

# On the Bungler-Language of the Pseudo-Esperanto

## Ueber die Pfuscher-Sprache des Pseudo-Esperanto

[by Johann Martin Schleyer, inventor of Volapük, around 1895]

All fakes of Volapük have — like its precursors — pretty much vanished from public attention and use into thin air. Only the ‘Esperanto’ of that Mister S. i. W.\* here and there haunts and vegetates in some hazy and timid minds. Still, its mouthpiece, the gazette ‘Lingvo internacia’ in Upsala (Sweden), has folded and is shelved. So it bores us infinitely to loose any more words about that ‘Esperanto’ gibberish. Still, we shall undertake it again (and hopefully for the last time) as some all too trepidant Volapükans asked us to.

Comparing in 30 points the Volapük with ‘Esperanto’, any unbiased and unprejudiced mind will be presented with the following conclusion of the comparison:

1. Vp. does not require any knowledge of other languages apart from the grammatical knowledge of one’s mother tongue. — Esp., however, presupposes the knowledge of at least 2 to 3 Romanic ... languages apart from one’s native language, and really is hardly more than an omnium gatherum, a hodge-podge and gibberish concocted from 2 to 3 distorted Romanic... natural languages.
2. Vp. is considerably **more concise** than Esp. Where Vp. needs just 4 lines, the Pseudo-Esperanto’s bungler-language requires 6—7 lines, and in a sample sentence selected and printed by Esperantists themselves, the Pseudo-Esperanto language needs 24 words for what Volapük can say with just 17: Thus Volapük has 7 words less in one single sentence which certainly means a lot in telegraphing, writing postcards, printing and writing in shorthand. Hence, Esp. is a mere blabbering language — like some modern ones — and thus is a sheer waste in telegraphing.
3. The acute-angle sign above the 5 letters c, g, h, j, s in Esp. is very ugly, bothering and Slavic; likewise the breve above the u (e.g. in *aud...*). — Vp. does not need such-like, using similar signs only to explain the pronunciation in natural languages but not in Vp. as such.
4. The many word-sectioning signs in Esp. such as in the word *libr’óten’antó* ... are very unaesthetic and disruptive.
5. In Vp. the pronunciation of words always is quite certain and distinct. — In Esp., however, one does not know if *lingv*, to give an example, should be read *ling’v* or *lin’gv*, or *lin’gve*...
6. The sound of <German> *ch* (**ch**) has no place in a universal language because it is rarely found in natural languages and is difficult to pronounce for some as the French... which is why Vp. dropped it. — Esp., however, does have it, namely written as an *h* with the acute-angle sign or little roof above it.
7. Similarly superfluous are the letters and sounds of *sh* and *tsch* in Esperanto. — For these, Vp. simply has *j* and *c*.
8. Likewise any ablative case is reproachable in a universal language. — Esp., however, makes mention of it.
9. Vp. tolerates just 2 consonants following one other. — Esp. has 3—6 consonants in direct juxtaposition, e.g., *kompreneble*, *sanktan*, *kontrau*, *obstinaj*, *ekstrem*, *fingrn*, *membrjn*, *schtrumpjn*, *orandschjn*... Such a large number of consonants directly following each other can only make a language ugly and difficult to pronounce.
10. Vp. does not tolerate the same consonants or vowels side by side. — Esp., however, does have them, e.g., *grenn*, *dissaltos*, *mallonga*...

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\* Samenhof in Warsaw.

11. Diphthongs in a universal language are superfluous, and their pronunciation varies far too much between speakers. So, Vp. has rejected them. — Esp., however, has them, e.g., *adiau*, *aud*, *auskult*, *nau*... (ugly!).
12. Languages without any umlauts sound monotonous, harsh and boring with their perpetual tubby *u* and *o*, or their broad *a* and shrill *i*... In contrast, a language with umlauts is richer, more sonorous, tonally more diverse, more magnificent in timbre. It allows a much broader plenitude of words and has shorter words as well as transitive and intransitive verbs with a similar appearance... This is why Vp. has umlauts. — In Esp., they are lacking.
13. Vp. places the tone, the stress always on the last syllable, thus avoiding the degeneration and gradual loss of its important final syllables. — Esp. cannot avoid this as it has the stress on the second to last syllable.
14. Vp. only has one definite article, which is not needed very often (*el*). — Esp., however, has 2 of them, i.e., *la* and *l'*.
15. Vp. also has an indefinite article, which, although not always necessary, is occasionally needed. — Esp. has none.
16. For declension, Vp. uses only genuine cases instead of particles which must (ambiguously) serve to indicate the grammatical case. — Esp. lugs in the particles *de* and *al* to express the genitive and dative, which is a waste of words.
17. Vp. has only one form for each single grammatical case. — Esp. uses two — *de* and *da* — for the genitive.
18. In Esp., the word *ili* being the plural form of *li* is wholly inconsistent as Esp. usually indicates the plural by the letter *j*. But how one should pronounce this *j* is not known. — Such inconsistency is not found in Vp.
19. Vp. has only one suffix to indicate females (*of*); — Esp., however, needlessly has two, i.e., *in* and *nj*. But it is not explained how this *nj* should be pronounced, likewise it is not said how to read the ending *-ing*: like the German *-ing* in the word *Ding* or like *in'g*. — The more difficult and rarer sound *ng*, however, has no place in a universal language just like the nasal sounds in French (*mon*, *on*...). After all, even some Germans prefer to say *Bemerkunk* instead of *Bemerkung*. —
20. Vp. does not need 2 words to express the degrees of adjectives. — Esp. says *pli blanka* and *plei blanka* for *viedikum*, *viedikiin* (whiter, whitest).
21. Esp. took the words *sch*i (*she*) and *oni* from Vp., or from English and French, respectively; likewise, Esp. lifted the suffix *an* from Volapük.
22. The infinitive and plural are entirely different in Vp. and can never be confused (*-ön* and *-s*). — In Esp., they are easily confused (in writing and hearing) as they very inaptly are *i* and *j*.
23. Esp. regards the subjunctive and conditional moods as the same thing since the ending *-us* is used for both. — In Vp. they are strictly distinguished by using the 2 very different endings *-la* and *-öv*.
24. The abundant inserting of suffixes in the midst of words makes the affected words in Esp. very unclear and difficult to understand and easy to confuse... such as *babelado*, *faronta*, *kredinda*, *triobla*... Vp., in contrast, only has prefixes and suffixes with a definite meaning without insertion in the midst of basic words. —
25. The ending *-um* is explained in Esp. as an “suffix of miscellaneous meaning”. But it is not said what actually that is supposed to achieve. — Vp. really would be ashamed of such obscurity. — —
26. Esp. requires that in a word consisting of 3 words each word should be looked up individually in the dictionary. What circuitousness and robbing of time!! — Such does not exist in Vp.

27. Vp. has nothing but clearly defined prepositions which do not have 2—6 meanings. The undefined preposition *je* of Esperanto is thoroughly unclear and useless. — It is obvious that Mister S. i. W. has pursued significantly less linguistic studies than the inventor of Volapük. —
28. Simply taking over into a bungler-language purely latin... words like *homo*, *sed* and such, is something every language bungler can do who desires to make things easy for himself and to make some money; and **prior to S.** this was undertaken by many **other Vp. fakers**, but likewise without success.
29. The words of Vp. are all comfortable and easy to e'nunciate because the rattling, rough, snarling *r...* is mostly avoided, not the least with the Asiatic... peoples in mind. — Esp., on the other hand, has a large number of *gruff* and *difficult to pronounce* words like *tschj* and similarly rough combinations of sounds, i. e. *ajljn*, *akv'*, *ankrjn*, *bestn*, *borsn*, *brantschn*, *doltschn*, *ekscit*, *estr*, *kajln*, *haladzn*, *kadrn*, *kankrn*, *kaprn*, *kavernjn*, *kovertjn*, *membrjn*, *Mitschjn*, *ojstrjn*, *onkljn*, *orandschjn*, *ostrjn*, *palpebrjn*, *perdrikjn*, *pingljn*, *plastrjn*, *popljn*, *poschtjn*, *pugnjn*, *pulmjn*, *punktjn*, *rangjn*, *ringjn*, *salajrjn*, *sciencjn*, *semajnj*, *sojljn*, *spongjn*, *sturnjn*, *schinkjn*, *schtrumpjn*, *schultrjn*, *tigrjn*, *ulnjn*, *ungjn*, *vaksjn*, *ventrin*, *vintrjn*... It is obvious: Esp. originates from Poland; Vp., however, was devised by a connoisseur of music, a composer and poet. —
30. All comparisons between Vp. and its *fakes* and precursors show clearly: In Vp., a good *genius*, inciting to broad and deep language studies, is manifested and confirmed; while the systems of its fakers reveal nothing but mere arbitrariness, whim, and the *philistine* and base pursuit of fame or money... — This is why those fakes *mushroomed* overnight from the soil of dull brains, and — vanished quickly.

**Conclusion.** He who loves an expensive, time-consuming, *unusable* and unpleasantly sounding hodge-podge, *mishmash* and *blabber* language: he may learn the boastfully blazoned hype-language of the Pseudoesp. or other language fakes of Vp.! — But he who wants a *true world or universal language* which is really fast to learn, which saves time, space, effort and money, which is vigorous and vibrant in sound, and which was introduced without hype — he, then, who wants a simple, succinct and *practical thinker's language*: he may most joyously learn Volapük and remain true to Volapük which is daily *spreading* ever farther over the whole earth, and which now has nearly **1800** graduated teachers of both sexes.

(Translation from German by Hermann Philipps, March 2009)