his long journey north from London, and Mikeo had announced in advance that he had a prior engagement which would delay him slightly, but as for Tim and me ... erm... well, we arrived just before four, having taken a roundabout sort of route.

After a quick drink, the four of us stopping over headed off to check out our accommodation. We'd arranged to stay at Hawthorn Lodge, an attractive B&B on the outskirts of the town, which offered excellent value for money in beautiful surroundings. We were just remarking on how comfortable the rooms were when a sudden phone call reminded me that I had texted Mikeo to tell him to meet us in the pub... and then forgotten to text him to tell him we we'd in fact moved on.

Luckily he didn't take it too personally, and we all headed out together to see the sights of Buxton. The first sight we saw was Wetherspoon's, and, as is traditional at JEB get-togethers, couldn't resist stopping off for a quick meal. Feeling the need to explore the local area more thoroughly, we soon moved on to another pub, a decision which

could be regarded as having been a mistake.

It was rather a spit-and-sawdust affair, of the variety where everyone turns and glares at you when you walk in. We retired to a back room with a couple of pool tables, and whilst Daniel proceeded to thrash Tim, the rest of us sat around and meditated uncertainly on the rules. Daniel then took on Mikeo, and in the process managed to unwittingly attract the attention of a hen party, who were the only other occupants of the room. Well to be precise, the bride-to-be appeared to hit on Mikeo, at which point Daniel gallantly decided to rescue her from certain disappointment with

JEB's favourite deviant, and proceeded to spend the rest of his evening pursuing her around Buxxton and buying her drinks.

We and the hen party soon moved to a nicer pub in the upper part of Buxton, and whilst Daniel alternated in his attempts to coax us to follow the bride to Buxton's only nightclub, a dubious-looking establishment called Mood, and his attempts to coaxthebride to let him wear her pink

tutu, the rest of us ate crisps and ably demonstrated the difficulty of coherently articulating the word "edziĝontino" after a couple of drinks.

By eleven the majority of us were ready for our beds. Mikeo sadly had to head back home to Congleton





and was unable to join us for our walk on the morrow due to a prior engagement. Whilst Tim and I showed our age by retiring to the Bed & Breakfast for tea and cake, Marteno gamely agreed to accompany Daniel and his hen party to Mood. The rest of us were slightly worried as to whether they would succeed in navigating their way through the winding streets of Buxton and back to our accommodation, but happily the ever-prepared Marteno had his GPS to hand and all was well.

Whilst Tim and I settled down to an excellent breakfast at nine, the party animals were a little slower to emerge from their beds. Marteno made it to the dining room just before the last orders for veggie sausages, but nearly an hour after we were supposed to have checked out, Daniel was still in his bed, along with a pink sash which he seemed to have acquired as a memento of his adventures.

I had a small adventure of my own at breakfast when the guesthouse proprietors, noting that we were talking at table in a funny language, asked if by any chance we were speaking German. We confessed that we were not, but when the lady revealed that she had a large number of German guests staying with whom she was unable to communicate, Tim happily dropped me in it by informing her that I would be happy to translate. It was rather a struggle for my brain to make a quick gear change between Esperanto and German, but I managed to establish that they were very happy with their accommodation and help them order some dinner.

Daniel eventually emerged, but announced that much as he would love to climb hills, he didn't quite feel up to it, so the three of us that remained set off for the countryside without him. We parked at the Cat and Fiddle pub, which is located on a beautiful stretch of road outside Buxton, and had a pleasant hike across to Errwood Reservoir and up to Shining Tor, the highest point in Cheshire at 559m. Marteno and I greatly enjoyed the combination of the gorgeous scenery and an opportunity for exercise in the fresh air. Tim was a bit bemused as to the point of hiking, but nevertheless made the best of it and helped to raise everyone's spirits with enthusiastic renderings of "Verdaj la junkoj, ho!" during the rare intervals where he had spare breath. Marteno and I were then condemned to spend the rest of the week with the lyrics going round in our heads!

There was just time to return to Buxton for a well-earned meal and a slice of cake, before it was time to embark on our long journeys home. Tim and I managed to get lost again, but that's another story! I would just like to take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone who participated and helped make the weekend the enjoyable experience that it was. I certainly had a great time, and it was a useful chance to practise my Esperanto before the following week's IJK. To everybody who didn't come, you missed out and I suggest you immediately pencil some time into your calendar to join us in July 2009.

This edition of Saluton was produced by Tim Owen, reachable for comments in the JEB forums and at meddysong.com

Guy Johnston, a student in Nottingham, attended his first Youth Congress in August, held at Szombathely, Hungary. Here he writes about it in Esperanto itself.

La ĉi-jara Internacia Junulara Kongreso en Szombathely, Hungarujo, estis mia unua kongreso de tutmonda Esperanto-organizaĵo, kaj mia unua sperto esti samtempe kun kelkaj centoj da esperantistoj.

Mi jam konis la unikan senton donatan de Esperanto esti kun homoj el diversaj landoj kvazaŭ ĉiuj estus samlandanoj, sed antaŭe mi ne estis jam spertinta tiun unikaĵon tiel grandskale. Estas danke al la helpo de NoJEF ke mi havis sufiĉe da mono por iri.

Verdire miaj spertoj de la kongreso estis tute bonegaj. Mi konstatis ke la programeroj estis tre interesaj kaj amuzaj, kaj mi ŝatis ĉiujn, kiujn mi partoprenis.

Sed fakte mi trovis ke verŝajne mia plej ŝatata sperto estis la vespera etoso simple esti kun tiom multaj, interesaj, diverslandaj homoj, ekzemple en la trinkejo (mi ja estas brito) kaj en la apudaj partoj de la kongresejo. Tie ĉiu-vespere ĝis la frumatenaj horoj estis multaj viglaj kaj festemaj homoj el multaj landoj, de kiuj mi eksciis multon kaj kun kiuj mi ĝuis bonajn interparolojn.



Miaopinie, tiel Esperanto ofte plej klare montras sian valoron: per glate ebligi tute normalan amikecon kaj amuziĝadon sen la kutimaj kaj lingvaj kaj naciaj baroj.

El la taga programero, mia plej ŝatata ero estis la Kultura kaj Lingva Festivalo. Estis diverslandaj budoj kaj prezentadoj kiuj estis tre interesaj, kaj mi lernis pri nekonataj landoj, ekzemple pri la havaja kreolo de la angla lingvo.

Mi ankaŭ partoprenis kelkajn malgrandajn programerojn, kaj mi tre ŝatis prezenton kiu nomiĝis "kiel fariĝi mondvojaĝanto", en kiu la prezentanto priparolis sian du-kaj-duon-jaran mondvojaĝon, kaj siajn interesajn spertojn.

Ŝajne la ĉefa avantaĝo de granda kongreso kiel la IJK, kompare al aliaj uzoj de la lingvo, estas la eblo esti samtempe kun multegaj homoj el multaj landoj, kaj ekkoni multajn. Sed alia tre grava eblo donata de Esperanto estas renkonti homojn kiuj loĝas en la vizitata loko, kaj bone ekkoni ilin kaj iliajn landojn kaj kulturojn.

Tion mi sciis post loĝado ĉi-jare en Tuluzo, Francujo, dum kelkaj monatoj, sed antaŭ la kongreso mi atendis ke tio ne vere eblos ĉeestonte la IJKon, ĉar malmultaj homoj venas el la kongresa urbo, kaj la kongresanoj havas maltro da tempo pro la oficiala programo.

Tamen mi feliĉe malpravis. Dum mia vespera trinkejumado kaj homamasumado, mi renkontis hungaron, Peter, kiu loĝas ĝuste en Szombathely. Dum la sekvaj tagoj, mi kaj kelkaj amikoj faris du tre plaĉajn ekskursetojn kun li, vizitante la ĉirkaŭan regionon kaj renkontante kelkajn siajn amikojn. Dum la dua tia ekskurso, ni tagmanĝis ĉe bieno vinprodukta de kelkaj liaj amikoj, kie ni ricevis bongustegajn hungarajn manĝaĵojn kaj alkoholaĵojn.

Sed evidente ne al ĉiuj homoj konvenas la kutima drinkado kaj drinkigado de hungaroj. Estas mia ĝisnuna plej stranga vido de interkultura lernado kaj malkovrado, vidi togolandan kongresanon vomantan ĉe pordo en la stacidomo pro ebrigecco, dum la revena vojo al Szombathely. (Ne maltrankviliĝu; li ridis pri tio la sekvan tagon post bezonata frua enlitiĝo!)

Dum la kongreso, mi eksciis, ke homoj emas

eviti dormi tro longe, por ke ili sufiĉe profitu la festadon, ĉar oni ja havas nur unu semajnon kaj estas multaj interesaj aferoj ĝuindaj. Sed mi memsperte lernis, ke estas limoj de tiu strategio por agi saĝe.

Tiubiena ekskurso estis planita por la ĵaŭda mateno, kaj pro longdaŭra interesa nokta babilado ĉe la ĉefa kongresejo, mi enlitiĝis tiom malfrue merkrede "nokte" ke mi povis dormi dum malpli ol tri horoj. Kutime, la plej saĝa ago kiam mi vekiĝas estus tiam malvekiĝi, dormeti dum pli da tempo, kaj anstataŭe partopreni alian plimalfruan kongresan programeron dum la tago.

Sed tamen mi decidis, ke estas bona ideo iri kaj forĵeti la eblon dormi plu. Rezulte, mi sentis min malsana kaj kiel zombio dum la tuta tago pro lacegecco, kaj estis tiel grave ke mi devis enlitiĝi relative fruege la lastan nokton, do la plejparto de la lasta festado kaj adiaŭado okazis sen mi. Do mi lernis de tiu eraro kaj memoros ne refari ĝin dum postaj kongresoj por esti ŝaga kaj sukcese profiti per ili.

Alia agrabla eblo donita de la kongreso estis ekkoni kelkajn aliajn junajn britajn esperantistojn. Antaŭ la kongreso mi estis renkontinta neniun el ili, kaj uzinta Esperanton parolate nur en Francujo. Mi trovis ke ili ĉiuj estas tre afablaj, kaj mi antaŭĝojas poste esperantumi kun ili kaj en Britujo kaj vojaĝante al alilandaj eventoj.

Pro la bonegecco de miaj spertoj ĉe la IJK, mi jam planas iri kun ili al la ĉi-jara Internacia Seminario en decembro, ĉar malplaĉegus al mi devi atendi similan junularan eventon dum tuta jaro. Espereble per kunagadi kun ili mi ankaŭ povos iomete helpi al ili kreski la Esperanto-movadon en Britujo.

Fakte mia sperto de la IJK jam helpis al mi ekfari tion. Bona amiko mia jam interesiĝis dum iom da tempo pri Esperanto kaj planis iam eklerni ĝin, sed nun pro miaj diraĵoj pri la IJK, li komencis efektive lerni, kaj jam planas kune vojaĝi al la IS. Li nun lernas diligente por ke li havu sufiĉe bonan lingvo-kapablon je ĝia komenciĝo. Ŝajne forta eklerniĝo estis la ekkonscio pro miaj diroj ke li jam maltrafas la okazon multon sperti.

Entute la IJK vdonis al mi nur du bedaŭrojn: ke mi ne lernis Esperanton pli frue, kaj ke ne eblas loĝi en Esperantujo dum la tuta jaro.