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Language for International Communication -- One or Two?
by Sir James Pitman, K.B.E.*

*London, England. A paper presented at the Conference of IATEFL on 7th Jan. 1977 at Oxford College of Further Education, Oxford, England.

1. The purpose of this Conference is to foster communication by language: language - that God-given gift bestowed only on the human race and not on any of the other animals living on this planet. Man alone is able to create language as a means of communication by word of mouth, and to extend that gift to communication by other media, thanks to which, communication by visible words may be more effective for widespread communication. Indeed, it is clear that man's invention first of writing, and much later of printing, extended to the hand and the eye what had formerly been confined to the mouth and ear, and transferred to the permanent and tractable in space what had hitherto been evanescent, intractable in time and very localized in carrying distance. Of these two extensions the far more important was printing, which extended visible communication to many

more eyes and ears (when read aloud) than writing or speech could ever have reached. On Michaelmas Day last year our Post Office celebrated by a special issue of stamps the introduction into England by William Caxton, 500 years earlier, of the novelty of printing by movable type, in letters based upon the best handwritings then current in Europe. The stamps are very beautiful and worthy of that all-important revolution in human communication by means of the English language,

2. Visible language thus became in many respects more effective for communication than oral language: furthermore, in relatively recent years man has invented the telephone, the radio and T.V. (with its concomitant pictorial aids for its oral communications), magnetic tapes and computer printing, all of which have enabled words to reach the ears and eyes of a great many more listeners and readers. Language by word of mouth is otherwise lost for ever but when stored "in the can" it comes to enjoy many of the great advantages of writing and printing, in that those reached are incomparably greater in number and that even the oral message is no longer evanescent and uncontrollable in time, but when recorded in space has become more tractable. Indeed speech, when so recorded, has become able to enjoy some of the benefits of permanence, retrieval and limitless reiteration which visible language enjoys. With each extension of language, the value of the widest possible understanding of words becomes even greater.

3. When we consider the potentially great advantages of oral and visual communication on as wide a scale as possible and the enormous increase in their potential, we may recall the story of the building of the Tower of Babel (I quote from Genesis 11, verse 1):

> "And the whole earth was of one language and one speech. . . And the Lord said, Behold the people is one and they have all one language. . . and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

We need to recognize how great an impediment to the welfare of mankind has been and will continue to be any barrier to *human cooperation* which is imposed on mankind by words being spoken, listened to, written and read in so many different tongues. [1] Is it not a needless friction in the use of man's unique gift that there should be any blockage in the understanding of one another's language?

4. I want to stress *human co-operation as* a consequence of man's ability to communicate. In co-operation lies the explanation for man's astonishing achievements in dominating not only all other animals but all vegetables and all minerals, indeed, almost his entire environment. The heaviest and strongest elephant can be hoisted on board a ship and placed exactly in a predetermined place, but this is possible not for the reason that man's strength is adequate to the task but because of man's language and his ability to pass information to his fellows (over both time and distance) and his ability to think and to plan and to collaborate in the plan's execution.

5. Man's achievements have grown, are growing and will grow in proportion as communication by words becomes wider and the impediments to its passage are removed and the words understood. In a small tribe, the achievements of man who can understand only his tribe's language can be only negligible, compared with those of man in a wider world, where his understanding of even one World Second Language (W.S.L.) would immeasurably increase his knowledge and power.

6. This premise is no doubt self-evident, but the questions raised are many. To what extent is man able to learn languages other than his native tongue and if, so, what is to be the one or more languages preferred for universalizing understanding?

7. Is bilingualism better *per se* than monolingualism? Is there advantage to the individual if he remains only monolingual? Surely not. Surely improvement in the first language is inevitable in learning any second language, whether a world language or not. This paper is no argument against *any* language, in addition to a World Second Language (W.S.L.), being learned and used. Very much the contrary, provided it be thus additional.

8. We must define bi- and multi-lingual isms as comprising skilled knowledge of the added languages; and by skill we must mean the habituated ability to think not primarily only in the mother tongue but in the second language also, and as clearly as in that first language. The added language needs to be not only an additional medium of communication and of thinking, but also a means of communication with those of that particular other language group as effective as if there were no barrier of language. Is it desirable, and if so is it practicable, to expect the population of the world to be eventually skilled in one other language and, if so, is it practicable to expect them to become skilled in two languages or even three? - what are man's potentialities and his limitations for adding yet other language skills? [2] Will it help the learning of more than one language if and when the language environment on T.V. from earliest youth has become bi- or even tri-lingual? [3]

9. To what extent are advantageous factors to be found in any of the very many languages of the world and what are the factors for preferring one or more as a common World Second Language (W.S.L.)?

10. It would seem that six factors, in combination, are *essential* for any language to deserve consideration:

1) There must be a vast range of word coverage of the concepts with which man is concerned.
2) There must be a vast accumulation of material in printed form in that language.
3) Printed material available must range widely, from the very simple to the most highly advanced and sophisticated, and the wide range must cover language of feeling as well as language of purpose.
4) Printed material must be widely stocked in libraries and be read by those to whom that language has already become a second language. Many students must wish and be willing to study and practise in order to become skilled in it as their second language. The likely accretion of newly skilled listeners, speakers, readers and writers is thus important.

So far the emphasis has been on world communication through literacy, not through oracy: but nevertheless

5) The language should be also spoken and listened to by a significant proportion of the world's population. (The essentiality of these five factors eliminates all but about a dozen languages. For instance, the Danish language has much to commend it but Danish scientists pass on, even to one another, their know-how in a printed language other than Danish, desiring a wider field of communication than their own language affords.)
6) The language must be easy to learn. (The artificial languages, such as Esperanto, Ido, etc. are indeed easy to learn but they do not qualify for acceptance in all of the five factors above, least of all in the second, third, fourth and fifth.)

11. It would seem that there are probably not more than a dozen of the living languages [4] which so qualify for consideration. Each member of the audience may make his own list, with his own total, but it is likely that five languages - Spanish, German, Russian, French and English - will feature in every such list which may total five or more.

12. As is implicit in the second, third and fourth factors essential for consideration (paragraph 9), visible language needs to be regarded as more important for our purposes than audible language, though oracy is of course also relevant, particularly having regard to the recent developments in speech recording and broadcasting mentioned in paragraph 2. The Chinese language is not likely to

be sufficiently eligible for two reasons: firstly, that it is not one language in oracy but two or three or more, notwithstanding that in literacy it is a single language; and secondly, that its claim to eligibility in those three essential factors in literacy (Nos. 2, 3 and 4) is not nearly as strong as the claim of each of the five other languages, all of which have also a wide, if not as wide, use in oracy. Finally the volume of foreign language listening to broadcasts to foreigners in their own languages is so great that comparisons based on the populations of any one nation (e.g. China) are not necessarily a valid criterion.

Arabic is a strong contender and would be among the first five were more emphasis desirable on oracy and less on literacy. Any relative shortage of printed material available to meet factor number three, and for that matter number four also, is a most important consideration. Man, for the purposes we are considering, needs to benefit from being communicated with rather than from communicating and, spread as he is over the face of the globe, for his purposes, books he can obtain from a library and read (factors four and three) are more important for him than broadcasts, lectures or speeches to which he might listen-and are of much greater value to him and more convenient and accessible. Even with T.V., the students of the Open University in Britain are dependent upon access to printed material for effective study. Equally, it is likely that the historical and literary claims of a language such as Italian or Portuguese, great as they are, do not overcome their weakness in the second, third and fourth of the six essentials.

13. It seems therefore, to me at least, that the field of choice of one or even two languages as W.S.L.'s ought to lie within these five languages.

14. The extent to which a language should be eligible for preference as a W.S.L. may be judged by the use of it already in world-wide communication. For instance, there are likely to be only a few films or programmes originated in the Albanian (ɑ) or Welsh (ɷ) languages. [5] World-wide broadcasting: Ground-to-air and Air-to-ground communication in Civil Aviation; T.V. programmes and films, originated in that one particular language, and having been so originated have been either (i) "dubbed" in the oracy of another language or (ii) subtitled in the literacy of another language, are all relevant.

15. However, there needs to be recognized that any indications are relevant more to oracy than to literacy, but even in oracy the relevance is only to listening, not to speaking with a world-acceptable accent. Those who listen may be influenced by the sounds of a language they hear but for most adult and adolescent listeners - who are not strongly motivated to acquire a desired accent(s) - just listening does not alter the mother-tongue interference based on existing speech habituation, so separate are the activities of listening to and understanding in context what others have spoken, and those of speaking when they involve not only composition but also alteration of habits deeply conditioned long ago. A world-acceptable accent needs to be studiously acquired. [6] Lest it may be argued that there are so many millions who do not own or have access to a radio receiver or a T.V. set and others who do not attend film showings, there needs to be considered that generally speaking it is the more fortunate in these respects who are the literate ones and therefore of the sophisticated class for which the first four "essential factors" in paragraph 10 are self-selecting.

16. I have so far been more successful in obtaining facts for world radio broadcasting and the world marketing of T.V. programmes than of films. However, what I have obtained is given in Appendices I and II. I hope to obtain some information through the embassies of France, Russia, Spain, Germany and any others who may be willing to furnish comparable facts for additional Appendices. Taken together, even what I have collected is a valuable check on the reliability of judgements which otherwise can be subjective only. The appendices are on pages 8 and 9.)

17. The remaining important question is whether one, two, or more languages are desirable and whether more than one is practicable, and if so how many more. In any case it is most important to bear in mind that if any language has become established as the unique language for world-wide collaboration - as English has become in aeronautics - nothing should be done to disturb it. The recent tragedy in the air space over Yugoslavia emphasizes the dangers of practising more than one language between ground control and those in the air, or *vice versa*.

18. It seems, to me at least, that the question in terms of practicality becomes whether two would be practicable, and how much less practicable than one.

20. The main advantages that a decision for two would have over one would be that two would

1) greatly increase the numerical support for the innovative concept of designating, as preferred and recommended, any language as a W.S.L.
2) The proportion of literates in any one language to the total population of the whole world is insignificantly small. The total of all those who are native speakers of any two of the world's main languages is not a great proportion but if added to the total population of the world who speak other languages with no pretensions to world acceptance (who wait in default for leadership, decision and action to nominate any one or two of the main languages as chosen W.S.L.(s)) totals a very large proportion indeed.
3) It would also substitute co-operation in place of opposition between two of the most eligible candidates one might almost say contenders - each wishing in the future to support the other, once the aim has become the universalization of the other language as well as their own.
4) It would also exhibit the willingness of the native speakers of either of the twin World Second Languages to become skilled linguists in that of the other and to submit themselves to the same need to become skilled in a World Second Language, other than their own, just as they expect the speakers of all other languages to submit themselves.
5) It would further exonerate the speakers of either language from the accusation of selfishly desiring the speakers of all other languages to learn only theirs.
6) Furthermore, as has been hinted earlier (in the first sentences of paragraph 7), it is no idle belief that every user of language for communication becomes a better communicator, even in his own language, as soon as he has added an equal skill in at least a second language. If this be accepted, it would be a great disservice to the speakers of any language chosen as a W.S.L. to have removed from them the strongly-motivating urge to learn a second language and the opportunity so to improve themselves.

It seems too that the price to be paid for gaining these six advantages-in agreeing on two rather than one language - will be insignificant. The world needs a whole loaf of bread, but say nine-tenths is very much better than no bread.

20. If then two W.S.L.s are practicable, are not three W.S.L.s also practicable, at least for the speakers of neither of the two languages chosen?

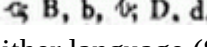
21. If three languages are within the capacity of those who are native speakers of some language other than the two W.S.L.s, [7] there will come about a partial "over-kill" in that everyone who is a native speaker of either of the two W.S.L.s and is fully educated to be bilingual in the other W.S.L. will be able to communicate in either of the W.S.L.s with all bi-lingual *and* with all tri-lingual speakers. But what of it? There will at least remain for the remainder (those who speak their own language and only one of the two W.S.L.s) the practical convenience that they will be able to communicate with, and to receive communications from, all who are bilingual in both of the W.S.L.s and all who are tri-lingual-an eventually very large proportion of the world's population.

22. Greatly daring, I stick my neck out and plump for both French and English, *but only on the condition that the learning of those two languages is made very much easier than it is at present*, so that the sixth essential factor may also be enjoyed, seeing that *in this factor alone* both of those languages are much less acceptable as W.S.L.s than many of the languages that have been excluded. As our Bullock Committee has recently reported (paragraph 7.27):

> "it is self-evident that a simplification of the relationship between sound and spellings must make it easier for a child to make progress in the early stages."

If this be true of English-speaking children learning literacy in a language they already speak, how much truer is it of a foreigner seeking to learn both oracy and literacy?

23. Furthermore, only if the alphabetic dis-relationship between literacy and oracy in both French and English be eliminated can the learner's senses of touch and the benefit of the kinaesthetic skill of motion become fully effective. For the newborn child, the location of the mother's nipple by touch, the motions to move to it, the act of sucking and the final reward are the first experiences in all mammals, including man (and woman), of learning cause and effect. Learning by touch and motion is held by some to be the most important approach to man's success in yet *further* learning, particularly of language in all its forms, e.g., handwriting, touch typewriting, shorthand, and the Morse code, as well as of oracy and literacy. [8] And there are other factors at work which make learning a language more successful if the learning be multi-sensory, employing all the relevant senses and employing them as it were pari passu, i.e. in parallel immediacy, from the very outset. If there be doubt about the difficulties which Traditional Orthography (T.O.)presents to the foreigner learning English(but which can be eliminated), let the doubter read the latter of the two papers mentioned in paragraph 25; if there were then to be any doubt about the need to eliminate all those drawbacks (and to obtain the consequent benefit of that close relationship between literacy and oracy which comes about in learning English when oracy and literacy may be learned *pari passu* in a beneficial harmony), let the doubter read the other two papers mentioned in paragraphs 24 and 25 be low. *He will have no doubt whatever that the learning of both French and English in oracy and in literacy may indeed be made very much easier for the foreigner and with greatly increased success.*

24. In the January 1972 issue of "The Incorporated Linguist" was published an article with the title *"Oracy and Literacy"* in which I showed the great value of simplicity in learning and the practicability of relating the letters of the alphabet for French and English to the spoken sounds of those languages and the proposed l'Alphabet d'Apprentissage (ada) and the speech Initial Teaching Alphabet (*Speech* ita) as such learning media and showed how practicable it would be in both languages to have, *during the learning period*, a systematically alphabetic medium on *national* lines in place of the International Phonetic Alphabet. I proposed a learning medium designed for each language which would be thus better for learning oracy and literacy simultaneously and could be nevertheless designed to be so akin to *Les Formes Imprimees Traditionelles* (F.I.T.) and to *Traditional Orthography* (T.O.) that the learner could immediately transfer to either, much as he so easily does from lower case to upper case (capitals) or from upper and lower case to cursive characters  and as he so easily transfers to reading variant individual handwritings in either language.(See specimens of the proposed learning, and so temporary, medium in paragraph 27.) [9]

25. In 1974 at the IATEFL Conference I read a paper with the title *"The Importance of Medium and Motivation in the Learning of English as a Foreign Language"* and advanced the thesis that "if English were made easier to learn, particularly in the earliest stages, motivation would be generated. . . and would be more sustainable among those motivated" and that success would thus be more frequent, earlier, more certain and of higher quality. In a paper at the 1975 IATEFL Conference

entitled "*The Drawbacks* of Tra*ditional Orthography,*" I analysed the confusions which face the learner of oracy and literacy in English, particularly oracy, and showed how they could be eliminated while occasioning no problem at all in the transition from the learning medium to the traditional. The two papers are of course applicable no less to learning French oracy as well as literacy.

26. It ought now to be clear that in both French and English the sixth factor of simplicity in learning may easily be added.

27. Here are respectively specimens of l'Alphabet d'Apprentissage and of *Speech* ita, the latter prepared for use in Nigeria in Infant Schools. (These can be presented on a screen from an overhead projector from a transparency or from a slide and an ordinary projector.)

l'Alphabet d'Apprentissage

le lecteur n^{e}є$_{t}$ pa$_{s}$ saŋ$_{s}$ savoir qe l^{e}alfabe foneetiqi^{e} iŋternasional (A.P.I.) є$_{t}$ larjemeŋt utilisee comme moiyiŋ d^{e}eŋsegnemeŋ de l^{a}eecoute ee de la parole, maix il є$_{t}$ tellemeŋ$_{t}$ diff-ereŋ$_{t}$ de l^{e}alfabe ee dees eepelasioŋs ordinair$_{es}$ — formx iŋprimee$_{z}$ tra-disionell$_{z}$ — (F.I.T.) qe l^{e}eŋsegnemeŋ$_{t}$ de la lecture ee de l^{a}eecriture eŋ$_{n}$ F.I.T. є$_{t}$ gravemeŋt eŋdommajee. iŋsi le graŋt avaŋtaje de l^{e}a.d.a. appliqee a la parole reexide daŋ$_{s}$ la possibilitee qi^{e}il offre, tout eŋ pouvaŋt etre utilisee avec une aûssi graŋde eefficaçitee qe l^{e}A.P.I. pour la formasioŋ de l^{a}aûdisioŋ ee de la parole, d^{e}etre uŋ outi baûcou plus efficaçe pour l^{e}eŋsegnemeŋ de la lecture, de l^{a}eecriture, ee meme curieusemeŋ, comme le$_{z}$ recherche$_{s}$ l^{e}oŋt eetabli, de l^{a}ortografe.

fatħer: "ħær is a big ekspanʃħon in mieniŋ at ħe preseŋt tiem."

muħer: "whie is ħat?"

fatħer: "ħe reesoŋ is ħat sumwun has mæd ħe discuvery ov led in ħe mountæns. led is a soft metal ov græt value, ħœ led pieps freekwently get bursts in ħem."

muħer: "will ħær bee a tendensy for an increes in trædiŋ ov aull sorts?"

fatħer: "yes, ħær ar aull ħe siens ov ħis. ħe œnly limit tœ ħe ekspanʃħon ov træd is ħe ræt ov ekspanʃħon ov ħe miens. træd will bee supported bie ħe muny ħe mieners get."

muħer: "trædiŋ wiħ ħe mieners will bee very rewaurdiŋ. it wœd bee a ʃħæm not tœ dœ sum ourselvs."

fatħer: "ie will mæk nœ prœtest agænst ħat. it is a gœd sujjestioŋ. ie hav mie agreements wiħ ħe trædiŋ cumpanis heer for ħe distribueʃħon ov ħær gœds. ħæ will let mee hav sum gœds for trædiŋ mieself."

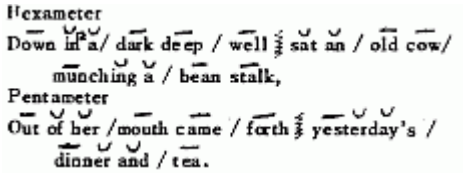
muħer: "anna and ie will tæk part."

fatħer: "yes. wee will get sum cloœshiŋ, bœts and ʃħœs, fœd and driŋks. it will bee a ʤænj from farmiŋ and bildiŋ."

28. I hope meanwhile that I may have successfully made the point that two W.S.L.s are practicable, are better than one, are more likely than one to bring about the ideal we all desire and that French and English can be made very easy to learn. Not only are these two learning media immediately meaningful to anyone literate in French or in English, but they are also full of clues most helpful to those learning *oracy* in those languages - and the importance of a "good" pronunciation, in parallel with a good literate skill, is most important.

29. *Speech* ita is particularly helpful to the learner of English as a second language because the heavy type indicates speech with primary stress for that syllable, the ordinary type indicates what may be called ordinary stress and the small type lack of stress, thus indicating not only a difference in the pronunciation of the vowel when unstressed but also indicating those rhythmically differing speech patterns which are so important for intelligibility to the ear. The acceleration in the pace of speech which occurs when secondarily stressed and (particularly) when unstressed vowels are spoken (whether schwa [10] or schwi [11]), and the slowing down when words are primarily

stressed, is clearly shown by an Elegiac Verse in English. The short beats of the lesser stressed vowels at the end of the dactyl contrast with the longer stressed beats of the first syllable and the two long beats of the spondees:



Furthermore, the variations in linear position of the in the small type indicates the particular vowel sounds - *schwa* or *schwi* - which is appropriate when that syllable lacks stress. For instance, when the words *that, are, should*, etc. are heard on the tapes in their weak forms, the vowel character (in the low position) needs to be interpreted and spoken with the *schwa* and equally when the syllables *me, be,* print*ed* are heard in their weak form, the vowel character (in the higher position) indicates that it needs to be spoken with the *schwi*, the vowel appropriate for its weak form.

30. The value of ada and of *speech* ita in teaching and learning oracy in French and English depends on the use of tape records - and it is essential that the tape records be made first and the print then made to agree with what will be heard on the tape: also that the voices on the tapes should reflect the "accent" preferred. Thus we have now at our disposal in both French and English the means of making these otherwise most difficult-to-learn languages very much easier to learn, and in learning both oracy and literacy, and of enhancing greatly the achievements of man by widening communication and thus improving his ability to think, to plan and to co-operate, even better than ever, with his fellow men. *Now is the time*!

31. Perhaps in the first part of our discussion we may consider, and as a general proposition, only this last point. But let us, in this, free ourselves from emotion in the consideration of which language or languages should be chosen, and only then, proceed to the inevitably emotional issue of whether one or two, and if so which one or two languages should be generally accorded the status of W.S.L.

32. I have bravely stuck out my neck, and twice - not only in suggesting two languages instead of one, but also in plumping for French and English as those to be chosen. Let others shoot me down on both questions but let them attempt to be, as I hope I have, both objective and constructive.

33. Married men will agree that women, who desire from their husbands consent to some expensive innovation, succeed in proportion as they manage to discuss the detail of *which* new house or *which* new motorcar should be bought. In diverting their husbands to discuss the secondary, the husband's agreement on the primary becomes pre-empted. The more furiously rage the arguments and disagreements over whether one or two W.S.L.s are the more desirable and whether language A and/or languages A and B (or C and D, E or some other) should be chosen, the more deeply the arguers become committed to the acceptance of the main principle.

34. All of us here devoutedly wish we may *raze*, not *raise*, the Babelesque barriers. [13] I hope that what I have said, in fervently sharing the desire for enhancing communication, may have advanced the day when *homo sapiens* agrees that one World Second Language (or two) is a most desirable step forward and that the desired end is attainable by speakers of any of the several thousand languages of the world who are both sapient and well-educated. Let us then hope for general agreement and for the action which can be based only on very wide agreement. That agreement (and action) will need to come from a significant number of other language groups, but that of itself is surely no insuperable hurdle.

Footnotes

[1] Prof. George Steiner in his book, *"After Babel"* (see bibliography # 22) instances "1,000 different languages spoken in New Guinea alone" (p. 50) and "four to five thousand . . .

current in use . . ." (p. 51) and that counting now dead languages "at least twice that number" (p. 51) in total inexplicably spread (p. 54). "What can possibly explain this crazy quilt?" (p. 54). Chapter 2, at least, of his book is obligatory reading for all interested in the subject under consideration.

[2] The Danes in particular, the Scandinavians, the Dutch and the Swiss admirably point the conclusion that multilingualism is within the potentiality of at least a large proportion of the human race.

[3] Undoubtedly the invention of printing developed national languages. The Bible - in the favoured dialect - was read aloud in every parish church and read silently in every educated home. The ownership of a T.V. set in every educated home is likely to do for oracy for the world what printing did for the nation, in the number of languages favoured by those in charge of T.V. transmissions. The high costs of programming are very strong in discouraging variety in languages - just as the high cost of printing discouraged variety in national languages and worked towards a single standard: in England, the "Court" speech, the King's English.

[4] The Pope's 1976 Christmas message was spoken in 12 languages. The Roman Catholic Church is certainly to be recognized as a very large world community indeed, and the Pope's choice of these 12 languages is at least significant. They were:

Italian French German English Spanish
Greek Polish Russian Chinese Portuguese
Latin Ki Swahili

[5] Chosen from the several thousand languages as Alpha and Omega lest susceptibilities be needlessly aroused.

[6] Great pains are taken to coach the "stars" and all leading speakers in order that their speech may be recorded in an acceptable world accent. Moreover, rejection is strongly if quietly at work on those whose speech is, if comprehensible, not generally acceptable.

[7] Here again the commendable example of the Scandinavians and Swiss indicates that three languages are not too many, because that achievement is apparently inherent in man's capacity to learn.

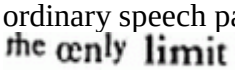
[8] See Bibliography # 21: Prof. Ritchie Russell with A. J. Dewar, *Explaining the Brain,* Oxford Univ. Press, 1975.

[9] It will be clear from this and what follows that neither l'Alphabet d'Apprentissage nor *Speech* ita are intended as spelling reforms. F.I.T. and T.O. are each at least as convenient and efficient for *reading* as any initial learning counterpart. It is only for learning, and of oracy as well as of literacy in conjunction, that T.O. and F.I.T. make the task very difficult, whilst ada and *Speech* ita are so very helpful. The use of ada and *Speech* ita is to be restricted to the learning period only. Thus the value of an initial learning medium is ephemeral as a more helpful learning medium which, as such, will carry over easily into F.I.T. and T.O., both of which will continue to remain unchanged. The advantages of a two-stage learning are very great and the disadvantages few, and if they exist, very minor.

[10] The short unstressed neutral vowel at the end of *banana.* See the indefinite article

in line 1 of the specimen of *Speech* ita.

[11] A new word to cover the weak forms of /ee/, /e/ and /i/ in b*e*, m*e*, *i*t, b*e*fore, print*e*d, min*u*te, etc., in the ordinary speech pattern of "give me a chance." (See the word "only" as spoken by "father" in



[12] The key to pronunciation in the Oxford English Dictionary makes clear the distinction between the longer stressed /i/ in /sit/ and the short unstressed /i/ (schwi) in v æ n ĭ ty; similarly, it shows the distinction between the stressed long /ei/ in /rein/ and the less stressed shorter pronunciation of the indefinite article "a" which they show as ă and even less stressed as ə (the symbol for *schwa).*

[13] This is an example of why Spelling Reform (for the purposes of reading) would be damaging rather than helpful to the reader. *Raze* (AR AYE ZED EE) (to destroy) and *raise* (AR AYE IE ESS EE) (to build) are homophones, but have in this context exactly opposite meanings. You and I have been at a disadvantage because I am speaking and you are listening. If I were to show that sentence on a slide and you were to read it, you would recognize the fact that because they are heterographs in print there is advantage to the reader since the differences in their spellings show that the first means to destroy and the second to build. Thus the message is made clear by spelling differences which give no difficulty at all to the skilled reader and will give none in reading to the learning-to-read beginner provided that a learning medium be employed, and that they are printed as homographs. There is no difficulty at all in reading for the learning-to-read-and-to-speak beginner were he to have the benefit of a systematically alphabetic initial teaching medium (while learning and only while learning) when those two words will have been presented to him in forms as homographic as they are homophonic. When he has learned, he will have no difficulty in reading the heterographic versions. Later he will easily come to read, and be helped in understanding by, other heterographc forms: *sun* and *air, son* and *heir; there, their* and *they're;* and, for many of us, *arms* and *alms; saw* and *sore; law* and *lore* (when a consonant follows). Our language is full of heterographic homophones as many of us speak them, because we know the language and therefore have the benefit of context in listening, but we ought to be thankful in that in print meaning is made even clearer to those who are literate by visible differences which help and supplement the value of context.

If the question be raised whether there should be reform in the spellings of such words for the benefit of those who are learning to spell orthographically, the answer depends on the purpose of the conformity. If the purpose be to help the private individual who is writing in his own individual handwriting, there is a very good case for allowing the writer not to conform but to be as individualistic in his spellings as he is individualistic in his handwriting and in his pronunciation of the wads he writes. The written form *a book rabbit* will betray his Lancashire or Yorkshire accent when speaking, but with only little damage to anybody's understanding of his message. If the purpose be to amend the printings on the printed page, the answer is surely that the understanding of what is read will be made more difficult, not easier; also that it is impractical to expect anything but disagreement about "one correct pronunciation" which should determine the new spellings. None of us here (English, American, etc.) would accept *rise* (AR IE ESS EE) as the new spelling for both the homophones *raze* and *raise,* just because that price had to be paid for Australian acceptance of new spellings in which the new spelling of other words misrepresented the generally accepted Australian pronunciation. Agreement on pronunciation is as impossible as the proposition of the spelling reformers for a new and rational *orthography is* ill-considered.

The case for spelling reform thus stands on leaving the printed spellings alone for helping general reading but on allowing permissive spellings for individual writing, counting upon the context and the intelligibility of the message when so written to be as intelligible as are the differing accents and the still more differing handwritings. There is no point in creating a new and different orthography for individual writing. Let the old one stay for print and formal writing. It works very well and much better than would any new orthography based on supposed standard pronunciation.

An Englishman and an Australian were staying up very late one night talking, when the Australian rose and said that he must go home because it was getting /light/. The Englishman, surprised, went to the window and pulled the curtains back, disclosing that it was still very dark. He had misunderstood the Australian's message, which was that it was getting late. In English as a W.S.L. there will be need not only to follow the film, radio and T.V. industries in selecting or coaching those who will be recording the teaching tapes but in doing so to straighten out those not very many misunderstandings which can be caused by variation in accent. Let the tapes reflect the regional

accent-Scottish, English, American, Australian, etc. - but, so far as feasible, with selection and moderation, so that world communication by oracy may be functionally effective.

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Note: The name *Speech* i.t.a. was originally *World* i.t.a. (w.i.t.a.) but was changed to *Speech* i.t.a. to indicate its purpose to teach English *Speech*, and in an accent chosen to be acceptable and therefore so spoken on the tapes. Those tapes are to be listened to in relation to what has been printed on the page. Oracy and literacy are then made to be mutually supporting.

Appendix I

List of countries transmitting programmes in *English* on short-wave radio with the hours and minutes of daily broadcasting, taken from Prof. R. E. Wood's study.

The table below is taken from *English Around the World*, a publication of the English Speaking Union of the United States in an article (Nov, 1976 issue) about a study by Richard E. Wood, Associate Professor of Languages & Linguistics, Adelphi Univ. Garden City, New York. It begins: "English is the leading linguistic medium in a major field of contemporary world communications-short-wave broadcasting to target listening audiences in foreign countries."

Table I

HOURS OF DAILY SHORTWAVE BROADCASTS IN ENGLISH, BY COUNTRY AND STATION

Name of Country (Plus name of station, if more than one per country)	*Daily Duration Hours - Minutes*
Official, governmental, semi-governmental or monopoly-licensed radio broadcasting entities.	
Afghanistan	1:00
Albania	8:30
Algeria [1]	0:30
Angola [1]	0:15
Argentina	3:00
Australia	23:30
Austria	2:30
Bangladesh	2:00
Belgium	1:00
Brazil	1:00
Bulgaria	3:30
Canada	12:30
Chile	2:15
China, People's Republic	19:00
China, Republic of	2:50
Congo, Rep. (Brazzaville) [1]	0:15
Cuba	8:00
Egypt	7:45
Finland	2:30
France	1:00
Germany, Federal Republic	6:55
German Democratic Republic	10:30
Ghana	13:30
Great Britain	34:00

Greece	1:00
Grenada	1:35
Hungary	2:40
India	9:45
Indonesia	3:00
Iran	0:30
Iraq	0:50
Israel	2:15
Italy	2:00
Ivory Coast	1:15
Japan	13:00
Jordan (Commercial, religious)	5:30
Korea, Democratic People's Republic	10:10
Korea, Republic	4:00
Kuwait	6:00
Luxembourg, (Commercial, religious)	3:45
Malagasy Republic	1:00
Malaysia	1:30
Maldives (Commercial, religious)	2:30
Malta [2]	0:05
Mongolia	1:00
Mozambique [1]	0:10
Netherlands	12:10
New Zealand	18:00
Nigeria	4:40
Norway [2]	0:45
Pakistan	7:00
Philippines	11:35
Poland	6:00
Portugal	3:30
Romania	6:00
Saudi Arabia	4:00
Somali Republic	0:15
South Africa	8:50
Spain	4:00
Sri Lanka (Partly commercial, religious)	11:00
Sweden	4:30
Switzerland	4:00
Syria	1:30
Tanzania	3:00
Thailand	2:20
Turkey	3:15
Uganda	3:00
United Nations [2]	1:10
USSR (of which:	27:40
Radio Moscow	21:30
R. St. "Peace and Progress"	3:30
R. Kiev	1:30
R. Tashkent	1:00
R. Vilnius	0:10
R. Erevan [3]	0:05
USA (of which:	55:45

VOA	31:15
A FRTS	24:00
Organization of American States	0:30
Vatican	2:30
Vietnam	3:00
Yugoslavia	1:45
Zambia	4:00

Total: 76 Countries - 83 Stations

2) Private missionary religious broadcasters unaffiliated with host-country governments:	*Hours -Minutes*
Country - Station Name	
Ecuador - HCJB	21:50
Ethiopia - Radio Voice of the Gospel	3:15
Guam - Trans-World Radio	3:00
Liberia -ELWA	2:30
Malta - Adventist World Radio	1:00
IBRA Radio	1:00
Monaco - Trans-World Radio	2:00
Neths Antilles - Trans-World Radio	1:30
Philippines - FFBC	11:45
Philippines - Radio Veritas [3]	3:00
Portugal - Adventist World Radio	1:00
Portugal - IBRA Radio [1]	1:00
Seychelles - FFBA	5:00
Swaziland-Trans-World Radio	5:30
USA of which:	17:15
WYFR, Your Family Radio (Oakland, Calif.)	9:15
WINB, World International Broadcasters (Red Lion, Pa.)	5:00
KGEI, The Voice of Friendship (San Francisco)	3:00

Total: 12 Countries, 17 Stations

Total, governmental and 84 countries, 100 Stations private:
Key -
[1] *Irregular, subject to change*
[2] *Not daily; pro-rated to daily basis*
[3] *Catholic all other miss. stns. - Protestant, Evangelical (RVOG is Lutheran, moderately Evangelical)*

General Notes:
1. VOA - Voice of America. AFRTS- American Forces Radio & T.V. Service. The remaining acronyms are possibly station identification letters.
2. Where, as happens in broadcasting from America and Great Britain, such broadcasting exceeds 24 hours a day, the explanation lies in duplication of short-wave broadcasting.
3. Prof. Wood arranges the order of the countries broadcasting most in English, as Russia and Australia, third and fourth to America and Britain themselves.

He gives interesting assessments of the pronunciations in English used by a number of countries: Russia, Japan, China, Sweden, Netherlands, Portugal, The Vatican, Czechoslovakia, Albania, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

He also reports on short-wave broadcasting in languages other than English, mentioning German, Spanish and French, but concludes "English is the leading single linguistic medium in international broadcasting."

Appendix II

B.B.C. T.V. Programmes

All programmes which are exported to overseas stations as English-language programmes are exported as shown to British audiences. Some are then dubbed and some subtitled in the language of the purchaser. Programmes so bought and translated from English during the last few years have been:

The Six Wives of Henry VIII	America	Elizabeth R	Fall of Eagles
War and Peace	Onedin Line	Search for the Nile	Dad's Army
Civilization	The Pallisers	David Copperfield	Dr. Who
Ascent of Man	The World About Us		

Some other single items and complete programmes are regularly sold from long-running series such as Horizon, Man Alive and Panorama. Programmes are bought by countries ascending from 25 in number at the least to 60 at the most. It would be more indicative of the volume of the listeners and viewers were the price paid for the rights to show the programme, to dub or to subtitle to be available. Possibly this information could be made available and added later in a revision and reprinting of the Appendices, as already mentioned in paragraph 16.

The 30 Foreign Countries as shown in Table 2, who purchased such B.B.C. Television programmes during the year to 31 March, 1975, who either dubbed or subtitled the programme into their own languages - in number of hours per country dubbed or subtitled - were as below:

Table 2	*Hours Dubbed*	*Hours Sub-titled*
Austria	58	
Belgium	9	22
France	45	
West Germany	59	
Holland		175
Italy	35	
Switzerland	36	
Portugal		73
Spain	70	
Albania	35	
Bulgaria		29
Czechoslovakia		12
East Germany	26	
Greece		75
Hungary	22	
Israel		77
Poland	50	
Yugoslavia		117
Japan	49	
Middle East (Arabic)	120	386

Turkey		85
Iran		22
Latin America (Spanish)	812	
Latin America (Portuguese)	29	
Denmark		70
Finland		94
Iceland		69
Norway		73
Sweden		105
USSR	7	

It is with grateful thanks to the English Speaking Union of America that the results of Prof. Wood's study are reproduced in Appendix I, and similarly to Mr. Robin Scott of the British Broadcasting Corporation that the information contained in Appendix II has been made available. It may be possible in later appendices to include a breakdown by Mr. Gregson of the short-wave broadcasting by the B.B.C. comparable to that which is given by Prof. Wood: also to include figures of the foreign countries which buy films from America and having bought them, either dub or subtitle them. At any rate a letter has been sent to Mr. Jack Valenta, President of the Motion Picture Association of America in New York. He is said to have the information and to be likely to make it available. I hope eventually to be able to supply copies of a revised printing of this paper in which may be included what further information I may obtain (see paragraph 16). It may be desirable to call special attention to paragraph 15 in order to qualify the validity of the Appendices (particularly of programmes spoken in French or English) as indicative of the world acceptability of communication in those two languages, or any other.

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One Alphabet for Reading and Writing English, by Gertrude Hildreth*

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School children en route to English literacy are confronted with several versions of the ABC's, the letters derived from ancient Greek and Latin roots. The world of print employs forms different from conventional handwriting styles, and the capital letters of print, typing, and handwriting differ somewhat from lower case (small letter) forms.

The diversity among alphabets for reading and handwriting introduces confusion in learning the basic skills of literacy. Instructional time could be saved and mistakes avoided if the basic hand scripts and printing press alphabets were brought into close agreement.

Sir James Pitman and others have called attention to the problems that our multiple alphabets cause beginners, and through experiments with i.t.a. in primary classes, they have demonstrated that beginners introduced to reading, writing, and spelling with identical alphabets were ahead of like-age children learning to read with conventional alphabets, as well as in handwriting and language expression. [15] Downing [3] and Mazurkiewicz. [12] Word perception in reading, particularly, benefits from similar forms in print and handwriting.

An augmented alphabet for simplified spelling will contain 18 or 19 new or borrowed letters, including the schwa sign [14] This is the time to consider the elimination of unnecessary variations

between script and print. George Bernard Shaw favored an entirely, new alphabet for English spelling consisting of 40 signs. [15]

The English Alphabet in Print

The basic forms of English print have scarcely varied during the past 300 years, except for the recent introduction of sans-serif print with simplified letter forms. In extensive tests, The Bell Telephone Company found sans-serif to be the most legible type. For illustrations of this plain style print see telephone books, *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 1975, or *The American Heritage Word Frequency Book*, 1971. The simpler style print is also found today in periodicals, bulletins, advertising materials, and children's schoolbooks.

As for similarities and differences between the capital and lower case letter forms in handwriting systems, printing fonts and typewriting, ten of the letters in standard news-print are approximately the same, seven have some resemblance, and the rest are decidedly different. Standard typewriter letters, caps and lower case, have approximately the same degree of resemblance.

The Handwriting Story

Cursive handwriting, also known as commercial or American Business penmanship, has been the prevailing style taught in American schools from earliest years to the present century. Cursive style has slender, eliptical letters, joined within each word at the base line, and with a thirty degree slant to the right or a "back hand" slant; 'in direct contrast to machine printing.

Today, educators view cursive handwriting as inappropriate for introducing school beginners to handwriting for a number of reasons. Cursive style is laborious for youngsters to learn because it requires excessive drill on letter strokes. Cursive writing contributes little to beginning reading because the children's writing is different from print. Furthermore, the children are unable to read their own writing for a year or two.

Instruction in Simpler Writing Styles

For sixty years or more simpler writing styles have been taught in schools here and abroad to replace elaborate cursive writing. Manuscript or print-style writing is the prevailing mode for beginners today.

Modern manuscript was named after the plain vertical letter style used in early times for copying the Bible Hour Books, and important documents with a quill pen. The letter forms are similar to sans-serif print with rounded letters packed closely together but unjoined to form words, and are suitable for modern pens that have displaced the old steel pen points, pen holder, and ink well.

In American schools the introduction of manuscript during the 1920's coincided with the activity program and the integrated teaching of language skills related to child experience. [13]

Advantages of Manuscript, Print-Style Writing

All studies indicate that manuscript is learned more rapidly than cursive in the primary years and the children can use it sooner for written expression. The letter forms are easy to produce without elaborate, monotonous drills. The writing is immediately legible; even Grandma can read it.

Reading the words and sentences children write themselves gives further experience with word recognition and sentence comprehension. Story charts, written announcements, and instructions prepared by the teacher extend the amount of meaningful material from day to day.

Spelling, too, is practiced as the children observe the teacher writing words on charts and the blackboard, then proceed to copy the words separately and in sentences.

Simple print style writing is also recommended for the first non-book reading content and handwriting practice for older illiterates and non-English speaking persons studying to become literate in English.

Block Printing

Another variety of print writing is block printing using only the capital letters of the standard alphabet:

THIS WAY TO THE FAIR

Block printing is commonly used for advertising layouts, signs, draftman's layouts, art work, store sales slips, and so on. Some grown-ups habitually use odd combinations of block printing and lower case letters for all their writing because it is more legible than the cursive hand. However, block printing is not recommended as a general purpose hand script. Manuscript suffices for filling in forms when a person is asked to "print", and for the signature as well.

Criticism of Manuscript Writing

As soon as manuscript writing began to replace cursive style both in lower and advanced school classes, some parents inquired anxiously when the children were going to learn to write, and children asked the same question. Some folks even said, "Manuscript writing looks too childish. It's babyish printing, not real writing." "Print writing is too easy, cursive style looks more educated," was another complaint. Cursive writing had become the symbol of academic learning and literacy. Still another criticism was that children were unable to read adult cursive style writing.

The "Too Slow" Argument Against Manuscript Writing

Educators and handwriting experts complained that manuscript beyond the primary grades was too slow in comparison with cursive for general writing purposes, although an improvement over cursive style for the first two grades. [4] Rate of writing is not considered significant in the primary grades, but above that point speed becomes a critical issue.

There never has been any conclusive proof from comparison studies of matched groups that manuscript writing is slower than a flowing, joined letter cursive style. Children who have always used manuscript style equal the rate of cursive writers and even exceed it.

The question of speed was investigated some years ago by comparative studies in Brookline, Mass. schools. In Brookline, manuscript writers proved to be equal to cursive writers, grades five and six; and were well above the Ayres' cursive writing grade standards in grades seven and eight. [6]

My early study of seventh graders proved that the half-dozen fastest writers had always written manuscript style: Manuscript writing holds up in legibility and neatness, even under speed pressure, in contrast to typical cursive style. College students who turn in papers in print style writing to which they are accustomed are normally rapid writers.

The illusion of slowness is due to misleading impressions from the written page. To a naive person, manuscript *looks slower*, less hurried, as though done more carefully than busy-looking cursive style with flourishes and flowing letter joinings.

When I sent a batch of upper grade manuscript papers to a school superintendent who had complained about student's slow manuscript writing, his comment was, "Well, those papers *look slower."* All had been written at or above cursive rate norms for the grade. The same illusion occurs in observing finished art work. How slowly and carefully the painter must have worked to create such a beautiful picture! But the artist's own testimony is to the contrary.

Naturally, there are individual differences in writing rate from one person to another, just as in performing any other habitual motor skill. Furthermore, a neat or hurried job can be done in any style of handwriting.

Manuscript writing is said to lack individuality. The fact is that by maturity the style is as distinctive as any other, as personal as one's thumb prints.

The "Change Over" Policy in Primary Classes

In the leading public schools and most private schools where manuscript was first introduced, the simplified style was considered appropriate for all school levels and for lifetime use. Dr. Carleton Washburne, superintendent of the Winnetka, Illinois schools said he could see no reason for changing to cursive writing at any grade level. [17]

In Bronxville, New York, manuscript writing continued throughout the elementary school years unless parents made individual requests.

A course of study was prepared by the Brookline, Mass. schools for teaching manuscript throughout the elementary years. There the children were taught to read cursive style writing and to write a cursive style signature. [6]

Due primarily to the foregoing arguments against manuscript writing, a changeover from manuscript to cursive writing not later than the third grade has become an established tradition in the public schools. Handwriting publishers have failed to furnish materials for perfecting manuscript writing beyond the third grade, and few teachers have received training in assisting pupils to achieve more mature manuscript in the intermediate grades and beyond.

With the mandatory changeover in public school systems, making comprehensive comparative studies of competing writing systems above the primary level is now impossible.

Italic Style Handwriting

Italic handwriting offers a compromise between plain letter manuscript and more elaborate cursive styles. The letters are slanted about five degrees from the vertical, the "round" letters are more eliptical than round, and serifs are produced with a broad-edge pen. About two-thirds of the letters within words are joined at the baseline. In Italic script, both printed and handwritten, a few letters show differentiation between capitals and lower case forms as in other styles.

Italic is rhythmical, fluent, and graceful as well as legible even in the lower grades. Printing press Italic has a script-like quality in contrast to standard page print. (Thompson [16] Lehman [10]).

Charles Lehman, a teacher of Portland, Oregon, has obtained favorable results from comparative studies of Italic and traditional writing styles in elementary school classes, and has prepared a Teacher's Guide for Italic, Grades One to Three. A simplified Italic alphabet is taught with only natural joinings in words. With this in-between style there are few requests for a changeover to cursive writing!"'

Guidelines for Achieving One Alphabet

To achieve *one alphabet* for printing and writing English a number of criteria are suggested as guidelines.

Bring basic handwriting styles into close alignment with sans-serif printing press letters and simplified typewriter print.

Capital letters and lower case forms should be identical except for size.

Letter forms of initial handwriting instruction would be vertical and/or rounded as in print; at a later stage slight slant and elliptical shapes for the "round" letters could be adopted according to individual preference.

The lower case letters, *a, g, t,* and *u,* should terminate in straight, downward strokes.

Letters within written words are left unjoined in writing, as in printed words. Letter strokes added solely for joinings are unnecessary.

The style of handwriting should be similar for both younger pupils and older students to avoid any need of a changeover to any other style beyond the primary grades. Thoroughgoing studies at all levels of school instruction are necessary to test out the practicality of these criteria.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1977 pp12-15]

Function Words: Grammatical Indicators, by Emmett Albert Betts, Ph.D.*

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Pronunciation Shifts: A Special Class

Alphabeteers, spelling reformers, linguists, and others concerned with the vagaries of traditional orthography (T.O.) are confronted with many *different* types of problems requiring *different* assessments and *different* solutions. One of these challenges is the spelling of a small, but highly crucial, category of words which includes *a, and, the*, if, of, and other high-frequency usages which usually are unstressed in conversational speech.

The fact that these words have weak stress and, therefore, are pronounced one way in discourse and another in isolation from content merits consideration in a revised spelling system. Consider these words:

Word	*Stressed*	*Unstressed*
for	/'fór/	/fər/
has	/'haz /	/həz, əz/
the	/'thē/	/thə (especially before consonant sounds, the (before vowel sounds/
to	/'tü/	/tə/
your	/yur/	/yər/

(Note: The stress or accent mark indicates pronunciation in isolation. All pronunciations, or respellings, are based on Webster's *New Elementary Dictionary,* G. & C. Merriam Co., 1970.)

This special category of words has special functions in grammar. Some of them (e.g., pronouns) are used as substitutes for other words. Others are markers of syntactic relationships (e.g. *the* in *the man).* Furthermore, they are members of a *closed* form class because their number is relatively fixed, or permanent, as contrasted to growing lists of *open* form classes represented by nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

Words: Function and Content

A small, limited group of words (approximately 300) have high frequency usage in speaking, reading, and writing at all grade and age levels. These commonly used words including *the, and, in, why, if* - are quite different from *boy* (noun), *catch* (verb), *young* (adjective), and *swiftly* (adverb). They have different roles in the *system* of language.

First, the high-frequency words are indicators of grammatical structure as in:

the man (indicates, or marks, a noun)
boys *and* girls (connects two nouns)
in the house (preposition forming a unit with a noun cluster)
Why are you late? (signals that the sentence is a question)

There are several types of these common words, called *function* words. They are also called *structure,* or *signal,* words because they signal grammatical structure. That is, they have grammatical meaning as contrasted to the referential meaning of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs).

Content words have been categorized as "parts of speech" in traditional grammar and as "form classes" in structural grammar. But "parts of speech" includes all words in the lexicon.

Second, function words are usually unstressed; that is, they have weak stress in a word group of conversational speech. Consider the function word *and* in these examples:

ham and eggs
this and that
bananas and apples
men and women

In the above examples, *and* has weak stress, contributing to the rhythm of speech. In fact, most dictionaries list more than one pronunciation for the unstressed use of *and:*

and /ən(d), an(d), n/

When *and is* said in isolation from other words, it is automatically stressed as /'and/. The unstressed pronunciations are given in dictionary respellings of other function words, such as *or* and *for.*

Finally, the above discussion is somewhat simplistic but provides a view of function words as contrasted to content words.

Function Words: An Overview

Function words (about 300 of our lexicon) are used to make clear the structure of sentences, usually in lightly stresses or unstressed syllables; markers of form classes; words which pattern differently from words in form classes (parts of speech); signals or determiners of nouns (e.g., *the, some),* auxiliaries of verbs (e.g., *am, has),* intensifiers of adjectives and adverbs (e.g., *very, too);* closed classes of words with limited membership, fixed and very slow to change; grammatical indicators, including prepositions (e.g., *and, but, because),* articles (e.g., *a, an, the), auxil*iary verbs, (e.g., *have, has, had*); a word with little or no lexical meaning (except in context) used in combining words into syntactical structures. (Function words are called structure words, syntactic words, "empty" words, structural markers, structural signals and syntactic devices.)

Different types of function words are sometimes called *closed* classes because their membership is fairly well established and slow to change. There are, for example, limited probabilities that words such as *of, to, over, very,* will be added to the vocabulary.

On the other hand, the parts of speech are called *open* because words are added (e.g., *space ship, cortisone)* or dropped (e.g., *beteach, pitous, cruent)* from the vocabulary.

Grammatical Indicators

Function words have little, if any, meaning themselves. No one has seen *and, of, or* in the extensional world; functional words are indicators of grammatical structure and exist only in language.

Indicators of grammatical structure include:

1. Function words (pattern signalling words; markers of word groups,
2. Affixes (altered forms of words)
    a. Prefixes
    b. Suffixes
        (1) Inflectional
        (2) Derivational
3. Word order
4. Intonation (speech melody)

In various combinations, the above indicators of grammatical structure delineate the patterns, or word groups, of sentences. An awareness of these indicators facilitates "reading by structures."

Function Words: Classification

Function words may be classified as:
1. Noun markers (determiners), as *a, this, any*
2. Verb markers (auxiliaries), as *is, may, might*
3. Phrase markers, as *up, down, near*
4. Clause markers, as *if, which, though*
5. Question markers, as *who, how, what*
6. Intensifiers (markers of adjectives and adverbs, or degree words)
7. Pattern-fillers: *there, it*
8. Starters, as *well, why, oh*
9. Proposers, as *if you please*

Some words may function in different ways

1. 'like':

verb	John likes tennis.
	Mr. Smith would like to move.
	How would you like to go swimming?
adjective	The mannequin was lifelike.
	His behavior was childlike.
	His suit was a like color.
preposition	There is no place like home.
	Jim always acts like a gentleman.
	John always registers for a subject like mathematics or physics.
	The dog smelled like a rose.
	There is no fool like an old fool.
noun	The world may never see his like again.
adverb	Mary works like mad.
	Like as not, Jane will go to the dance.
conjunction	Jane looked like Susan.
	Mary looked like she was happy.

2. 'now':

adverb	Mary is waking now.
	He is reading now.
	He left the office just now.
conjunction	We will have a good time now that we are here.
noun	He works harder than any man as of now.
expletive, or	Now, see here.
sentence starter	Now, listen to me.

3. 'is':

verb	He is here.
verb marker	He is going to school.

Isolated from verbal context, function words tend to have little, if any, practical meaning because they function primarily in language structure. Hence, they are taught in context-in the syntactic structures which they signal.

Function Words: Weak Stress

Furthermore, function words tend to have a weak stress in the word groups which they signal. In the sentence, *He went to* town, the word *to* probably is pronounced /tə/ or /tŭ/ rather than /tu/. Likewise, the word of probably is pronounced /əv/ rather than /'äv/; the word *and,* as /ən(d)/, /n(d)/, or /an(d)/ rather than as /'and/. Therefore, function words are taught in their structural contexts to maintain in reading situations the intonation of speech - to retain thw wholeness of the word group which they signal and to facilitate "reading by structures."

Types of Function Words

1. Noun markers (determiners)

a	all	more	many	my
an	any	much	some	our
the	every	another	few	your
each	several	no	most	their
this	these	both	his	her
that	those	either	neither	its

one, two, three, four (etc. to ninety-nine)

a. A determiner is the typical marker of a noun.

b. If the noun has one or more modifiers, the determiner precedes them.

The book
The new book
The controversial new book

c. Pronouns *his, her, my, your, our, their, its* are determiners.

d. Proper nouns - Mr. Hall, Miami, Mt. Vesuvius - usually do not pattern with determiners. However, some proper nouns - the Indian Ocean, the United States - pattern with the determiner *the*.

e. Although pronouns - *I, me, you,* etc., - occur in noun positions, they do not pattern with determiners. Furthermore, some words - *his, much, two,* etc., occur as both determiners and pronouns.

All facts are not known. (Determiner)
All are not known. (Pronoun)
My book is here. (Determiner)
Mine is here. (Pronoun)

f. Some words - *a, an, the, your, our, their* - are always determiners.

g. Determiners point to a word group ending in a headword, as

The change
The small change
The common phrase-marker
The word group is a span of words beginning with the determiner (e.g., the) and ending with the noun.

h. Some determiners may be used as noun substitutes.

These are enough.
What can we do with old books like *these*?
Mary cannot tell her books from *his*.

i. Determiners to signal a noun prevent ambiguity. Note these headlines, quoted in isolation, from newspapers and magazines:

Teachers Demand Increase
Singing Dangerous
Building Outlay Rate
Diagnosis by Fungus
Promising Harmless Hormones

j. Two determiners have some degree of inflection:

Singular	Plural
this	these
that	those

k. The function word *the* usually precedes a noun (i.e., there is a high probability), although modifiers may be used between the determiner and noun headword.

(1) The determiner does not signal which word is a noun, as in:
The very old man.

(2) The determiner rarely precedes some other part of speech, as in:
The more, the merrier.

1. Subclassifications of determiners include:

(1) Articles - *a, an, the*

(2) Possessives - *her, his, our, your, its, their*

(3) Demonstratives - *these, those, this, that*

(4) Indefinite pronouns - *every, both, each, many, few*

Note: Some words occur as determiners (e.g., *my, no*) but not as pronouns. Some pronouns (e.g., *he, mine*) do occur as determiners.

2. Verb markers (verbal auxiliaries, or verbal helpers):

am	were	did	has	might	would
are	being	doing	had (past		has to
is	been	done	tense)	must	had to
be	do	have	can	shall	have to
was	does	having	may	will	ought to
			could		

a. The commonest verb markers are *be, have, do.*

Verb John is happy.
Verb marker John is swimming.
Verb Bob has a cold.
Verb marker Bob has to work late.
Note the shift from /'haz/ to /haz/, /(h)əz/ or probably /'has/.
Verb Susan did good work.
Verb marker Susan did her work.

b. Modal auxiliaries (auxiliary verbs indicating moods) function as verb markers: *will, should, could, may, can, might, must.*

c. Some words - *is, has, do*, etc.- mark a succeeding verb headword in a functional unit of a sentence, as in:
John *might have been* going to school.

d. The auxiliaries also have a distinctive word-order position in sentences (questions), as in:
Should John play?
Must we go now?
Have you finished?
Will you help?
Is it time to go?
Am I on time?

3. Phrase Markers (prepositions):

at	against	but	by	onto	till
up	amid	except	with	off	until
upon	among	for	within	through	versus
down	below	from	without	throughout	in spite of
in	before	like	into	toward	with respect to

of	beside	near	inside	towards	instead of
out	besides	around	under	past	by means of
outside	behind	along	underneath	plus	aside from
above	beneath	across	near	save	apart from
about	between	from	over	since	in accordance
after	beyond	to	on	than	with

a. Prepositions signal word groups which are parts of larger structures in sentences.
(Not many *of us*) can move mountains, but we can throw an occasional bluff.
If you want (a place *in the sun) you* must expect to get blisters.
Children have (a great deal *of perception.)*
Man has always gazed *(at the star-spangled night sky.)*

b. The most frequently used prepositions are *of, in, to, at, by, from, on, with.*

c. One-syllable prepositions usually have weak stress in word groups.
Jim was tired *of* studying.

d. One-syllable prepositions may have primary stress.
John came *with* her.

e. Two-syllable prepositions - e.g., *about, among, before, between, into* - may have different degrees of stress, depending on meaning.
The culprit stood *before* the judge.
He stood *before* him.

f. Prepositions are usually followed by a noun, or noun substitute, (e.g., *he, she, they),* a personal pronoun - called the object of the preposition.

g. Some words may function as both prepositions and adverbs:
Preposition He moved *about* the house.
Adverb He moved *about.*
Preposition He looked *in* the house.
Adverb He looked *in.*

h. Some words may function as both prepositions and word classes (parts of speech).
Preposition Everyone was on time *but* Sondra.
Conjunction John went to the circus *but* Sam went to the airport.
Adverb We are old *but* once.

4. Clause markers:

as	what	whichever	until
so long as	whatever	who	unless
as soon as	when	whoever	once
inasmuch as	whenever	whom	now
being as	whereas	whomever	seeing
being that	whence	whose	like
except	whither	why	than
if	where	while	that
because	wherever	though	so that
before	whereby	although	in that
after	wherein	since	such that
how	whereof	so	in order that
however	whether	till	lest
	which		

A clause is a word group that has a basic noun-verb group:
If you are interested in earning your education the co-op way, see your high-school counselor for a list of co-op colleges.

Although the big-bang theory of how our universe began seems to be winning, there are still unanswered questions.

When I was a boy, it was expected that every youth would spend hours gazing at the sky - "daydreaming" as it was called.

Light bounced off the reflector shines on a scale model Apollo, *where* the shadow patterns created by protrusions such as antennas, rocket nozzles and landing legs are fed into a computer.

This was the day *when* economic aid ceased *because* it was no longer needed.

Once the war damage had been repaired, Free China's economic planners dug in for the uphill pull.

As the child interacts with his surroundings, language becomes a reality in its own right.

5. Question markers

who	why	what	whither
whom	how	whatever	whence
whose	however	where	which
whoever	when	wherever	whichever
whomever	whenever		

a. A statement may be transformed to a question by using the necessary intonation:

John is here. John is *here?*

b. Questions may have a verb-noun order:

Have you been to the store? Were you there?

c. Verbs and modal auxiliaries may transform statements into questions:

Did he arrive on time? Do they want the book?

d. Question markers coming at or near the beginning of a sentence serve as signals:

Who is planning to go? *Whom* did you meet?

When is the meeting? For *whom* are you working?

Which came last?

Why has the Republic of China succeeded so magnificently in its use of U.S. aid?

Who is Cousin Ella? *What's* new?

What else do you listen for? *How* often should a child see his dentist?

6. Intensifiers (degree words)

any	just	pretty	so much more
any more	least	quite	so very much more
away	less	rather	some
awful	little	rather (too)	somehow
awfully	more	real	somewhat
even	more or less	really	still
extremely	most	right	too
fairly	much	so	very
far and away	no	so much	very much too

Words which pattern with adjectives and adverbs are called intensifiers. An intensifier is a word which patterns like *very:*

She was *very* happy. She was an *unusually* happy person.

Intensifiers - e.g., *very, more, quite* - are called degree words because they express varying degrees or shades of meaning. They are also called markers of adjectives (e.g., *very* sad) and adverbs (e.g., *much* later).

Intensifiers differentiate (a) adjectives from verbs and (b) adjectives from nouns.

Intensifiers occur before adjectives:

Tim had a *very* good time. Mary was *quite* happy.
Tom was a *fairly* good sport. Tony was *too* good.

Intensifiers occur before adjectives with inflectional endings

Vera worked *even* harder to win the second game.
Jack worked *no* harder than he had to.

Intensifiers occur before adverbs:

Henry worked *too* rapidly. Jim ran *mighty* fast.
Bill was *almost* there.

To differentiate between adjectives and participles, try to insert *very* in these two sentences:

John is running. John is very running.
John is charming. John is very charming.

In the above pair of sentences, *running is* a verb because *very* cannot be sensibly inserted; *charming is* an adjective.

Test each of these sentences to determine the probability of intensification:

Mr. Smith is baiting his hook. Mr. Smith is teaching arithmetic.
Mr. Smith is fencing his property. Mr. Smith is interesting.
Mr. Smith is exciting. Mr. Smith is exhilarating.

In the following sentences, the use of groups of intensifiers multiplies the possibilities for expressing shades of meaning

A *fruitful* activity A *much more fruitful* activity
A *very fruitful* activity A *very much more fruitful* activity
A *more fruitful* activity

The inflectional endings *er* and *est* may be intensifiers, as in:

John was brave. John is *much* stronger now.
John was braver than Jim. Mary is a lovely girl.
John was bravest of all. Mary is a *very* lovely girl.

In the above sentences, three levels of intensity are indicated. In other instances, *more* and *most* indicate levels of intensity, as in:

John wrote a *more* interesting story than Jane did.
John wrote the *most* interesting story.

7. Pattern-fillers: *there, it:*

There is a man at the door. *It's* a hard job.
There was a burglar in our house. *It is* a beautiful day.
It is a hard job. *It's* a beautiful day.

8. Starters:

Certain common utterances are merely sentence starters:

Why, yes I may go. *See here,* I want it done this way.
My goodness, I hope you can go.

9. Proposers (requests):

Requests often begin with special words and phrases:

If you don't care, . . . If I'm not troubling you, . . .
If you don't mind, . . . Please, . . .

In Summary

Function words, as one group of grammatical indicators, are (1) crucial in the English language system and (2) high frequency words in connected discourse. Hence, they merit special consideration in a revised spelling system.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1977 p15}

JACK LOVELOCK

Thow *Wooderson* deprived yoo wunce or twice
Of victory in the mile, yoo ment to win,
Supremely confident before the race,
Yoo showd uncommon judjment from the start,
Conforming to the feeld's terific pace,
Ashured that stamina wuod play its part.
Three hundred yards to go. Yoo take the lead.
Bie munthhs of training arduous yet precice,
The fifteen-hundred metres at Berlin.
Excitement is intense. Thow in their prime,
The uthers tire. But yoo maintain yoor speed
To win a gloarious race in record time.
A faultless style reflecting perfect fitness,
Yoor running, *Lovelock,* wos a joy to witness.

The above was sent in by Frank T. du Feu. It is written in his Revised Spelling system. He mentions that Lovelock was married to an American lady and was a doctor in a New York City hospital when he was killed by a subway train. Here is another of his poems:

Hooz Fault?

"Oh," sed Betty, "thiss bruese came mie way
When too frends wer for seeing a play;
But they faild to agree
As to hoo came withh me;
Then they faut and I got in the way."

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[Spelling Reform Anthology §17.3 p231]
[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1977 p16}

What is Reading? an Answer, by Harvie Barnard*

Written in SR-1*

[See web page]

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[Spelling Reform Anthology §17.2 pp229-231]
[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1977 pp16-18]

The Three F's of Education - Frustration, Fear, Failure! by Harvie Barnard*

*SR-1 used. (Spelling reform, first step)

What's gone wrong with our three basics of education - Readin', Riting an' Rithmetic? Quite a lot, but why, and how?

Interlined with the time-honored 3 R's we've had another trio, the 3 F's, and in too great a percentage of our young pupils these 3 F's have spelled disaster-flunk and dropout. And after that, what? Usually delinquency, followed by the inevitable effort to "make a living," a deviate conduct, or more simply, crime and criminality in all its terrifying and destructive aspects.

We are well acquainted with the consequences of academic failure, and few who have given eny thot or study to the problem of deviant social behavior - criminality in all its grotesque forms - would dispute the facts of experience which indicate that a well-defined chain of events lead to anti-social or deviant behavior, in a word, "crime."

If we are to examine the initial difficulties inherent in lerning, our observations would begin with the child shortly after birth. Altho this has been attempted and is being done in isolated instances, the practical problems of educating each child are usually not apparent until the child enters the public school program, which would be kindergarten, first grade, or, in more fortunate circumstances, "preschool", "early school," or eny similar plan for getting the lerning process started "as soon as possible.

In situations where there is neither preschool or kindergarten, teachers are frequently faced with a difficult teaching and lerning condition described as "lack of rediness," which can and often does lead to serious later problems both for the child and the teacher. It is at this specific point, the start of the structured or class system of instruction, that the "Three Fs of Education" may take root and develop to the detriment of the child and to the tragic loss to society, as well as to the individual concerned.

The first and beginning stage in the chain of events leading to deviant behavior is FRUSTRATION. Without attempting to outline all the situations, causes and conditions leading to frustrations - which will certainly vary with the individual - it would be reasonable to agree that *situations which cause confusion* in the consciousness or mind of the child are likely to result in a frustration condition.

There are an almost infinite number of situations which way and do cause confusion and/or frustration for the child or for enyone. In the case of the young pupil, such situations are redily predictable, and thus should be avoidable. The trained and experienced teacher, whether the subject be mathematics, composition, or reading, knows the obstacles, hurdles, and road blocks to lerning

in the subject being taught. It is this knowledge of probable confusion as well as the subject matter, which enables the instructor to develop a lerning situation while avoiding frustration of the student or of eny group of students.

Without going into the specific detail of eny one subject, (for the moment), it would be helpful to understand and to agree that certain principles of instruction be observed. The material to be presented must be - for the beginner at least - not only within the comprehension of the pupil, but also simple, short, obvious, and in small bits. As more bits and segments of information are added, each additional bit should in some manner agree with, or relate to, or "square" with what has alredy been taught, thus reinforcing the lerning process. To use an adult term, the facts must be consistent and logical, and they must fit together to form a reasonable "picture." If the facts or bits of information or data are consistent, logical and reasonable, they will be accepted and are more likely to be remembered and "lerned" than if they are illogical, inconsistent, or unreasonable. It is precisely those bits of input which are *not* logical or consistent which cause confusion because they dissociate the item being lerned from previous items lerned. (How meny times have you asked yourself, "is it 'i before e, or i after e'?") And unless a prompt and reasonable correction or explanation is provided which successfully clarifies an illogical fact or situation, the pupil remains confused. And if confusion is heaped upon confusion, as in the case of presenting new information more rapidly than it can be assimilated (added to and fitted into the established "picture" or set of data), then we have FRUSTRATION, which is a condition of virtual hopelessness as far, as eny further lerning is concerned. Thus, when a pupil arrives at a frustration situation, he cannot proceed. So when his lerning process is roadblocked, cut off, thwarted or harmed, there will be an inevitable consequence - the *first stage of which is FEAR!*

Fear, the 2nd F of the three F's of education, takes meny forms and produces a varied and unpredictable array of reactions. To the individual, such reactions are altogether terrifying and often uncontrollable. To the teacher, who may not be fully aware of the psychological problem which has developed, the pupil may appear to be withdrawn, dull, mischevious, troublesome, perhaps what the teacher considers "unreachable:' At this point some form of psychological rescue is imperative - but is often missing. An experienced, perceptive, and pupil oriented teacher will recognize and appreciate the urgency of the situation - provided there are not too meny causes of frustration going on all at the same time. But if - and the situation is not at all uncommon - there are large classes, (too large to be adequately handled by one teacher), little Jonny is not going to get the rescue when he needs it most.

The pupil's fear then proceeds into a veritable nightmare of secondary reactions. We then have the "disturbed" child, and when this condition becomes repetitive or continuous we have a certain and truly tragic result - FAILURE! There's not too much that can be sed about failure, except that it is altogether too commonplace, and that it should never be permitted to happen. Perhaps this is the reason that so meny students are "passed," when in fact they are failing, or have failed, and the educational system is trying to cover *up its failures* by ignoring the truth and by clumsily attempting to deceive the failing pupil. But the child is NOT deceived - even tho his parents may be. He suffers and his teachers suffer. If he is able to read at all, it is with great difficulty - slowly and laboriously - with little or no comprehension.

Our academic failure may be buoyed up and sustained by various non-academic interests - sports, band, orchestra, choral groups, social events, school politics, and perhaps by some success in manual arts - shop work or art - or possibly mechanical drawing or graphics. But in those subjects which depend to a large extent on reading - which includes all courses leading to college level studies or eny branch of eny profession - our non-reader or semi-literate pupil is not doing passable work and is getting by on D's, minimal standards and a policy which ses, "Nobody flunks - we can't afford to have dropouts roaming the streets getting into trouble. It's better for the taxpayers that the

teachers be babysitters and keep these failures in school rather than in jails or "reform schools."

But in spite of the best efforts of teachers and of the administrators, some quit, a few have to be "transferred" to other facilities, and others mysteriously disappear from the academic scene. Once in a while some phenomenal youngster finds himself a job, takes his work seriously, digs in and by sheer personal effort becomes self-taught and eventually overcomes his past failures. These are the exceptions, the stand-outs, the fellows who didn't quite fit in - to the academic pattern of life but who somehow fought off their frustrations, fears and early defeats. But despite the very few who are able to overcome - to beat the statistics and disprove the rule - there are an overwhelming majority of those succumbing to the three F's who wind up as drop-outs, delinquents and social deviants. It is an established statistical fact that approximately two thirds of our delinquent young people are functionally illiterate and have gone the 3 F route. Also it is the sad truth that from 50% to 80% of our convicts are in this same category.

In summary, the inescapable conclusion is that belonging with frustration in the erly years, those who fall under the depressing spell of failure - academic or otherwise - are immesurably handicapped and are almost certain to drift or become dragged into deviant behavior of one kind or another. This is simply a kind way of saying that failure to be able to compete in the job market - legitimate work, that is - leads move or less directly to illegal work or crime. And so, where the 3 F's take presedence over the 3 R's, regardless of when or where the failure begins - at home, (preschool), in the erly grades, or later in the academic program, the ultimate result is substantially the same.

At this point in our logic it should be fairly obvious that our problem in education is to plan and organize the subject matter in all areas of instruction so as to avoid confusion and frustration. In meny areas this has alredy been accomplished, notably in the sciences and in the manual arts. Obvious weaknesses still remain in certain sections of communication, particularly in reading, in writing, and in clarity of verbal expression - speech. These deficiencies relate to, and indeed constitute a reflection of the capacity for logical thought. To communicate clearly, it is necessary to think clearly, and agen, this capacity requires mastery of the 3 R's and avoidance of the 3 F's.

Lerning to communicate well, or at all, implies lerning to think - to think logically, honestly, and toward some objective or purpose. This involves the use of language, whether employed verbally - in spoken expression - or in written-in symbols or some form of script - or within the mind, in the imagination. But the idea or concept which is to be communicated cannot be conveyed from one mind to another without the use of some audible, visible, or tactile means, and this calls for language, and language requires the use of some medium of expression which in its simplest form could be called "words." The use of words, whether spoken, written, or sent as some form of electronic or vibrational signal becomes our means of transmitting the language we choose to use.

Lerning the use of the ABC's - or perhaps some other alphabet," while at the same time avoiding the 3 F's, becomes the primary object of education, and when educators lern how best to accomplish this, perhaps our educational processes will improve. A fairly straightforward and unsophisticated procedure for approaching and progressing toward a solution (perhaps we should say 'a prudent choice'), has been developed, put into practice on a limited yet fairly extensive scale, and will be proposed in a later discussion.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1977 pp18,19}

Letteritis (the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life), by Peter B. Stolee*

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The insistent demand by parents and press for more and earlier phonics in the teaching of reading no doubt resulted from the way the "look-say" used in the basal series of readers left a large proportion of the pupils with a poor ability in reading. Then, a decade ago, Dr. Donald D. Durrell, as chairman of a national study of reading sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education, gave phonics-first his prestigious endorsement in an article in the Atlantic Monthly of Sept. 1964. Duffell places phonics high, but he puts knowledge of the names of the letters even higher, reiterating five times in two pages how pupils must know the names and shapes of the letters, especially the capitals, at the earliest possible time, preferably before coming to school. Durrell's remedy for the poor showing in grade one reading is at least 15 hours of one-to-one tutoring for all beginners, to teach the names and sounds of the letters, especially it seems of the capitals, plus a few sight words. For the 15% who would not reach this skill the first time through there would be 20 hours more of the tutoring. (Just watch our school boards jump at the opportunity to pay for tutoring of this kind.)

Dr. Jeanne Chall, with a grant from the textbook publishers, in her *Learning* to *Read,* 1967 shows many ways in which the basal series have not served well. Though vocabulary control has been lightened somewhat, the language is still not natural English. The manuals issued to go with the first grade lessons have a question for the teacher to ask for every 12 words the pupil is expected to read. There isn't much left that the child cannot guess from the questions and the pictures. Chall thinks that the child does not benefit from so many illustrations, for with T.V. and all the magazines he has a superabundance of pictures, and the illustrations may somehow slow down the learning of reading (the deciphering of the letters that make up the word). But Chall too prescribes phonics early, before the child begins to read.

It was while Durrell and Chall made their call for more and earlier phonics that Sir James Pitman's Initial Teaching Alphabet made its first appearance in the U.S.A., and naturally the new medium, neutral though it be, was given a phonic stance which has followed it all over the continent, whether in Bethlehem, Pa. or Los Angeles, Calif., or elsewhere. So much so that when I recently suggested the testing of i.t.a. as a medium for teaching reading to the provincial curriculum officials, the curt answer was that since phonics was not the main thing in teaching reading (which may be true), i.t.a. would not be considered. Evidently these "experts" think that i.t.a. is the equivalent of phonics, which of course, it is not any more than any other alphabet.

The debate as to "phonics" (synthetical) or phonics (analytical) or "look-say"(photographic memory) methods could, I believe, be settled by giving some attention to how reading is taught effectively in lands where the correspondence between the letter sounds and the spoken and written word is almost perfect. My observations on the Island of Madagascar, where I was a missionary teacher for some 25 years, and where I saw the "letters-first" method practiced in almost clinical isolation since there was practically no printed materials floating about, should have interest for all reading experts, but perhaps most of all for teachers using or planning to use the Initial Teaching Alphabet.

Let me give you the setting first. Welsh Methodist missionaries introduced literacy to the Malagasy of the island of Madagascar in the early 1820's, and followed the Welsh fashion of one symbol for each sound and one sound for each symbol. This made learning to read so easy for the natives that in a remarkably short time a fantastically large number of them could read their own language well. The brighter students, once they could read their own Malagasy, learned to read English fairly

easily. These were assigned chapters of the English New Testament to translate into Malagasy and bring to class for comparison and study. A good translation of the New Testament was made within a few years. Dictionaries and textbooks were compiled, all accomplished with little apparatus other than the fine reaction between eager students and wide-awake teachers. In a little over a decade the entire Bible was translated, and the instruction in the mission schools was probably on par with good high schools in Europe. But the very success of the schools proved inimical to the Christian cause-at least so it seemed to the missionaries, who were driven out in the early 1830's.

The speedy learning of reading by the Malagasy had completely ceased by the time I arrived in Madagascar in 1925, a century after the pioneers from Wales. The reason was evidently that the well-intentioned English missionaries, who had returned in the mid 1860's, and the equally benevolent French colonials who came in 1895 and later, brought in "new" and fashionable educational methods. Letters were taught first in teaching reading, for this was the way it was then done in Europe. And letters were used to form words synthetically. This made learning to read a chore indeed for the Malagasy despite their very phonetic orthography. One mission produced a primer which had six alphabets on its first and second pages: upper and lower case each of Roman, italics, and script. This was followed by several pages of syllables (without meaning) using all six sorts of letters. Finally there were some short stories of half to a page long. In 1926 I actually found curriculum directions to teachers of our mission schools giving the four or so letters, (in all six alphabets, naturally) to be taught each month. With 21 letters in the Malagasy alphabet, more than half the school year was spent on the letters, and the rest of the time mostly on syllabilization. Where the teacher followed the curriculum, few of the pupils learned to read in one year, and there would not be much inclination to go on to another year of the same. To pass the reading test for adult baptism, most of the catechumens learned the stories in the second half of the primer by heart. Even in the late 1930's it was still so. A Malagasy woman about 25 years old came to our parish from another mission carrying a recommendation stating that she was a good evangelical speaker. She was visiting in my study, when on impulse I asked her if she could read. She said she could, so I gave her a New Testament, from which she "read" the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel beautifully, while holding the book open to another gospel. (I really think that she believed she was reading, as do some of our pupils in America.) Even with the almost perfect phonetic orthography of Malagasy, "the letter killeth" the meaning.

From 1936 until 1945 I set about developing a Malagasy primer based on word and letter counts and commonly known and picturable key words to teach the letters in their natural setting. I found it possible to start with the high frequency letters, so that after a lesson or two the learner would know the six letters comprising 2/3 of the phonemes on the average page.

Here are some of the early results: 30 illiterate soldiers were taught by 15 of my catechist students, with three lessons a week for two weeks, or six lessons, each about an hour long. 25 were able to read well at the end of the course. This was repeated a second time with identical results. A missionary in charge of the mission elementary school told me that when she had to tell the parents that she could register no more children who couldn't read, but could take some more if they could read, they at once set about teaching their children at home, using my book. A great many managed to teach their own children to read in a mere week or so.

Not all Malagasy teachers took kindly to the new method. When I told one of the young teachers that he really could have his class reading in a month or so, he retorted, "And what will I do with them then?" Often, on visiting a mission school I would write some words on the blackboard for the children to read. One such word was: f o l o, meaning *ten.* If the teacher was a "letteralist", the children would invariably read: f o l o, meaning *rotten heart.* Truly the letter killeth meaning.

Then, in 1946, 1 used my work in Malagasy reading as a basis for my Master's Thesis at the Univ.

of Minnesota, Dr. Guy Bond, who was one of the examination committee, asked me whether something similar could be done in English. I answered that this was not possible with English spelling as it is. When, however, in 1964, 1 heard Sir James Pitman explain his new alphabet, I was at once eager to apply the experiences I had had with the different editions of my Malagasy primer. First, I counted the i.t.a. phonemes to establish their relative frequencies. Then I used C. K. Ogden's *The Basic Words,* G. Dewey's *Relativ Frequency of the Commoner Words of English,* and Pitman's *Wurd List,* containing the i.t.a. spelling of upward of 3,000 common wads. This helped me avoid much of the preparatory work I had done in Madagascar.

I called the new primer *Gangway,* and it is designed to bring the learner quickly to the point where he can read i.t.a. material easily, and where he depends upon context for the new words he meets. It uses essentially the Global Method advocated by the UNESCO committees on literacy at the close of W.W.II.

Gangway introduces the letters by appropriate pictures and through the oral work of the teacher. The f[i]rst two lessons contain only three letters, but these *e, t,* & *n,* are the most frequent sounds in English, so that when they are mastered the pupil has been introduced to about 22% of the sounds of an average page of print. Where Malagasy took six letters to bring a 2/3 familiarity, it takes 21/2 times this (15) in English, with its longer alphabet. Only one new letter is taught in each lesson after the second lesson. There is a restriction on the letters available, but none on the vocabulary except that a word must have only the phonemes used up to the point reached.

Gangway, using Pitman's i.t.a., is designed to be a temporary *detour of* the difficulties of English spelling. It is a phonological approach to reading using Sir James Pitman's Alphabet in an orderly and efficient letter-by-letter program tied to meaningful words and sentences. Meaning is stressed first of all, but the phonics involved introduced directly along with the words used to introduce the phonemes, as in the Global Method advocated by world authorities in their report to UNESCO about the end of World War II.

This i.t.a. primer, not only introduces sense and sound together, but brings the phonemes to the learner's attention one by one in the order of their relative frequencies. This gives an early mastery not found in other methods. Thus five letters give a mastery of one-third of the sounds found on an average page, ten a mastery of well over 50%, 15 brings the student mastery of over 2/3 of the sounds used on an average page. This means he will early tend to depend on the i.t.a. letters for the sounds of the words he meets. The assurance this gives the learner in his early reading tends to help him in his later spelling for it reduces faulty pronunciation, the most serious cause of misspellings.

By reducing the learner's fixation on lone sounds, 0 practically eliminates the problem of blending. The teacher soon finds that the pupil can read and pronounce all the sounds he uses in normal conversation.
The one-by-one presentation of the letters in meaningful material makes this primer a useful diagnostic tool, and as a remedial text it immediately shows both teacher and pupil where more effort is needed. Meaning is the needle which draws the thread of letter sounds into the memory web of the learner.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1977 p19]

Cartoon

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1977 p20]

Book Review, by Gertrude Hildreth

Downing, John. Learning to Read with Understanding. Johannesburg & Capetown, Juta & Co., Ltd. 220 pps. $7.95 1976

Prof. Downing's recent publication consists of seven lectures he gave in 1976 at the Johannesburg College of Education. The topics of the lectures include: psychological foundations of reading, various functions of reading, teaching children to read for meaning, outcomes of research with the i.t.a., expanding vocabulary in reading, weaknesses in reading at secondary and college levels, language communication for life, a summary of the Bullock Report on the teaching of English. In the author's view, developing all communication skills to a level of competency for lifelong use requires that students gain an understanding of the purposes and values as well as the techniques of communication.

Primary teachers lay the foundation for meaningful learning to facilitate continuous reading development at all later stages. The learner's home background combines with school experiences to develop understanding concerning language and literacy, consequently cultural differences may be responsible for variations and deviations in reading achievement. Prof. Downing favors the Language Experience approach in primary reading instruction because of the linkage among literacy skills and child life experiences, as well as supportive reinforcement among all aspects of language-arts: reading, speech, oral expression and comprehension, as well as writing.

Proof that complications arise in learning to read and write with irregular English orthography as compared with a simple, regular, reliable relationship between spoken and written English is found in outcomes of experiments with Pitman's i.t.a. as conducted by Prof. Downing and others during a fifteen year period.

The sixth lecture of the series relates to problems of reading with secondary and college students, a subject that has largely been neglected both in teacher training and in the schools. A common problem is that of the student who learned to read in the early school years, but is now confronted with an array of subject matter texts beyond his or her grasp. Here is the crux of the problem in study areas.

Technical vocabularies, the load of new words and terms in study materials must receive attention in instruction if students are to read with understanding. Attention to *readability* of materials, fitting

reading content to the student's comprehension level is one means of dealing with context and vocabulary, difficulties.

There is no mention of general library reading as a means of improving comprehension skills and building vocabulary, as well as stimulating interest in a wide range of reading materials at youth and adult levels. Have the popular audio-visual media displaced school libraries and youth centers in public libraries?

Speeding up in reading, a problem that concerns secondary and college students, their teachers and parents, is more largely a matter of difficulty of reading content and vocabulary than of vision or eye-function. Eye-voice span - throwing the eyes ahead of the point of visual interpretation - is the chief mark of the superb, mature reader. Increased rate of reading is gained not through direct practice in "speeding up the eye-movements or taking in more at a glance," but on continual practice in reading with understanding.

Each section of the book has a concise summary. Every section is well-documented and the references supplied are listed at the close of each lecture. The volume supplied is completely indexed.

This publication is useful not only for orientation of young people who are preparing to teach, but affords a serviceable "brush-up" for others wishing to learn what's going on in the reading field.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1977 p20]

Book Review by Newell W. Tune

Pulgram, Ernst, et al. Edited by Wm. Haas. *Writing without Letters.* Mont Follick series, Vol. 4. Manchester Univ. Press, Rowan & Littlefield, Totowa, N. J. Feb. 1977. 216 pp. $ 12.5 0.

This is the 4th of a series established under a grant of the Mont Follick Foundation for studies on English Orthography. It consists of six lectures given by different authors between 1966 and 1975. As the preface is an excellent review of the subject matter, it is hereby quoted:

The appearance of this volume amongst the others of its series may call for a word of explanation. It may seem strange, at first sight, that studies that concern themselves primarily with the use of alphabetic letters, and with current problems of literacy, should be joined by this volume which is primarily on 'writing *without* letters.' There are, in fact, good reasons for such an excursion. One is that our understanding of alphabetic systems is bound to gain from a comparison with other possibilities of written communication; the other, that we have never ceased to take advantage of other systems of writing. Non-alphabetic techniques are found in a variety of special notations: from the symbolisms of mathematics or logic or chemistry to the international codes of road-signs and geographical maps. It seems appropriate, too, that in a volume which is intended to serve comparativist interests, the typology and evolution of writing systems are singled out for special attention.

Prof. E. Pulgram (of Univ. of Michigan) presents typological classifications which aim primarily at an understanding of the evolution of writing systems.

Mr. W. C. Brice (of the Univ. of Manchester) points to characteristic features of non-phonetic writing, with examples from early 'ideographic' scripts of which he has made a special study.

The contribution of the late Ernst Grumach (one time Prof. of Greek at the Humboldt Univ. in Berlin) is highly critical of the now widely accepted reading of the famous Linear B tablets. His views will therefore be found very controversial; but there will be generally agreement that his observations provide a salutary warning on the difficulties of decipherment, especially in the case of documents that do not comprise a sufficiency of syntactically coherent texts.

With the contribution of Prof. J. Barr (of the Univ. of Manchester), we have all but arrived at our own system of letters. He examines systems that provide letters for everything except the vowels. (Grumach, in his paper, reviewed some interesting new ideas on how this gap might eventually have been filled.)

Mr. M. A. French (of the Univ. of Manchester) introduces us to the Chinese system of writing, this most prominent non-alphabetic system which, to the present day, continues to prove its vitality and its special advantages; he also discusses the place of the Chinese script in a general classification of writing-systems.

To conclude, the Editor continues the typological inquiries of this volume by surveying the range of options that are available for the design of a writing-system. Some thirty references reinforce his analysis of the basic options in the design of a new writing system.