

# Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1966

Dedicated to finding the causes of difficulties in learning reading and spelling.

"A closed mind gathers no knowledge; an open mind is the key to progress."

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## 1. Which Witch?, by Julian Franklyn. Review by N. W. Tune.

- a book of Homonyms - and near homonyms. Copyright 1966 by Hamish Hamilton, Ltd. 90 Great Russell St, London, WC 1, Eng. 198 pp. price 21/-

For many years this Editor has been intrigued by the number of words confusable because of their same spelling or same pronunciation (tho differently spelt). When he could not find a complete listing of these confusing words, he compiled what he thought to be a fairly complete list of "Homophones, Homographs & Heterographs - the Deceitful words of English." This 16 page monograph was offered to the S.P.B. subscribers along with the March, 1962 issue.

Now, at long last, these appears in England a most comprehensive book on this subject., The first 16 pages of the book are devoted to definitions, explanations and pronunciations, about which homonyms evolve. A sort of apology is on page xii, which is worthy of note:

"Precognition ... is not needed to hear ahead the roar of dissenting voices all excitedly asserting that the pair of words on page x, and the triplets on page y, are not only not homophonous, but are wide asunder in the scale of sound, and only a person with a diseased ear could have brought them together; or, if it is not due to auditory degeneracy, it is a symptom of crass ignorance, an error of comparative phonetics that could only have been made by one unaccustomed to speaking 'the Queen's English.'

"to please all speakers of the Queen's English (for all English spoken is Her Majesty's save that section owned by Uncle Sam), we would need to produce a separate thesaurus of homophones for circulation in each dialect area."

This explains the listing of many sets of phonetically different (to us) words that apparently are in Received Standard and Cockney, confusable words and hence worthy of listing. If the worst that could be said of this book is that it was over-extensive in its listing of nearly similar sounding words, one could hardly consider this a detraction. And we do think this is not a serious fault, but rather a revelation in the speech habits of other & strange parts of the English-speaking world.

Technically, the book is very well organized, using 3 different fonts of type to make it easier to spot the main headings, sub-headings and text. Indenting is also used to advantage to help the ease of finding different sections.

"Homonyms are inherently humorous; and it may be merely a coincidence that the nations speaking the languages that largely harbour them are noted for their high senses of humour."

The earliest listing of homonyms was made in 1791 by Wm. Crakelt, M. A., Rector of Nursted & Ifield in Kent. This list contained in round numbers 450 groups - rather a comprehensive for those days. This list is most interesting because one can see in it phonetically grouping that would not suggest itself today: *do* and *doe*, *coin'd* and *kind*, *earth* and *hearth*, to mention just a few.

Above all don't miss Shakespeare and his puns - very good!

[Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1966 pp2-5 in the printed version]

## **2. Reading New Words - a Test of Phonic Substitution, by Helen W. Henrikson, Ph.D.\* and Dorothy Geiger, B.A.**

\* Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the co-operation and assistance of the Director of Education, Mr. A. C. Ritter, and the Inspector of Public Schools, Mr. H. C. Hunter, of Kingston, Ontario for authorizing the testing - the Primary Supervisor, Mrs. G. Bain, and the Guidance Consultant, Mr. W. R. Davidson, for preparing the instructions for the principals, and the sixteen school principals who did the testing. We also thank the Director for his permission to publish the report.

### **The Object of the Present Word List Test:**

The present test was used to determine how well grade 1 children can apply the phonics technique of consonant substitution or addition, to read new words. Consonant substitution is one of the main methods taught in grade 1 for reading new words.

Not being examined is facility in additional grade 1 techniques used for attacking new words, such as (a) structural analysis (prefixes, suffixes, inflectional endings, compound words), and (b) context clues from text or illustration.

It was felt that this test could provide additional information about reading ability to that obtained from standardized tests. In the Gates Tests in use at the time, there are few words which are derived by consonant substitution from known words.

### **Method of Teaching Reading in Kingston:**

The method is a conventional basal reader approach very similar to that in the Teacher Manuals of the Nelson Reader Series (1962). It is comparable to that described in *Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading* by Heilman (1) 1. 2

(Note 1. "Basal reader series in wide use today embrace two major premises: (1) that the child should learn a number of words as sight recognition words before attempting any type of word analysis, and (2) that the introduction of new sight words should be systematically controlled..." Heilman (1), page 104; " .... once a word is introduced, it will be used many times." page 114.

(Note 2. .... the child learns to apply his phonetic knowledge in attacking unknown words through the use of initial- and final-consonant substitution... For example, assume that the child knows the first word in each of these groups: *jump* - bump, lump, dump; *his* - hit, hid, hip. From this word, he should be able to derive the sound of any of the other words on the list .... (grade one Teachers' Manual, p. 37, Curriculum Foundation Series).

The following will illustrate the technique of teaching consonant substitution by what has been termed the indirect phonic method, in which the sounds are not learned in isolation, but from the beginning of words, e.g. a new word (bun) is to be derived from the known word *run*. The sound of *b* is known from the beginning of several sight words. Initial drill in class goes as follows: "it (bun) looks like run, but starts like ball, so it is bun."

Later final consonant substitution is taught, e.g. "It (rug) looks like run, but ends like dog, so it is rug." After a time many pupils can dispense with the key or known word and perform the reasoning silently, or read the new word directly.

### Preparation of the Test:

All words appearing in the six grade 1 reading series in use in Kingston schools in 1963-64 were compiled on master lists. The reading series were published by the following companies: Row, Peterson & Co, U. S. (Alice & Jerry), Winston & Ginn, Copp Clark (Canadian Reading Development Series), Nelson (1962), Gage (Curriculum Foundation Series, Dick & Jane). Each school used two sets of readers per class. Therefore, words which appeared in at least five of the six sets were known to each child who completed grade 1. The known words in Table 1 are used frequently in the readers, since the controlled introduction of words learned by sight involves the use of each word at least 5 times in each reader [1] (1, page 104). Each word of the test is derived from the known word on the same line by initial (i) or final (f) consonant substitution, or by the addition (a) of consonants or blends. 17 of the words were derived by changing initial consonants, since the children had more experience with initial rather than final substitution. All 20 words were regular and monosyllabic. All except *gown* have a short vowel sound. The word *buzz* was known to some classes.

**Table I, a Phonic Substitution Test**

Unknown word	Derived from known word	Unknown word	Derived from known word
1. hog (i)	(dog)	11. quit (a)	(it)
2. dent (i)	(went)	12. wall (i)	(ball)
3. rust (i)	(just)	13. jam (a)	(am)
4. gown (i)	(down)	14. kill (i)	(will)
5. shed (i)	(red)	15. mix (i)	(six)
6. inch (a)	(in)	16. buzz (f)	(but)
7. blot (i)	(not)	17. track (i)	(black)
8. spun (i)	(run)	18. cash (f)	(can)
9. vet (i)	(pet)	19. thump (i)	(jump)
10. yelp (i)	(help)	20. flop (i)	(stop)

(i) and (f) refer to initial and final consonant substitution.  
(a) means addition of a consonant sound to known word.

### Limitation of the Test and Testing:

All this test purports to examine is how well the children can use phonic substitution. Only simple words were used which could be derived by a single change either in beginning or end of word. Thus words such as *cup*, *ship*, *rob*, *tap* could not be used because more than one change would be required.

Not all words will be new to many pupils. They may have occurred in classroom or phonics lessons. The reading material for children in units 4 and 5 (grade 2 readers) may include some test words, which would then be known words.

This test is designed to be given after grade 1 (unit 3), both because of the words selected as known words, and because a grade I method is being tested. However, all the first year pupils were examined at the same time, whether they were in normal, slow or accelerated groups.

### Groups Tested:

835 Kingston Public School first year pupils (92% of grade 1 enrollment) were tested. Grades 1 to 4 are divided into 3 units per grade. 85% of the pupils had completed at least unit 3, or grade 1; 15% were still in units 1 or 2 (Table II). Many were in unit 4, and a few in unit 5 of grade 2. A large

proportion of these have accelerated and are above the average in intelligence, but some would be in their second year of grade school. Some pupils start reading instruction (first unit) in the second year of kindergarten and hence, by June of the grade 1 year, have had one and a half years of reading experience.

### **Classification of the Schools:**

The schools were classified by the Guidance Consultant, the Director of Education, and the Primary Supervisor (independently), according to the cultural environment, intelligence, and achievement, of the majority of the children in the school. The classification of schools as A (best), B, or C, therefore, is not an estimate of the merits of the schools themselves, or the teaching staff, but an average estimate of all pupils in a school.

### **Method of Testing:**

The test was given by the principals of the 16 schools in June 1964. The reading of word lists to the principal is a normal situation for Kingston grade 1 pupils. Explicit directives were sent by the Director of Education, the essence being that testing was to be done individually and privately; that ten seconds be allowed for each word; and that a second trial be permitted for words read incorrectly (marked x), or not attempted (marked -) the first time. Children were permitted to say the known words if they wished, but the list, presented word by word, did not contain the known words.

The schools were given an arbitrary number for identification, which is not known to the authors who compiled and evaluated the data. The report was presented to, and discussed with, the Director of Education, the Inspector of Public Schools, and their associates who are involved with reading supervision, guidance, and testing.

### **Results:**

We empirically set 20% error or less as a pass (16 or more words correct), and 25% or more error as failing (15 or fewer words correct).

In setting the passing grade for this test we have drawn upon the experience of Syracuse University Reading and Arts Center in the testing of reading ability. For graded word lists to be read at a moderate rate, the Center sets a 25% error as the "cut-off" point, at which the test is discontinued. A 5% error is used in Kingston by principals in passing pupils from one unit to the next. Their lists contain some unknown words, altho the majority are known.

The data was also analyzed in a second way; the average error per child in a group determined. This indicates the degree of error in a group, rather than the number who can or cannot read adequately according to the above standard. We consider grouping individual scores as probably the superior of the two methods.

The data for the first year children thruout the city are summarized in Table II, showing % in each unit of reading, % failing, and average errors. As the 4th column of figures shows, 41.2% of these children who had had at least one year of reading instruction failed the test, i.e. had 25% error or more. The figure for combined units 3 and 4 was 30-67- failure.

The low average error for unit 4 (127.) indicates that relatively few of this group failed. Therefore, the average failure rate for unit 3 by itself (end of grade 1) would be much higher than 30.6%. (At the time the individual errors were determined, we unfortunately did not have the data necessary for separating the performances of these units).

**Table II**

Unit in which child was registered	Number of pupils	% of pupils	% failed on 1st trial	*Average % of words missed 1st trial	error missed) 2nd trial
4 (a few in 5)	340	40.7	30.6	12	7.5
3	367	44.0		40	33
2	62	7.4	100	76	74
1	66	7.9		87	84
all units	835	40.5	100	30	30

\*failure: 25% or more words incorrect

The average error for the 835 children was 35% on first reading, 30% after second trial. There were marked differences in the performances by the different units. One would expect this, particularly since they had studied different amounts of subject material. The wide difference between units 3 and 4, with 40 and 12% error, respectively, points out that the data for these two units should be considered separately. Pupils in units 1 and 2 had little knowledge of consonant substitution as judged by this test (87 and 84 % error). They had little or no drill in this phonic technique, and some may not yet have learned by sight recognition all the words from which the test words were derived phonically. However, units 1 and 2 combined comprised only 15.3% of the total.

The second attempt at reading the words missed the first time did not improve the performance appreciably, except possibly for the unit 4 group.

In figure 1 the percentages of pupils which failed the test on the first trial are shown separately as horizontal bars for the 16 schools. The bars representing school performances are arranged from top to bottom in order of increasing failure rate for all units tested (whole first year). To the left of each bar is the number of the school and its classification as A, B, or C. In figure 2 the data for average error is arranged similarly for the 16 schools, the arrangement in this case being based on average error by unit 3. Unit 4 error is also presented below that of unit 3 for each school, but it does not run parallel to that for the schools for unit 3.

One of the most striking features about the results was the great variability in average performance for the same units from school to school. The % which failed the test ranged from 77 to 3 for the whole first year, and from 69 to 3 for units 3 and 4 combined (figure 1). The average error for unit 3 in the schools varied from 72 down to 8%, and for unit 4 from 27 to 2% (figure 2). The range of average school performance in the Gates Primary Sentence and Paragraph Reading tests in October, 1964 was much smaller (grades 2.8 to 3.5).

The relationship between performance and the average intellectual and cultural advantages of pupils in the schools (A, B or C) was examined. The individual scores for all first year pupils in a school showed that the 7 schools with lower average failure rates (3 to 23.5%) were A and B schools (four A & three B schools); whereas the 9 schools with a much higher failure rate (43 to 77%) included all 6 of the C schools, as well as one A and two B schools. For units 3 and 4 combined this same relationship held except that C school v 5 was included in the first 8 schools, ranking fifth. Since the above 7 schools all had a higher proportion of pupils in unit 4, this undoubtedly affected the average performance. The classification may also be affected by this factor of acceleration. However, 'A' school, #12 had a high proportion in unit 4, but a poor performance, and it might prove worthwhile to examine the reasons for this exception.

When the performance was measured by average error, the rough correlation between this and classification as A, B or C did not hold for units 3 or 4 (figure 2), or for the schools as a whole (not shown). Indeed the three best school performances were by B schools, followed by 1 C and two A schools. The average error apparently measured a different facet than does the percent failing the rest.

Thus, with the information available, it is better merely to point out the relationships above without drawing any general conclusions.

The relative difficulty which the children had in reading the different words on the list is indicated in Table III by the average error after two trials. The average error for individual words ranged from 16.7 to 46%. There were three times as many errors for *quit* and *cash* (46%) as for *wall*, *hog* and *jam* (16%). These latter three are probably known to many pupils from phonic lessons, whereas *quit* and *cash*, altho in common usage, would have been derived less often.

The table also shows that, altho consonant blends have been taught, more errors were made in words with blends. The three words with final consonants substituted or added were also among the more difficult words.

The data were examined further to find out what % of words were read incorrectly and what not attempted at all.

Of the 30% of words scored wrong after two trials, 2/3 were read incorrectly and 1/3 was not tried.

**Table III**

Relative difficulty of words on list

Word	% wrong after 2nd trial	Type of substitution
1. wall	16.0	i
2. hog	16.6	i
3. jam	16.8	i (a)
4. kill	20.6	i
5. mix	21.1	i
6. thump	22.2	i
7. rust	23.6	i
8. flop	23.9	i, bl
9. dent	26.7	i
10. track	27.3	i, bl
11. gown	30.5	i
12. spun	31.0	i, bl
13. shed	31.2	i, bl
14. vet	31.2	i
15. buzz	33.5	f
16. inch	33.5	f, (a) bl
17. yelp	36.7	i
18. blot	36.9	i, bl
19. quit	45.5	i, (a), bl
20. cash	46.6	f, bl

i and f refer to initial or final consonant substitution, (a) to addition of consonants (either initial or final part of word), and bl to use of blend rather than single consonant.

## Discussion

Tests of consonant substitution evaluate to some extent the independence in reading. The large failure rate (41%) and large average error (35%) indicate that a large proportion of these first year Kingston children cannot apply consonant substitution satisfactorily. Therefore, the conventional basal reader approach of teaching reading has not given 41% of these pupils sufficient independence to read simple new words satisfactorily.

It cannot be implied that grade 1 Kingston children do not read as well on the average as children in other North American cities. In Primary Standardized reading tests they score above the norm for their grade level. Those of the 835 pupils who were still in Kingston in October 1964 scored 3.2 on the Gates Paragraph and Sentence Tests, the norm being 2.2 for October testing. The average I.Q. was 109 by the Lorge-Thorndike test. As a further indication of Kingston reading performance, the first year pupils in June 1965 scored above the norm of 2.0 (June) in the Dominion Achievement Reading tests. For words, Sentences, and Paragraph tests, the average grade scores were 2.1, 2.3, and 2.3, respectively. The Dominion tests provide fewer pictures for context clues than the Gates Primary tests. In the Gates tests a score of 2.0 can be achieved if the child only knows words from grade I readers.

It is common for critics of such a word list of unknown words to object, "But these children (7 years average age) do not know the meaning of that word (e.g. quit, cash), and that is why they can't read it." Is not the purpose of phonics to teach how to decode unknown words? At any rate, the meaning of track is well-known, yet 27% of the pupils read this incorrectly after two trials. The unknown word 'queen' is in the Gates Word test, and is presumably acceptable; but it is a more difficult word than quit.

The average error of children in unit 3 was three times greater than that of those in unit 4. The reasons for better performance in unit 4 include their greater experience in reading, the beginning of instruction in vowels, the inclusion of some of the words of the test in their grade 2 readers, and the inclusion of a large proportion of brighter children who have been accelerated in their first year. Thus, it is obvious that this test should be given after the same level of reading instruction is reached, after unit 3, regardless of what time of the year promotion from grade 1 to 2 occurs.

We consider that this type of test with unknown derived words would prove valuable to supplement other types of testing. It tests directly the ability to apply consonant substitution - to use phonics. By recording the actual errors made, this type of word list can serve as a useful diagnostic aid in determining whether the child is having difficulty with the initial or final consonants or the vowels. The unknown words can be added to the usual oral word list which is used in testing reading, and the performance evaluated separately. They can be included in sentence form for Context [\[2\]](#), or presented as a Spelling test [\[5\]](#) [\[6\]](#) which is time-saving and can test the children's knowledge of phonics.

Examples of the type of information which can be derived from these three methods of using unknown words are given below:

1. L. H. Babcock, Principal of Polson Park Public School in Kingston, added the list of words in this paper to the regular oral word list. Examples of misreadings, quoted to the authors by him, were: *thump* read as *jump* or *bump*; *quit* read as *quiet*, *quite* or *quack*; *track* read as *back*, *truck* or *black*; *gown* read as *grown*. These misreadings show errors in interpreting the initial consonant(s) by reading *jump* or *grown*; in the vowel by reading *quiet*, *quack* or *truck*; and in the final consonant by reading *quack*.



2. Johnson [2] included unknown words in sentence form, altho it is more difficult in this way to introduce as wide a variety of phonemes. The following examples were used on New York children and the reading was recorded on tape. "*Mike fed some nuts and figs to his tame rat,*" was the sentence containing the phonically derivable words (*in italics*). The previous sentence with known words (for comparison) was, "Mother will not *like* me to play *games* in my *big red hat*." The average error for children promoted to grades 2 or 3 was 57% for the five italicized unknown words, and 16% for the five known words (in italics). The word *Mike* was read as *milk* or *make* by 21 out of 66 of the pupils. This showed that many knew the initial or final consonants in *Mike*, but could not attack the vowel and therefore could not read the word. The words *fed* and *figs*, when attempted, were read as a variety of words starting with *f*, so that here the majority who tried the word knew only the initial consonant as a clue to guessing the rest of the word.

3. Lists of 20 known words and 20 derivable unknown words were dictated to two grade 1 groups. Those with conventional indirect phonic instruction spelled 33% and 77% wrong respectively, while the experimental group with the same text, but with articulated phonic instruction included from the beginning, spelled only 8% and 17% wrong respectively. Neither group had had formal spelling instruction. [5] The use of spelling tests was discussed by Strang et al [3] and Terman and Walcutt [4], in relation to reading.

### Summary

In June 1964, 835 Kingston children were tested orally at the end of the first year with a list of 20 unknown, monosyllabic words. These were derived from regular known words with short vowels by changing, or adding, either the initial or final consonant. In Kingston, reading is taught by the conventional basal reader method. The primary children score above the normal in standardized reading tests.

(1) 41.2% of the pupils had 25% or more of the words wrong, or failed the test according to the standard set. 30.5% of all those in units 3 and 4 failed the rest. (Unit 3 is the last unit of grade 1, unit 4 the first of grade 2).

(2) The average error for all pupils was 35%. For units 3 and 4 the errors averaged 40% and 12% respectively. For those still in units 1 and 2 the error was 82%.

(3) This test should be given when the child has completed unit 3 of grade 1.

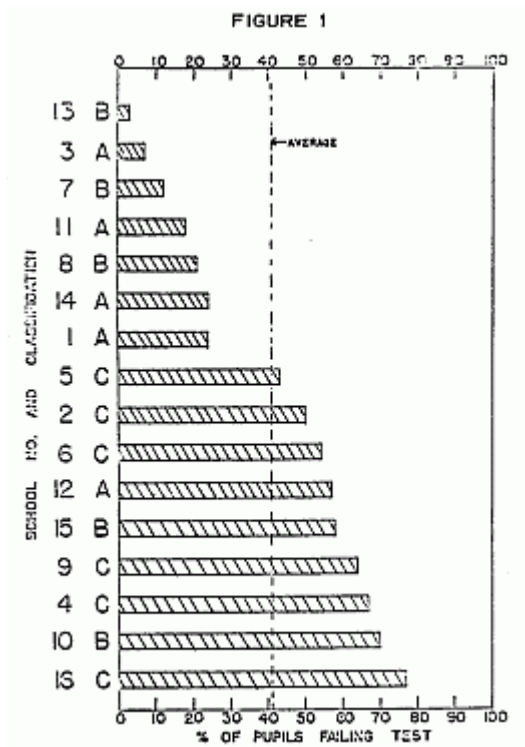
4. There was great variability in average performance for the same unit from school to school. This was much greater than for the Gates Primary Reading Test.

### Conclusion

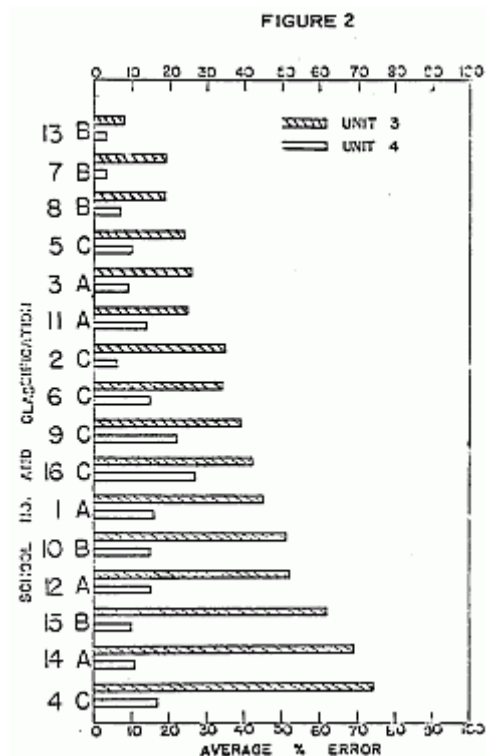
Since 41.2% of the pupils who finished grade 1 did not have the independence to read these simple words, a satisfactory working knowledge of phonics is not provided by the conventional basal reader method of indirect phonics.

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6. World-Wide Survey, *Report on Reading*, No. 1, 1959. Presented to Royal Commission on Reading in Manitoba. Data summarized and published in reference 2.



A phonic substitution test. The failure rate for first year pupils in 16 schools; that is, those with 25% or more of the words wrong on first reading. Schools are arranged according to increasing error. See text for numbering and classification of schools.



A phonic substitution test. The average error for 16 schools for unit 3 and unit 4 (first reading). Schools are arranged according to increasing error in unit 3.

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### A proposal in queer type, by D. W. H. Brayden.

Darlung love, my hand us shaking  
 Far too mich to hold a pen;  
 That us why the cold typewriter  
 Hammers oit the latest gem.

Shortly and precusly, darling  
 Somethungs birst unto my lufe;  
 Yoi mist know aboit that somethung -  
 Darlung, wull yoi be my wufe?

P. S. Please excuse the misprints,  
 Do not feel inclined to chide,  
 Even on unfeeling keyboards,  
 U and i are side by side.

From the Bedside Lilliput, Ldn, Hutton, 1950, p. 359

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### **3. Will the Real Dr. Johnson Please Stand Up?, by John E. Chappell\***

\*Dept. of Geography, CWSC, Ellensburg, Wash.

This is a good year for arguing that a Johnson is not always what he seems. Forty million Americans recently voted for a member of the Johnson clan on the ground that his campaign oratory gave promise of superior statesman-ship for solving the world's problems. As several writers such as James Reston have chronicled, however, he has spent most of his time since election dealing with politics rather than problems, with the ostensible result that most of the problems are still around, looming larger than ever.

Johnsons are, however, numerous enough to exemplify nearly all the differences found within the Anglo-saxon branch of humanity. A historical comparison with the Johnson who presided over these United States a century ago can reveal this much; so weak was the hold which that unfortunate leader had over the minds and hearts of his contemporaries in the legislature that they missed by a single vote of throwing him out of office for improper conduct. Our present leader seems far from such a face, however.

The subject of the present paper is removed from our day by still another century: Dr. Samuel Johnson, well known to the readers of these pages as something resembling the devil incarnate; for it was he and he alone who created an English dictionary with such weight of authority that for all time since, it has been judged nearly sacrilegious to spell a word in any other way than the way it was spelled in Dr. Johnson's Dictionary.

I have discovered that one does not need to be a professional Johnsonian scholar in order to reach the conclusion that this devil caricature has been vastly overdrawn. The purpose of the present article, therefore, is to portray Dr. Johnson as he really was, or really thought, on matters pertinent to the aims of spelling reformers and primary educators. A final judgement cannot really be made; for Dr. Johnson lived in another time and place and faced problems different from our own. But it must be of some value to try to look at one's so-called enemies with a fair and objective eye, to appreciate the truths and values they have in their favor, and to plan future moves which are not negations of all that the "other side" has done and stood for (for no humans can be so totally bad as to deserve such a fate), but rather new formulations embodying the best of the old and unpopular with the wisest in- sights achieved from our newer and higher vantage point. In other words, and especially in the realm of ideas, enemies are not defeated by campaigns of annihilation, but rather by fair-minded reason and forbearance, by a strategem which is careful to take into account the other man's point of view. (20th century Johnsons take note).

One of the charges frequently made about Dr. Samuel Johnson is that he wished to preserve a difficult and illogical spelling in order to make it more difficult to obtain an education, thus restricting education to the higher classes. But the record does not support this claim. Dr. Johnson was aristocratic in temperament but still had no desire to restrict education to the upper classes. According to Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, in 1772 the great doctor disagreed with a man who feared

that widespread education would make the masses less industrious. No, Sir, said Johnson, reading and writing may be a distinction when few have the ability, and those who do may tend to be idle; but when everyone can read and write, the ability will tempt no one to be idle. Look at our manufacturers, he said; among the most intelligent people in the land, yet they are also among the hardest-working.

In 1776, according to Boswell, Dr. Johnson answered a similar complaint that "a general diffusion of knowledge among a people was a disadvantage; for it made the vulgar rise above their humble sphere," with the opinion that "Sir, while knowledge is a distinction, those who are possessed of it will naturally rise above those who are not. Merely to read and write was a distinction at first; but we see when reading and writing have become general, the common people keep their stations. And so, were higher attainments to become general, the effect would be the same."

One might in this democratic age pause with disfavor over Dr. Johnson's apparent willingness to see "the common people keep their stations." But his feelings were not quite as disdainful as this passage implies. In 1775, he declared that "More is learned in publick than in private schools, from emulation." In 1777, he advised Boswell not to refine the education of his children. "Life (said he) will not bear refinement; you must do as other people do." The good doctor had suffered too many privations on his long and arduous road to fame and success, to fail to sympathize with the lot of those who must engage in common drudgery all their lives, or to recognize the necessity of this drudgery. In fact he characterized his own greatest work, the compilation of his dictionary, as little more than a necessary drudgery; probably his most often-quoted words are these from the preface of the dictionary:

"It is the fate of those who toil at the lower employments of life, to be rather driven by the fear of evil, than attracted by the prospect of good; to be exposed to censure, without hope of praise; to be disgraced by miscarriage, or punished for neglect, where success would have been without applause, and diligence without reward. Among these unhappy mortals is the writer of dictionaries; whom mankind have considered, not as the pupil, but as the slave of science, the pionier of literature, doomed only to remove rubbish and clear obstructions from the paths of Learning and Genius, who press forward to conquest and glory without bestowing a smile on the humble drudge that facilitates their progress. Every other author may aspire to praise; the lexicographer can only hope to escape reproach, and even this negative recompense has yet been granted to very few."

In view of the response he actually received, these forebodings were rather too grim; but if one were to read the the judgements of spelling reformers only, one might quickly decide they were too optimistic.

Dr. Johnson was not really cynical; there was even a humorous streak in his character. We can read it in these words uttered in 1763, in answer to Boswell's question on what should be taught first to young children, "Sir, it is no matter what you teach them first, any more than what leg you shall put into your breeches first. Sir, you may stand disputing which is best to put in first, but in the mean time your breech is bare. Sir, while you are considering which of two things you should teach your child first, another boy has learnt them both."

Was Dr. Johnson therefore in favor of intensive, high-speed education? Far from it, to judge from these words of 1775, "Endeavoring to make children prematurely wise is useless labour. Suppose they have more knowledge at five or six years old than other children, what use can be made of it? It will be lost before it is wanted, and the waste of so much time and labour of teacher can never be repaid ... .. whereupon he details the history of a brilliant woman who coaxes precocity out of small children, to no real advantage to any of them. Such a concern over the efficiency of the teaching effort gives Dr. Johnson at least one thing in common with those who now strive to introduce phonetic spelling into the grammar schools; surely he would be impressed if he saw how much more effectively the teacher's time is spent with an improved spelling system. Would he also wonder why such a rush to overcome the spelling barrier in order to teach other things at a premature age? Perhaps; but I rather suspect that he would not think algebra or Latin premature at age ten or twelve (above, he is concerned with a much younger child), when our present students still must struggle with, and set aside time for, the more difficult points of spelling.

Just what were Dr. Johnson's feelings about spelling, in particular? The surprising truth is that he was both careless in spelling himself (no doubt due to the fact that he grew up in a time when spelling was still not standardized), and also unhappy with the illogical spellings then in wide use.

We note his carelessness in his dictionary itself, where he writes "pioneer" in the body of the book, but spells it "pionier" in his preface (see extract quoted above). Other examples of what has been called his "indifference" to exact spellings are fairly easy to find.

Although he disliked illogical and inconsistent spelling, he lived in a conservative age and deemed it unwise to try to change it. In the 18th century it took a man of revolutionary spirit from a frontier land, such as Benjamin Franklin, to argue for spelling reform; the polite, traditional, refined society of England would not have accepted such a plea (and indeed even the more adventurous Americans turned it down). Here are Dr. Johnson's exact words on the matter as they appear in the front of his dictionary (actually from pages 4 ff. of *Johnson's Dictionary; a Modern selection*, by E. L. Mc Adam, Jr. and George Milne, Pantheon Press, 1963):

"In adjusting the *orthography*, which has been to this time unsettled and fortuitous, I found it necessary to distinguish those irregularities that are inherent in our tongue, and perhaps coeval with it, from others which the ignorance or negligence of later writers has produced. Every language has its anomalies, which, though inconvenient, and in themselves once unnecessary, must be tolerated along with the imperfections of human things, and which require only to be registered, that they may not be increased, and ascertained, that they may not be confounded; but every language has its improprieties and absurdities, which it is the duty of the lexicographer to correct or proscribe."

He then goes on to reveal that he means here, by "irregularities that are inherent in our tongue," not the merely unphonetic spellings, but mainly words from the same root which have undergone differentiating sound change in the spoken language, such as *length* and *long*, *dry* and *drought*, etc. Such irregular forms arise from the wide dialectical and personal differences in vowel pronunciation, he implies; and at any rate the best thing to do is to fix them as best we can so that

they may not be further misunderstood or increased in number. Imagine a *twentieth-century* lexicographer even *implying* the possibility that he might change *the sounds* of our language (not to mention the spelling)! Yet Dr. Johnson feels compelled to explain why he does not do so! Only a few of the more radical spelling reformers argue along the lines of changing the spoken language; they have to be silenced by their more pragmatic comrades. But here was Dr. Johnson growling about irregularities which today are accepted with scarcely a murmur, and labeling them "spots of barbarity impressed so deep in the English language that criticism can never wash them away."

Besides the irregularities which inhere in the sound patterns of the language, Dr. Johnson also had to consider spelling anomalies in themselves. Here he attempted to follow the derivation of the given word when possible, and he gave the opinion (an accurate one) that more words have come into English from French than from Latin Directly. He tried to choose the more ancient form where no clear choice could be made from current usage; but he wanted none of the efforts toward revision of presently-accepted spellings back towards the ancient forms, which often have been made with imperfect knowledge of the etymology anyway (though he himself perpetrated a few errors of this kind, attributable to the primitive state of linguistic science in his day). To him, such classicist pedantry was a business "where caprice has long wantoned without control, and vanity sought praise by petty reformation." His business was not to turn back the clock of time, even if he knew the true etymology; but merely to record current usage and attempt to make it permanent.

It is here in his love of stability and permanence that we can find perhaps our best case against Dr. Johnson as he really was. He did not appreciate the need for gradual change, but felt rather that "There is in constancy and stability a general and lasting advantage, which will always overbalance the slow improvements of gradual correction." Yet it must be remembered again that he lived in 18th century England, at the very dawn of the Industrial Revolution, and entirely before the French Revolution. Only in a few distant parts of the world, as in the American colonies, was *change* of any kind - social, political, economic, scientific, technological - in such great evidence as to overwhelm one's mind and dominate one's world-view, as the idea of change does today. A hundred years later, after widespread industrialization, political reforms of many kinds, and the acceptance of Darwin's theory of evolution, the situation was nearly reversed; in every Western land, change seemed inherent in the very order of the universe, and evidence of it was around on every side, increasing daily. In this sense, we must concede that it might have been a different frame of mind in which Dr. Johnson would have spoken about the stability and permanence, if he had lived for a time in the 1860's, or even the 1960's (when the evil effects of change are more evident). But this would in truth have made him a different man, and not the Dr. Samuel Johnson of history.

What was important is that he did his best to make what seemed to be a forward step - from chaos to order - for his own day. He held no brief for illogical spellings; he merely went along with them with a sigh, feeling that at least we can use them with regularity, so that no one will mistake our meaning: "I have been often obliged to sacrifice uniformity to custom; thus I write, in compliance with a numberless majority, *convey* and *inveigh*, *deceit* and *receipt*, *fancy* and *phantom* ..." The fact is that he well knew no attempt to change these irregularities would be accepted, in his time and place. Simple spelling changes were not even accepted in the United States when Noah Webster

tried a few of them some decades later; so how then could Johnson have succeeded with them in Georgian England?

Actually, Dr. Johnson did attempt to regularize the spellings of some proper names, such as Jonson for Johnson, Brown for Browne, and Boswel for Boswell. But the general public would have none of it!

What a difference between such an attitude towards spelling anomalies, and that of the cynical H. L. Mencken, the greatest enemy of spelling reform in our own century! For Mencken lived, as we do, in an age when the merits of intelligent change are apparent to all, in the realm of things and gadgets, and yet while our inertia and our fears are so great that in the realm of the mind, we suspect that our increasing material comforts will somehow be jeopardized by tampering with the ideas already in vogue. In truth, of course, the reverse is the case: no society can be great in the material sense or in any other sense unless the minds of its leaders are alert to the winds of change and receptive to new methods and slogans, rather than intent on repeating those of centuries ago, or even those of 20 or 30 years ago (again, 20th century Johnsons take note). Let me point out, in case anyone misunderstands, that I do not here argue for changes in principles and fundamentals, but rather in tactics and forms, for these are what must change with time; and by keeping them fixed while they change elsewhere, we only endanger the fundamentals they represent. Thus spelling is merely a form, a superficiality; but by letting it fossilize while the language it represents changes, we injure the use and survival value of the very language itself.

Not only was Dr. Johnson poorly equipped by fate to appreciate the value of change in general; but he had no accurate notion of the degree that language in particular *must* change with time. The rediscovery of Sanskrit and the great surge of activity it led to, revealing the long evolutionary history of the Indo-European languages, had yet to occur when he lived; the science of historical philology which reached such great heights in the 19th century was scarcely even in existence. Not knowing this fascinating and valuable story, Dr. Johnson attributed inconsistency between sound and symbol to dialects, arbitrary choice, vulgarity and ignorance, rather than to such natural events as the great English vowel change of late Medieval times. He saw no reason why language, properly handled, had to change at all. Today we see that it does, despite the attempts of grammarians to fix it; and the forward-looking nations allow for change in both spelling and grammar, to be recognized by national academies at periodic intervals.

In sum, Samuel Johnson was a man beguiled by the seeming fixity of the world he lived in, yet one who still, within limits, sought to stabilize and improve it. He was less bold than we should wish him to have been, and also less bold than he wanted to be himself; he did not (and probably could not) change illogical spellings, and he gave too great a weight to the value of permanence in spelling. But if he could have known what we know, and still be Dr. Johnson at the same time, I have a strong hunch what his answer would be to the question: why did you not appreciate the need for spelling reform more fully? It would be the same reply that Boswell records him as having made in 1775, to a lady who asked him how he came to define *Pastern* as the *knee* of a horse: "instead of making an elaborate defence, as she expected, he at once answered, 'ignorance, Madam, pure ignorance.' "

[*Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1966 p8 in the printed version*]

#### 4. English as a World Language, by Harold Cox\*

*Formerly Editor, Edinburgh Review, Scotland.*

That it would be an advantage to the world to have a common language for international use, few people would deny. Indeed, in the hope of producing such a language, Dr. Zamenhof invented what is known as Esperanto, but the idea does not seem to have made much progress. In essence, Esperanto is an artificial language with no history and, worse still, no literature behind it. On the other hand, the international use of English is rapidly gaining ground. It is the common language of the educated classes throughout India who are unable to communicate with one another in their own numerous and widely differing languages. English is also gaining ground in France and Germany and in other parts of the Continent of Europe as a second language. In Turkey the teaching of English in schools has recently been made compulsory. English is the established language throughout the greater part of the North American continent. At a rough guess one may say that English is familiar to not less than four hundred million people in the world.

As compared to most other languages, English has the enormous advantage of grammatical simplicity. There are no genders for nouns, and an adjective takes the same form whether applied to a male or a female. The conjugation of verbs is also extremely simple. As a result, the student of English has almost no grammar to learn. In addition, from the European point of view, English has the great advantage that it more or less represents an amalgam of languages. It is largely Teutonic in origin, but also embodies a vast number of words derived directly from Latin, and many others coming to us from France and Italy, besides not a few derived from Greek. This language, thus built up from widely varying European sources, possesses a huge supply of magnificent literature, unsurpassed by that of any other language in the world. In the field of science, more is published in English than in any two other languages. In travel or commerce, English is the most useful language. To be picked for study by a student, the language must be the most useful one.

From these points of view, English is an ideal language for an international medium. Its chief handicap lies solely in the fact that our spelling and pronunciation have no reliable relation to one another. Attention was called to this fact by the late Lord Cromer in a poem published in the *Spectator* of August 9th, 1902,

When the English tongue we speak,  
Why is *break* not rhymed with *freak*?  
Will you tell me why it's true  
We say *sew* but likewise *Jew*?  
*Beard* sounds not the same as *heard*;  
*Cord* belies the sound in *word*;

*Cow* is *cow*, but *low* is *low*?  
*Shoe* is never rhymed with *foe*  
And since *pay* rhymes with *say*,  
Why not *paid* with *said* I pray  
And in short it seems to me  
Sounds and letters disagree.

The last two lines concisely sum up the whole trouble. It is impossible for any foreigner to guess in advance the pronunciation of an immense number of English words, and the same consideration



applies to the English child. At the Conference of Educational Associations in Jan. 1926 it was stated that in a number of schools experiments had been made in teaching children to read and write first of all thru a simple phonetic scheme of spelling, and that these experiments had been invariably and conspicuously successful. It may safely be assumed that foreigners would equally profit if they were provided in their first study of English with books phonetically printed.

Suggestions have been more than once put forward for the establishment of an educational alphabet. Proposals to this effect were made by a number of distinguished literary men and educational authorities in the year 1915. Similar proposals were made in 1924 and again in 1926. On each occasion the Government was asked to appoint a commission to consider the establishment of a complete alphabet for educational purposes. But nothing has yet been done. The matter unfortunately is one that would appear to win no votes for any political party, and therefore political parties are inclined to leave it alone.

The framing of an educational alphabet is not really so difficult a matter as it sounds, for we already have in the Oxford English Dictionary an excellent basis to work from. Indeed, that alphabet, with comparatively few modifications, might admirably serve the necessary purpose. The suggestion here made is that the Government should appoint a commission to consider and sanction an educational alphabet for use in English schools, in order to teach English children the proper pronunciation of their own language and also to assist them in learning to read English more rapidly than they can at present. Such an alphabet would automatically become available for the use of foreigners, and the strides that the English language is making on the Continent indicate how greatly it would be valued.

It would be of immense service in India, where English is the only common language available for 300,000,000 people. The proposed educational alphabet for English could also, with the addition of a few extra letters, be used to represent in Roman letters the various indigenous languages of India, now written in scripts, each of which is entirely unintelligible to the users of other Indian languages. The same alphabet with one or two additions could be used for teaching correct pronunciation of the different European languages. But the greatest gain of all would be that the English language would then become the easiest language of all to learn - and thereby be of immense commercial, social and diplomatic value to everyone.

[*Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1966 p9 in the printed version*]

## 5. The Witch-Hunt, by Yvan Lebrun, Ph.D.\*

\* Bruxelles, Belgium.

As was pointed out by Herbert Lottman (*Spelling Progress Bulletin*, v. VI, 1966, no 2, p. 16), one of the most talked-about French books of the past few years is *Parlez-vous Franglais?* by René Etiemble.

As a matter of fact, the sensation was made by the ferocity and uncompromisingness of the book rather than by its subject matter, as anglicisms have been French purists' pet aversion for more than a century.

As far back as 1855, Jean Viennet, a member of the *Académie française* complained in his *Épître à Boileau sur les mots nouveaux* that French was being invaded by lots of words (of English origin) that did not fit in with French phonetics, and he rebuked his compatriots for using such words as: *railway, tunnel, ballast, tender, express, track, and wagon*, because these foreignisms, Viennet said, sounded like glass shattering when they were pronounced by a Frenchman.

In his *Esthétique de la langue française*, which was published in 1899, Rémy de Gourmont already demanded that anglicisms which could not be avoided should at least be spelled in a French way (*speech* becoming *spiche*, *beef-steak* becoming *bifetèque*, etc.).

And in his book *Le français, langue morte?*, which appeared in 1923, André Thérive anticipated (p.157) Etiemble's recommendation that foreignisms be as far as possible replaced by indigenous words - possibly by obsolete words which need but be revived.

Thus Etiemble's book simply continues a purist tradition that has been living for more than a century. Only that *Parlez-vous franglais?* is fiercer and more venomous than most of the previous pamphlets against the use of anglicisms.

.Did the present situation call for this redoubled violence? The following facts suggest that it hardly did:

Henri Mitterand, in *Les mots français*, has figured out that in the widely-used French dictionary, *Petit Larousse* (1961 edition), which Etiemble reproaches for mentioning far too many anglicisms, foreignisms represent only 3-4% of the total number of entries.

In a recent issue (March, 1966) of *Vie et langage*, an American reporter is called a liar because he has written in the *New York Herald Tribune* that the use of anglicisms is widespread in France and that classical French has been replaced by a pidgin language called *franglais* (Note that this is also Etiemble's opinion; on the cover of *Parlez-vous franglais?*, one may read: "Present-day French is but a pidgin language which is ashamed of its glorious past").

In his book *Langue française, langue humaine* (1963), Jacques Duron, who is a colleague of Etiemble's and a purist like the author of *Parlez-vous franglais?*, expresses the view that one need not be troubled about the future of the French language, as most French speakers are still very concerned about correct usage.

One may therefore agree with Aurélien Sauvageot, one of the authors of *Le français fondamental*, that anglicisms such as they are being used by French speakers do not at all imperil the French language, let alone the French culture (See *Portrait du vocabulaire français*, p. 227).

This does not mean, however, that anglicisms are no trouble to handle in French.

For one thing, their pronunciation is often unsettled. To quote but a few examples: *building* is sometimes pronounced [byl'diŋ] and sometimes [bɪl'diŋ]; *meeting* is pronounced [me'tiŋ] by some people, [me'tɛ:g] by others, and by still others; *pipe-line* is pronounced [paɪplain] by some speakers, by others and [pi'plɪŋ] by still a few others - *clown* is sometimes [klun], sometimes [klo:n], rarely [klaun] and radio and T-V commentators not infrequently say [didit] for *dead-heat*.

Sometimes it is the gender that is unsettled. Some people say *un barbecue* (this word is very often pronounced [barbə'ky]), while others say *une barbecue*. It may be noted here that this difficulty may also arise with words that have been borrowed from another language than English; as an example, the Finnish word *sauna* may be quoted, which is sometimes used as a masculine and sometimes as

a feminine word (See [R. P. deGorog, *Le genre du mot "sauna" en français*, in *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 54 (1963) 2).

And what about the plural form of *hovercraft*? Should it be *hovercraft* as in English or should it end in an *-s*, like most French plural forms do? And should the plural form of *box* be *boxes* or should it obey the French grammar rule to the effect that words which in the singular form end in an *x* should remain unchanged in the plural?

In a number of cases, the unsettledness has been inherited from the source language: *caravanning* and *caravanning* alternate freely in French as well as in English.

To round out this general survey of the intrusion of English words into modern French, it should be added that some anglicisms have undergone semantic changes which are likely to puzzle English-speaking people when they come across these words in French and try to interpret them as they would do in English. As illustrative examples we may quote *cargo*, which does not mean *freight*, but *cargo-boat*; *living*, which does not mean *livelihood*, but *living-room*, *tramway*, which in French means *streetcar*; *wagon*, which can only be said of a vehicle for transporting passengers or goods on a *railway*, *box*, which can only be used to refer to a box stall, a recess for a car, or a partitioned enclosure provided for the accused in a courtroom; *spleen*, whose sole meaning in French is *melancholy*, *depression*; *groom*, which always refers to a young male attendant in a hotel; and *scooter*, which has no other meaning than *motor-scooter*.

It may finally be noted that the French vocabulary contains words that look as if they were anglicisms but, in fact, do not occur in English, e.g. *wattman*, which means *streetcar-driver*, the substantive *smoking*, which means a *tuxedo*, and last but not least, *tennisman*, which means a *tennis-player* and has a plural form *tennismen* as if it were the most genuine English word that ever can be!

*[Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1966 p9 in the printed version]*

## **6. ODZ 'N ENZ, by PATRICIA GILSON GREEN**

From now on, whenever I have to look up a word in the dictionary, I am going to spell it the way it seems it ought to be spelt, insted. If it's spelled differently in the dikshunary it is probably illogical and ineffishent, and I'm not going to be a party to continuing such a practis. If you ar men insted ov mise, join me in this individual kind ov crusading and we will make a dent in the sanctity ov this out-moded, illogical spelling very soon. If you feel you must, put the convenshonal spelling in brackets next to the way you think it shuud be spelt. I red about a Sivil War General, when askt in a note whot too doo in a sertin battl. He seezd a pees ov board and rote in charcoal: "FIt em". That got the message acrost and that is primarily whot langwage is suppozd too doo, not to be artifishal, arkayik, or flowery, as far as I'm consend. I am sick ov our children being retarded in reeding and down-graded for not using "correct" English spelling when their logical, creativ mindz wizely doo not acsept the illogical way tradishon says it shuud be ritn. I tell my dauter to lern the simpler way even if the dikshonary says its rong, so she will hav a full grasp of the proper pronunsiashon and be able to speak with intellijens and fite our arkayisms.

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*[Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1966 pp10,11 in the printed version]*

## **7. Teaching Spelling in South Africa, by B. C. D. Willamse\***

\*Secretary for Education, Arts and Science, Republic of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

In response to your letter of October 21, 1965, the following are extracts from correspondence from the institutions which have sent information on the questions raised in your letter.

(1) Natal Education Department

"The Natal Education Department is not now experimenting with the Pitman Initial Teaching Alphabet. However, one of its Inspectors of Schools recently spent several months in Great Britain studying various aspects of the teaching of English, including i.t.a.

Primary Schools in Natal use the *Word Perfect Series* by R. Ridout (Published by Ginn & Co.) and/or *The Essential Spelling List* by F. J. Schonell (published by Macmillan) in their teaching of English spelling.

It is a fact that English spelling has the defect of making the acquisition of the reading skill more difficult.

The lack of correspondence between the phoneme and symbol is a contributing factor towards weakness in English spelling."

(2) Education Department of the Cape of Good hope

"Like all other educational bodies, this Department is aware of the many difficulties which arise over the learning and teaching of English spelling. In the training of teachers and in guidance to

teachers, great stress is laid on purposeful and well-planned methods of teaching spelling, especially in the early stages.

This Department has not carried out any experiments in Pitman's Initial Teaching Alphabet, but intends giving its attention and consideration to the results (when available) of an experiment in this method at present being carried out by the Transvaal Education Department.

### (3) Transvaal Education Department

"I have to inform you that the Transvaal Education Dept. acknowledges the prime importance of correct spelling. In a pamphlet to teachers in the primary school on the teaching of spelling in Afrikaans (the same pamphlet for English is currently being compiled), it is stressed that the teaching of spelling should be tackled systematically with the object of inculcating a *spelling consciousness* with pupils.

The necessary time should be devoted to regular teaching of spelling as well as casual spelling exercises resulting from regular teaching in other subjects or other lessons such as conversation lessons, reading, and especially written work. Spelling should be a *written exercise* in the main. Pupils should not be expected to spell a word orally - rather allow them time to write the word and then to spell it. Altho the value of the auditory and kinesthetic methods is not denied, the visual aspect is stressed. For this reason ample use is made of the flash card (tachistoscope) techniques.

The time allocated for the regular teaching of spelling in the primary school is as follows:

Grades to standard I: 5x10 minutes, i.e. 50 minutes per week.

Standard II to V: 5x12 minutes, i.e. 60 minutes a week.

Clear instructions with regard to the teaching of spelling are given for each year from the grades to standard V in which the whole aspect is approached in a systematic and scientific way to ensure success in spelling if followed conscientiously.

Spelling furthermore is one of the aspects tested in the standardized scholastic tests of the Department. This underlines the policy of the Department and also has a certain degree of diagnostic value for the class teacher. The test of the multiple choice type, consisting of four distractors which are words spelt correctly, and the correct response, that is the word spelt incorrectly, which is to be recognized by the testee.

For promotion purposes in the primary school, spelling is regarded as an integral part of the whole, counting 15% of the total promotion mark for the home language from the grades up to and including standard V.

During January, 1966, an experiment with the i.t.a. has been started in the first grade in five English medium primary schools. The Department of Education is providing all the facilities.

After five months the carefully planned project is running smoothly. At this stage it is not possible to draw conclusions."

(4) Education Department of South West Africa (Free office translation)

The Pitman Initial Teaching Alphabet is not used in our European schools. Spelling is treated as an integral part of language training. Pupils who experience difficulties, are assisted individually.

The Pitman i.t.a. is also not used in the non-European schools. Provision has been made in the syllabus and time-table for spelling as an integral part of language training. The orthodox method of training namely in the form of dictation and spelling is applied. Even in the examinations of standard VI (8 years in school) provision is made for dictation and spelling.

The method of writing of non-European schools is even more phonetic than Afrikaans. It is also the policy of the Language Board to keep it as far as possible in this form.

(5) The South African Academy for Science and Art.

**(Die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns) free office translation.**

The spelling of Afrikaans is in fact much more phonetic than English or French, but is not completely phonetic. In this regard it might be compared with German or Dutch.

No governmental commission which must regulate the spelling of Afrikaans exists. There is a so-called Language Commission appointed by the South African Academy for Science and Art which gives rulings on spelling problems as they occur. Decisions taken are as far as possible being made within the scope of the accepted philological principles.

The Language Commission altho a body of the South African Academy for Science and Art, also receives a subsidy from the government. The Commission published since 1917 seven editions of its Afrikaanse Woordelys en Spelreë (Afrikaans Word list and Spelling rules) (the 7th edition in 1964) and continues to work uninterruptedly. The Commission first consisted of 3 members but now has 12 members, all of them philologists.

(6) Department of Coloured Affairs

"I have to inform you that the official languages for Coloureds are the same as for Whites, namely Afrikaans and English. Afrikaans is a reasonably phonetic language, but teaching of spelling in this language is often neglected. No test results are available in English.

There is a noticeable retardation in Afrikaans spelling of Coloured children in urban areas due probably to the influence of the city and the socioeconomic background.

As the syllabuses in both languages are similar to those prescribed for Whites, there are no problems other than experienced in schools for Whites, except perhaps that many Coloured pupils are bilingual, but not at the first grade level."

(7) Department of Indian Affairs

"In regard to spelling the method used in all schools i.e. European and Indian, is the traditional method."

(7) Department of Bantu Education

"For Bantu pupils in South Africa, English (as also Afrikaans) is a *second* language. As mother tongue they use one or another of the 7 recognized Bantu languages of the country such as Xhosa, Sotho, Zulu, etc.

In these schools, one of the Bantu languages is always used as the *medium* of instruction thruout the first eight years of schooling. English and Afrikaans, however are caught as languages from the very beginning, according to the following general plan:

Sub-standard A (First year): oral work only.

Sub-standard B (Second year): oral and reading.

Standard I (Third year): oral, reading and the beginnings of written work.

It is apparent, therefore, that spelling problems come to the front only in the second and third years. The major cause of these problems is the lack of any definite one-to-one relationship between sound and the written symbol in English. Spelling difficulties are intensified by children using non-standard English pronunciation, because of inherent contrasts between the phonetic sound systems of the Bantu languages and English.

Pronunciation difficulties centre mainly around the 11 vowels, and particularly-

(a) the stressed and unstressed neutral vowel [ə]

(b) the distinction between /e/ and /a/ as in *bed* and *bad*.

(c) the distinction between short and long as in *bed-bead*, *pot-port*, *head-heard*, etc.

There are also difficulties of syllable-stress and the general stress and intonation patterns of sentences. These pronunciation and general speech difficulties together with inherent difficulties of the English writing system make spelling a considerable problem in the schools. In general the methods used by the teachers are the conventional "look-and-say" method in reading, together with word-building exercises and spelling drills.

In the Bantu schools of Johannesburg, however, over the past three years an experiment in the use of "pronunciation spelling" in reading has been in progress. This has a similar theoretical rationale to the Pitman Initial Teaching Alphabet, but has been adapted to the special needs of second language learners."

[*Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1966 pp11-14 in the printed version*]

[\* = i.t.a. notation with non-keyboard characters, usually joined versions of the two letters given.]

## **8. An Experimental Use of Pitman's 'World i.t.a.' in the Teaching of English as a Second Language, by J. O. O. Abiri.**

Prof. of Education, Inst. of Educ., Univ. of Ibadan, Nigeria.

(A paper read at the Third International i.t.a. Conference, Churchill College, Cambridge, Eng. July, 1966. This paper refers to an experiment which is designed for a three to four year period, of which only about six months have been completed. It is therefore mainly descriptive of plans and aims and problems already encountered, rather than of results obtained).

### **A Brief Preface, by Helen Bowyer.**

Nigeria is a squarish block of West African territory fronting on the Gulf of Guinea, that vast indentation of the South Atlantic Ocean which witnessed so much of the old slave trade. Its area is some 357,000 square miles, about 160% of that of France, whose former dependencies surround it on its three landward sides. Its population of 57 million roughly equals that of the United Kingdom, with which it is now affiliated as an independent republic within the Commonwealth.

Its predisposition to Britain rather than to France goes back to 1807 when the slave trade became illegal for any British subject. In 1885 the then powerful British Empire established a sort of protectorate over much of Nigeria's present territory - a protectorate strengthened in 1914 by the exigencies of the First World War. Altho some 40% of the people were Moslems in religion, there have been enuf English speaking missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, to make English the language of instruction in the post- primary grades of the native schools, and more and more *the lingua franca* of the towns. So it was natural, when, in 1963, Nigeria took its place in the British Commonwealth - and in the U.N. that English should become its official language, and every effort should be made to teach it to the 250 different tribes and lingual groups which makes up its population.

For the most part, these tribes are still very clannish, each intensely loyal to its own ancient customs and traditions, each strongly disapproving of intermarriage with other tribes-and, in general, feeling itself vastly superior to all others. Most of their people live in primitive villages, scattered over their tribal domain and make their living thru their flocks and herds and the fork-and-hoe cultivation of a limited range of crops. Polygamy is still widely practiced and both the Moslem and Christian religions are substratumed by ancient superstitions and ingrained from which even the educated Nigerian rarely wholly frees himself. Childhood is ordinarily a happy memory so that even that minority of the tribes who early seek their livelihood in the towns look forward to spending their declining years in the ancestral community.

Of the welter of tribal and linguistic groups, the Yorubas are among the largest and the least primitive, centering as they do around Lagos, the Federal Capital, and around the town of Ibadan, the site of an important university. For these and other cogent reasons, it was decided to start among them the first large experiment in the Commonwealth countries of Africa.

But since only six months of the project had been completed when Mr. Abiri wrote his account of it for the Third International i.t.a. Conference, this issue of the SPB is giving only the first half of his story -the half which deals with the preparatory stage of the project. Six months of actual classroom



operation is too brief a time for any true evaluation of its results, so the editors have asked Mr. Abiri for an article in the Spring number, which will bring this fascinating Yoruba i.t.a. project more nearly up to date.

## **I. Introduction.**

Consequent upon a request by Sir James Pitman and a decision taken at the Commonwealth Education Conference in Ottawa, Canada in 1964, to conduct a thoro and scientifically controlled experiment aimed at ascertaining the potentialities of the Initial Teaching Alphabet for English language teaching in African Commonwealth countries, it was further agreed that the experiment should be carried out in Nigeria. The results obtained from such an experiment, it was expected, would serve as a basis for determining the suitability of this medium for second language teaching in other English-speaking African countries and elsewhere. An opportunity was offered for launching the experiment when, in 1965, the British Ministry for Overseas Development made available, by means of a grant, the funds for conducting this experiment to be based at the University of Ibadan, and under the direction of Prof. A. Taylor, Director of the Institute of Education at the Univ.

With due consideration for the special requirements of foreign language teaching, Sir James Pitman had designed a variant of the i.t.a. which is known as 'World i.t.a.'. This variant is being used in the Ibadan experiment. It may be observed here that ordinary i.t.a. - and by this I mean the i.t.a. most of us are familiar with - as distinguished from 'World i.t.a.' does not provide clues for syllabic stress patterns which constitute a very important element of English speech. The development of any reliable method for the indication by such stress patterns is of particular importance for those learning English as a foreign language, since such learners often lack reliable models [\[1\]](#) to imitate in the learning situation. To this lack of reliable models must be added the difficulties arising from the interference of the characteristics of the learner's mother tongue in his efforts to articulate English speech patterns with their conventional rhythm. This tendency is further heightened in the case of West Africans, most of whose languages are devoid of any semantically or otherwise significant stress patterns. The Yoruba language of Western Nigeria, for example, is tonal and does not employ stress patterns in colloquial speech nor for the indication of various nuances of meaning.

In arriving at a suitable medium for indicating syllabic stress, Sir James rejected the devices of the International Phonetic Alphabet and various other alternatives, including the use of colour and of diacritical markings such as dots and dashes placed in relation to the i.t.a. characters. He finally decided that the essential configuration of individual characters as in ordinary i.t.a. should be left as far as possible undisturbed. Altho it may well be presumptive for me to expatiate, however briefly, on ordinary i.t.a. in such a gathering as this, it is appropriate to outline the essential characteristics and principles of 'World i.t.a.' in so far as they differ from ordinary i.t.a.

## **II. World i.t.a.**

Exactly the same characters as in ordinary i.t.a. are used in 'World i.t.a.'. The distinguishing feature in the latter is that characters representing stressed syllables are printed in larger type than those representing unstressed syllables. Two types of stress and two of unstressed syllables are distinguished.

(a) *Stressed syllables*: (1) Syllables which normally receive primary stress in ordinary speech are printed in large thick (i.e. bold) characters. (2) Secondarily stressed syllables are printed in as large, but not so thick, characters as those used for primarily stressed syllables. [\[2\]](#)

(b) *Unstressed syllables* which contain the neutral vowel sound (ə) [3] as in the initial syllable of *about* and the final syllable of *data*, are printed in smaller characters on the same base-line as the larger characters, i.e. their bottom is level with the bottom of the larger characters. All such unstressed syllables (excepting those included in category (2) below) are treated in this way, because they all tend to be euded, in a greater or less degree, to the neutral sound (ə). [3] (2) All unstressed syllables containing the sound (i), as in the initial syllable of *equator* and the final syllables of *rabbit* and *market*, are also printed in small characters (as for (1) above), but *above* the base-line. That is, the top of these small characters is level with the top of the large characters used for stressed syllables. All unstressed syllables, the stressed versions of which contain the sounds /e/, /æ/, /\*ee/, and /i/, are included in this category.

(c) *Primary Rules for Syllabification:*

Division of words into syllables in 'World i.t.a.' is determined primarily on the principle of 'consonant plus vowel'. But the following exceptions to this principle may be noted:

(1) Words which stand as words on their own provided they are related in meaning to the root word, are regarded as syllables, as in the first parts of the words *work/er*, *ward/er*, *act/ive*, and *hill/ock*. This rule is intended to facilitate word building by emphasizing the structure of words, and to aid comprehension of what is read.

(2) As a corollary to the exception described in (1) above, the following endings are always regarded as separate syllables.

-ed (past tense of verbs ending in *t* and *d*; i.e. wherever the *ed* ending is sounded, as in *add/ed*, and *act/ed*, but not in *work/ed* or *roll/ed*).

-er (as in words like *driv/er*, *sing/er*, *teach/er*).

-es (plural ending in which the -es ending is sounded, as in *hous/es* and *pag/es*, but not in *gates*, *lakes*).

-'s (possessive ending of words having a final *s*-sound, e.g. *horse/'s*, *class/'s*, *Alice/'s*).

-ing (present participial ending, e.g. *us/ing*, *feed/ing*, *go/ing*).

-er (comparative ending, as in *near/er*, *fast/er*, but not in *better* because *bett-* is not the root).

-est (superlative ending, as in *quick/est*, *tall/est*).

-ly (adverbial ending, as in *principal/ly*, *actual/ly*).

(3) Double consonants are split medially, except where this would conflict with (1) above, e.g. *fol/low*, *mat/ter*; but note: *fall/ing*, *quick/est*, *tall/er*.

(d) *Stressing*: No general and consistent rules can be laid down for the determination of stressed and unstressed syllables. Indeed, individuals will vary, situations will vary and would in other cases be different, yet be correct. Some guidance is, however, provided by means of suggestions in section 3 of the Teachers' Manual to NNE (Part 1). Thus, *an* acceptable stress pattern is all that can be indicated -with the reservation that there can be others no less acceptable in the differing circumstances.

### III. Design of the Experiment.

The experiment is designed for a three- to four-year period. An experimental group use world i.t.a. symbols in their reading and writing until they are judged, by means of their fluency and confidence in the use of these skills, to be ready for transfer to the use of traditional orthography (T.O.). A

roughly equivalent number of pupils, as far as possible similar in all significant respects to the experimental group, and using the same text-books and the same materials as the latter, form the control group. The only difference should be that the experimental group read and write English through world i.t.a. whilst the control group do so through T.O.

The New Nation English Course is used for English, the Oxford Arithmetic Course for Arithmetic and the Alawiye readers for Yoruba. All the pupil's text-books and the Teacher's Notes as well as other teaching aids such as letter cards and wall pictures are supplied free to all participating classes.

Final comparisons as between experimental and control groups will be made only when the experimental group have transferred effectively to T.O.

#### **IV. Aims of the Experiment.**

The main aims of the experiment may be briefly stated:

- (1) To compare 'World i.t.a.' and T.O. (Traditional Orthography) in their effectiveness as means of teaching reading and other language skills such as comprehension, pronunciation, stress patterns, spelling, writing composition and reading speed.
- (2) To detect and define any difficulties met in transferring to traditional orthography (T.O.).
- (3) To establish and define any difficulties met by teachers in using World i.t.a.
- (4) To evaluate any relative influences of intellectual ability on progress in learning to read through World i.t.a. and T.O.
- (5) To evaluate the relative influences of parents' educational background and the linguistic and social environment on the children's progress in learning to read through World i.t.a. and T.O.
- (6) To evaluate any influences of the learner's sex on progress in learning to read through World i.t.a. as compared with T.O.
- (7) To evaluate the relative attitudes of children toward reading through World i.t.a. and T.O., as well as the possible generalization of such attitudes to school.
- (8) To evaluate the transfer effects of World i.t.a. on the learning of Yoruba and Arithmetic as compared with T.O.
- (9) To detect and define relative difficulties caused by learning Yoruba symbols at the same time as English thru World i.t.a. and T.O.
- (10) To determine the relationship between age and progress in learning English thru World i.t.a. as compared with T.O.

#### **V. Population.**

There are about 1166 pupils participating in this experiment of whom about 463 are in the schools on the outskirts of Ibadan and about 702 are in the mainland area of Lagos. Of this number, 81% are five to six-year old pupils in their first year of attendance at schools, whilst 19% (entirely in the Ibadan area) are seven-year old second-year pupils. These in the Ibadan area are predominately from illiterate peasant families, whilst those in the Lagos area are children of civil servants, teachers, small and big business men, soldiers, policemen, technicians, craftsmen, and men in the professions, and most of them have at least one parent who is literate either in English or one of the Nigerian languages.

Originally, eight schools on the outskirts of Ibadan were allocated for participation in the experiment following a request which was made to the Western Nigerian Ministry of Education. Two of these schools which were inaccessible were dropped. After considering doubts which had

been expressed as to the most suitable class-primary I or primary II - for starting English teaching, it was decided to include both classes in each of the schools in the Ibadan area. As a result of the difficulties arising from frequent change of teachers, difficulty of access, and the combination of both primaries I and II under one teacher, one school in the Ibadan area was dropped from participation in the experiment in May and two other schools were then added. The distribution of pupils in participating classes in the Ibadan area (in July, 1966) is shown in table 8. This table shows that of 464 pupils in the Ibadan group, 242 are in the experimental, and 222 in the control groups. Of the 242 pupils in the experimental group, 158 (i.e. 96 in Primary I and 62 in Primary II) are boys, whilst 84 (i.e. 54 in Primary I and 30 in Primary II) are girls. Of the 222 in the control group, 142 (i.e. 61 in Primary I and 81 in Primary II) are boys, whilst 80 (i.e. 30 in Primary I and 50 in Primary II) are girls. There are therefore 300 boys and 164 girls in this area.

Sixteen Infant I classes from 14 schools in the mainland area of Lagos were also allocated for participation in the research program by the Department of Education of the Lagos City Council, with the consent and cooperation of the Federal Ministry of Education. Each of the schools had several Infant I classes, only one of which was selected, excepting two schools where two classes each were selected so that one class could serve as an experimental group and the other as control. Table II shows the distribution of pupils in the Lagos area (as in July 1966). Out of the 702 pupils participating in this area, 390 are in the experimental and 312 in the control groups. Of those in the experimental group, 177 are boys and 213 are girls, whilst 168 of those in the control group are boys and 144 are girls. Thus, there are 345 boys and 357 girls in the Lagos group. The combined distribution for the two areas is shown in Table III.

Altho the original intention was to include only Yoruba-speaking pupils, it was found that this could not be done in the Lagos area, where large proportions of the population in the schools are non-Yoruba-speaking pupils. Another problem which arose was that one of the schools this area, by policy uses English as a medium of instruction from the first year, and therefore would not teach Yoruba orthography. Clause 9 and part of clause 8 of the aims of the present research can therefore not be fulfilled in that school. The schools are, however, quite enthusiastic about the project and are giving us their full cooperation.

## **VI. Teachers.**

Teachers in the Lagos area are mainly holders of Grade II teachers' certificate whilst those in the Ibadan area include a high proportion of holders of Grade III certificate.

In order to familiarize the teachers with the aims, principles and symbols of World i.t.a., the class teachers concerned and the heads or sub-heads of the participating schools were given a week-long course at the beginning of this year (1966). The teachers in the Ibadan area attended the course at the Olunloyo College of Education during the Christmas holidays, and those in Lagos were given the course at St. Jude's School, Ebute-Metta, early in the first term.

Teachers of both the experimental and control classes attended the courses, and allocations to experimental or control groups were not made until the last day of the course. This procedure was aimed at balancing any operation of the Hawthorne Effect. The teachers were very enthusiastic, and one teacher in the Lagos area embarrassed us by choosing to withdraw from the experiment rather than use T.O., so that we had to include her class in the experimental group. A number of other teachers, however, expressed fears that the use of the i.t.a. symbols would jeopardize accurate spelling in T.O. later.

A minor set-back arose early in the year when we found that several of the teachers in the Ibadan group who had been trained to use i.t.a. had either been transferred or had resigned from the schools allocated for the experiment in spite of assurances previously given by the education authorities of the respective Missions. Emergency training programmes had to be organized for their successors. It must be said, however, that the missions cooperated admirably by arranging to replace those who had resigned or had been transferred with other suitable teachers. Because of the changes of staff as well as for the benefit of the teachers of the classes which were added in May, a two-day refresher course was organized in June for the participating teachers in Ibadan and the heads of their schools.

It may be observed that apart from skills gained in writing and reading i.t.a. symbols and in transliterating from T.O. into World i.t.a., the teachers derived other immense benefits from the courses. Their awareness of the separate sound units and stress patterns of English was increased and their pronunciation was obviously improved. This is worthy of note because most primary school teachers in Nigeria normally do not show sufficient skill in these aspects of English speech to serve as adequate models for their pupils. To that extent the teachers of the control classes will have become less representative of those who would ordinarily be teaching their classes in T.O. This further ensures that any differences between experimental groups would be, as far as possible, attributable only to those between the media used, viz. World i.t.a. and T.O.

## **VII. Present State of the Experiment.**

*Pre-Testing:* Early in the first term, all the pupils in the research programme were given both verbal and sensorimotor tests of intellectual ability. The tests used were those previously developed and standardized for southern Nigerian populations by a research worker in the Institute of Education at Ibadan. This will serve as a basis for comparing the relative influence of both verbal and non-verbal intellectual ability on performance in World i.t.a. and T.O. Basic reading tests in English and Yoruba as well as a Number Test were also given to the pupils so that interpretation of their performance later may be made in the light of their previous levels of achievement in the various subjects.

*Class work:* All the pupils in the experiment started with oral English so that they would have some reasonable knowledge of spoken English before they begin to read and write. *'The Key to New Nation English'* provides the material for the oral lessons, and is supplemented by NNE wall pictures as well as the pictures in the NNE Pre-Reader. By the beginning of the second term, (May 1966), the pupils in primary II (these are in Ibadan only) had started reading some words in NNE Pre-Reader. Writing was also introduced in this class towards the end of the first term, and most of them are now writing i.t.a. symbols. Those in Primary and Infant I, however, have been learning only Yoruba alphabets so far while they continue to receive constant practice in spoken English. The spoken passages in *The Key to NNE* have been transliterated into World i.t.a. in order to guide the teachers both in their pronunciation and stress patterns. These transliterations have been given to the teachers of the experimental groups only. Teachers of the experimental primary II classes often pick sentences from the transliterated passages for writing practice.

The teaching of Arithmetic and Yoruba is meanwhile progressing almost uniformly in all the classes. The pupils' textbooks and the teachers' notes in the three subjects - viz - English, Yoruba, and Arithmetic - have been supplied free to all participants. The Oxford Arithmetic course is supremely suitable because since the first two books are devoid of any words, there has been no necessity for transliterating them into World i.t.a.

Many schools were slow in starting instruction in the first term. In some schools in the Ibadan area, the teachers had no registers and no pieces of chalk. About a third of the pupils in one school in the same area were absent because they were suffering from attacks of Guinea worm. In the Lagos area, at least three schools were late in starting owing to shortage of class-rooms for their Infant I pupils. One school in particular had about 300 Infant I pupils whereas it could provide room for only about 180; so that for weeks the whole number had to be squeezed into narrow spaces before the overspill were eventually transferred to another school. Most of the schools in the Lagos area are overcrowded, and instruction has to be shouted to the pupils over the confused din around. Classes are thinly partitioned, and movements in one class can easily affect the work in another. But, on the other hand, the schools here appear to be better organized, better staffed and equipped than those in the Ibadan area. Another constant cause of disruption was teachers going on maternity leave. In one school, the teacher of a participating class was taken to another class in the same school to relieve a teacher who was away on maternity leave, and it required the intervention of the Education authorities to rectify this aberration.

One thing which clearly stands out, however, is the ready cooperation of the teachers and heads of participating schools, the Education Department of the Lagos City Council, the Education authorities of the Missions or other bodies directly controlling the schools, and the Education Inspectorate (at least since May) for the Ibadan area. With their continued support and cooperation the research project is likely to achieve fruitful results.

#### **VIII. Summary and Conclusions.**

Over 1000 boys and girls between the ages of 5½ and 7½ are now participating in a three-year programme of experimentation with 'World i.t.a.' in certain schools at Ibadan and Lagos. The aim of the experiment is to study the relative effectiveness of 'World i.t.a.' as a medium for the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language, and the possible effects of this on certain other school subjects as well as on personality variables.

A good footing has been established for the research programme in spite of initial difficulties, and there are bright hopes of achieving the aims of the experiment. But since so much of the basic materials have to be supplied to the schools, since numbers are large, and since the experiment is now proceeding in two different areas, expenses are mounting steadily, and it can only be hoped that sufficient funds will be available to carry on the experimentation to the point of fruition.

#### ***Comments on i.t.a. symbols.***

Perhaps it will be all right to suggest a slight alteration in i.t.a. orthography in the light of my observation of its use in Nigeria. The suggestion is that, since the symbols /i/ and /y/ are used alternately, the choice being determined by the T.O. form, the symbols /\*oi/ and /\*oy/ should also be used alternatively. This would involve the addition of the symbol /\*oy/, but I believe there is more to be gained than would be lost by increasing the number of i.t.a. symbols.

#### **Notes.**

[1] *Teacher problems are discussed later in this paper.*

[2] Illustrated with slides of printed pages of Book One of the New Nation English course (in World i.t.a.)

[3] *I.P.A. Notation.*

## 9. The Advantages of an International Language, by R. E. Zachrisson\*

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The idea of establishing an international language, which is to be commonly known and used by the side of the native tongues, is coming more and more to the front.

It cannot be denied that such a language would be highly profitable to the whole human race. What tends to separate the nations more than anything else is ignorance of one another, which fosters suspicion, fear, hatred-and war. This ignorance would be to some extent dispelled, if citizens of different nations were able to communicate more freely and exchange thoughts with one another. It deserves being pointed out that for more than a hundred years there has been no war between England and the United States or between the Scandinavian countries. The common language has been the guardian of peace. Internationalism is the watch-word of the day. People from all parts of the world are continually meeting to discuss matters of international importance. How much more practical it would be from every point of view, if one language understood by everybody could be used instead of the babel of tongues that is now prevailing. No less would trade and industry prosper by the adoption of an international language. An efficient commercial training now presupposes knowledge of at least three or four modern languages, whereas one would suffice.

Moreover literary masterpieces and scientific works, no matter from what country they hail, would be accessible to the whole world. A world language has also an important social mission to fulfil. It will help to bridge the gulf between what DISRAELI called 'the two Nations.' It will give confidence and strength to those who know it. It will help to improve, socially and commercially, the position of those who take the trouble to learn it. For knowledge is power. In short, *an international language would prove to be a most valuable asset toward the maintenance of the world's peace, the prosperity of nations, and the spreading of culture and enlightenment all over the world.*

### An Artificial or a Living Language?

The big question is whether an artificial or a living language is to be preferred. An artificial language has the advantage of being neutral, i.e. not subject to national jealousies, and is somewhat more easily learnt than any living language, because they are made more regular.

On the other hand, there are some very serious drawbacks to the adoption of an artificial language. As a vehicle of thought it is naturally vastly inferior to a living one. The most attractive features of a living language - suggestive power, flexibility, richness of vocabulary, stylistic nicety in expressing the subtlest shades of meaning - are irretrievably lost. Even the supporters of e.g. Esperanto admit that the dictionary is incredibly small. The mere knowledge of an artificial language will not give insight into a people's soul, it cannot open up the vistas of culture, science and thought which they may rejoice in who master one of the great languages of the world. It is a language called into life by means of artificial respiration, a linguistic correspondence to what Hamlet called 'a king of shreds and patches.'

World-famous linguists, such as BRUGMANN, LESKIEN, MEYER, THOMSEN and JESPERSEN, have shown that Esperanto is unsatisfactory both in regard to its phonology and its forms. It may be a language, but it cannot aspire to the honour of being called full human speech. For this it is not expressive enough. The Swedish Socialist leader, HJALMAR BRANTING, who was a man of unusual common sense, never believed in Esperanto. What would become of the League of Nations, if all speakers were forced to express themselves, not in their native language,

but in a faked idiom incapable of rendering those subtle and at the same time precise shades of meaning which the vocabulary of international agreements find so necessary. All negotiations would come to a standstill, and ten years' hard work for the improvement of the world's affairs would be wasted. Unfortunately, the advocates of Esperanto do not realize that their watchword is: "When everybody cannot be equally well-off, everybody must at least be equally badly off." And they continue to offer us crumbs instead of the whole loaf of bread.

In spite of a propaganda of truly gigantic proportions, Esperanto has not made much headway during the 40 years it has existed. It succeeded Volapyk, which then reckoned about "2½ million followers and supporters" (LESKIEN). To obtain exact statistical figures for the use of Esperanto is extremely difficult. On the basis of official calculations made by the General Secretariat of the League of Nations (*Esperanto as an International Auxiliary Language*, p. 27), there were in the year 1922 about half a million people still alive of those who had followed Esperanto courses. It is pointed out, however, that out of one hundred persons who have learnt the language, there are probably not half a dozen who are members of the Esperanto propaganda societies. If we assume that about one fourth of those who have followed courses are able to speak the language fluently, we arrive at the figure 125,000 for the year 1922. I have not been able to obtain official or reliable figures for later years.

It is maintained by Esperantists that their language is at least eight times easier to learn than any living language. Opinions may differ on this. *Bonvojn addoni la fakturon kaj aksepti miaj sincerajn salutojn*, is in English: *Kindly enclose the invoice, and accept my sincere salutations*. 'But this is very much the same in both languages,' says the man in the street. 'No,' answers the Esperantist; 'it is eight times easier to learn in Esperanto than in English.' In other words, 'two twos are five!' I know a good many languages, but I cannot, without a good deal of previous study, either read or translate the following sentence which is given as the first reading specimen in a well-known Swedish Primer of Esperanto: *'Ho, fraŭlino, kiel mi estas ĝoia vidi vin tie ĉi.*

The English Esperanto Report remarks: 'In certain circumstances Esperanto might maintain a claim to become the second language of the elementary school, but until its employment in ordinary life is more general, it is neither desirable nor to be expected that it should be taught in many schools.'

The report on Esperanto by the General Secretariat merely resulted in the following resolution by the Third Assembly of the League of Nations: 'That questions relating to the teaching of Esperanto be referred to the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation, in order that the Committee may give its opinion on the various aspects of the problem of an auxiliary language.' (Report, pp. 33,53).

The Swedish Riksdag has seven successive times rejected a proposal by MR. LINDHAGEN concerning measures to make Esperanto the World Language.

The efforts of the enthusiastic little brigade of Esperantists have as yet shown no greater importance than the idle pursuits of children in erecting impregnable strongholds out of sand at the beach.

Supposing, however, it would be possible to create an artificial language satisfying all theoretical demands, there is still one very practical difficulty to overcome which even the most ardent supporters of an artificial language cannot be entirely blind to. Is there any likelihood that the American and English Governments will recommend public instruction in any artificial language, when Americans and Englishmen *already master a language which is understood and spoken all over the world?*

A popular French wit used to say that as the man who tried to talk another language always is in danger of making a fool of himself, the Englishman always prefers that the other fellow be the fool.



Britishers, Americans and dwellers in the British Dominions are travelling in all lands, speaking English and in a very large percentage of cases refuse to learn or speak any other language. Under such circumstances, every effort to make Esperanto or any other artificial idiom the language of the world is doomed to be a failure.

It remains to be seen then if any living language can be used for this purpose. Here it is not difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion. *'No living language has a better claim than English, which is spoken by more than two hundred million people, and is the administrative language of live hundred millions, i.e. one third of the world's population.* It is already the chief language of the sea and commerce. It is taught in practically all the secondary schools in most civilized countries, and for this reason it is already the common property of the whole world. In Belgium, where one half the population speaks French, the other Flemish, there is a strong movement in favour of English as a common auxiliary language. English has a similar mission to fulfil in several other small but highly civilized countries such as Finland and Switzerland. The Swedish newspaper *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* has (Feb. 10, 19, 1929) made some interesting practical inquiries into the use of English in Sweden. It sounded representative men in banking, commerce, industry, the gramophone and cinema worlds, telephone and telegraph operators, police, taxi drivers, and a host of others. The result was that every fourth person addressed by the newspaper reporter in Stockholm, the Swedish capital, was able to understand or speak English. Import and export firms and industrial men in practically all branches said that certainly English has the greatest prospects of becoming a world language. In 65 out of 100 cases English is the language in which their foreign business has to be conducted. German takes a good second place, but while foreigners may use any language they like in writing to Sweden, a Swedish business man would, when writing to foreigners, always use English except to a correspondent resident in Germany. Book dealers informed the newspaper reporter that the greatest demand is for English and American literature, and at the Public Library an 'incredible inquiry' for English and American books is reported - modern American, classic English.

Moreover, English is a highly democratic language. The knowledge of English is fairly general among the sea-coast population in the Scandinavian countries, and in one Swedish province, Dalecarlia, there are provinces where English is fairly generally spoken. As an optional subject, English is taught in Dutch and in many German, Danish and Norwegian elementary schools. In a somewhat corrupted form English is spoken among the working classes in Japan and China (*Pidgin English* - 'Business English'), in the Isles of the Pacific (*Beche-de-mer* English, named after a snail looked upon as a great delicacy and exported from China to the Pacific Islands), and among the negroes of West Africa. In point of fact, English is spoken all over the world, with the exception of Slavic Eastern Europe and Asia Minor and South America, but here also it is gaining ground. Latvia has decided to adopt English as its second language; there is a marked increase in the study of English in Lithuania, and English is obligatory in the modern section of the Gymnasia of Rumania. (J.W. Hamilton, *World English* p. 6) In his reply to the inquiry of the Northern Peace Union, Prof. Amin Nedjib (Constantinople) remarked that every educated Turk speaks French, English, or German, and that both English and French are taught in the high schools. Prof. Carnoy (Louvain) says: 'The hold England has now on the Near East will be a decisive factor. French and Italian will gradually be replaced in the Mohammedan world by English. The final decision concerning Constantinople will not be indifferent, but from now on the chances of English are great in that part of the world, so that Europe is now besieged on both sides. The alliance with England and the intensification of the relations with the U.S.A. have greatly encouraged the learning of English among Romance language people. No German business man, on the other hand, will in the future omit to learn English thoroly. Among Czechs, Poles, Slovaks, Yougoslavs (and also Italians and Greeks), the emigration to the United States and the return into their homes of many of these

emigrants, which has already helped in spreading republican ideals, will do much for the popularity of English in Central Europe.'

*For simplicity of grammar and a cosmopolitan vocabulary, English has no rival. It answers perfectly to the definition of an international language which has been formulated by the Esperantists themselves., It is the easiest language for the greatest number of people.*

If you speak English, you will be understood by two hundred millions; if you speak Esperanto you will *perhaps* be understood by two hundred thousand people. With a fair knowledge of English, you can travel all over the world; with a perfect knowledge of Esperanto you cannot travel anywhere - without an interpreter. How useful is a language for which an interpreter is constantly needed?

### **Objections to English as an International Language**

The following objections have been raised to the adoption of English as an International language:

- (1) The other Great Powers, especially France and Germany, will not give their consent.**
- (2) it would box in injustice to the other countries.**
- (3) English is handicapped by its antiquated spelling, which is rather a disguise than a guide to the pronunciation.**

In sequence these objections will be answered.

With regard to France, it ought to be pointed out that even now English is much taught in French schools, and that recent events have much contributed towards cementing the relations between the two countries. The spread of English will only help to strengthen these interests, and the beautiful and expressive French language can continue to be the international language of diplomats and among the scientists. And Germany has much to gain by giving her consent. In certain German schools, English held a very strong position even before the war, and recently it has been introduced into some of the elementary schools. Germany's commercial relations with both America and England will pave the way for the reform advocated.' In this respect, trade is the greatest peace-maker in the world. We have already ascertained that many leading German politicians and educators are in favor of the plan.

Moreover, if all the smaller nations adopted English for a common language, France and Germany would, as Mr. KNUT SANDSTEDT has correctly pointed out, sooner or later have to follow suit.

More weighty is the objection that it would be an unfair advantage to America and England and an injustice to other countries if English was made the universal language. It is true that the English-speaking countries may gain in prestige, but they will not thereby obtain means of over-ruling the whole commercial commonwealth. A general knowledge of English would, from a merely commercial point of view, mean increased facilities not only to America and England but also to all other countries. Nor would a world-wide knowledge of English mean a monopoly in the realm of thought and letters, for as has already been suggested, all books of standard value would be translated into the international language, and consequently be accessible to all. This again would mean an advantage to small but highly civilized nations.

During sojourns in Germany and France, I have often spoken French with Italians, but I had no idea I was thus strengthening the grip of France over the world, or weakening the position of other countries. And it can hardly be seriously maintained that the power of England is materially increased by the fact that a Swede and a Turk, an Italian and a German, or say two Chinese diplomats, converse together in the English language.

The whole world has not been anglicized, altho English is even now, to a great extent, the international language of sailors, tourists, and business men.

The English, who as a rule carefully avoid making any propaganda for themselves, would be the last people in the world to agitate for such a state of things.

Nor is English in reformed spelling too difficult to be used for practical purposes. We have already proved by our Anglic courses that a working knowledge of English can be obtained very quickly. This is also proved by the hundred thousands of emigrants who have had to learn English in the U.S.A. without any previous knowledge of the language and with the tremendous handicap of a defective system of spelling.

### **Votes in Favour of World-English**

In 1920 Mr. KNLJT SANDSTEDT, general Secretary of the Northern Peace Union, sent a circular to a number of representative persons (mainly professors of Comparative Philology) and organizations (Parliaments, Peace Unions, Chambers of Commerce, etc.) outside England, France, and Germany, asking their opinions as to what language, dead or living or artificial, should be adopted as a secondary language. Out of fifty-nine replies, thirty were in favor of English. Only one reply favored Esperanto. The votes for English came from Sweden (six), Norway (six out of seven), Denmark (five out of nine), Holland (four out of five), Finland, Belgium, Austria, the Baltic Provinces, Turkey, Czecho-Slovakia, and Switzerland.

Other votes in favor of World-English have been collected by Mr. J. W. HAMILTON in his very interesting paper *World English or Cosmo English*, See. Ed., St. Paul, Minn. U.S.A. 1928.

It will be of interest to quote a few of these verdicts:

The Archbishop of Sweden, NATHAN SODERBLOM;

*So far as I can see, the English language has the greatest possibilities of becoming the World Language.*

Bishop N. OSTENFELD, (Copenhagen):

*According to my personal views, English is the most suitable to become the general language for correspondence and conversation.*

Professor I.J.S. TARAPOREWALA (Calcutta):

*I have been an Esperantist, but my great admiration for Esperanto and my deep veneration for Zamenhof should not prevent my declaring openly what I believe to be the truth. Of two things I am absolutely convinced, viz. (1) that a world-language must have grown naturally - it cannot be artificial, (2) that at the present day, English is the best adapted to be that language.*

Dr. LIM BOON KENG, President, Amoy University:

*In China we have practically adopted English. World English should defer as little as possible from Standard English. If in every foreign country it is decided to teach elementary English according to an agreed plan, approved by the International Committee, one of the great obstacles will be removed.*

Baron SAKATANI, International Service Bureau (Tokyo):

*Your plan to make English the secondary language of the world is very important, and it should be given more consideration in Japan. English is practically a second language in public, middle, and high schools here.*

The English Language Congress, Philadelphia, 1926:

*English is well qualified to be the International Auxiliary Language by the Internationality of its vocabulary, and by the extreme simplicity of its grammatical structure, as well as by the wide use which it already has; a simplified spelling will come as soon as it can be shown to the businessman that its use is financially advantageous; English is already the international language of the Pacific.*

Professor GILBERT MURRAY (Oxford):

*I am certainly in agreement with your specific practical suggestion: that we promote a movement to teach foreigners English by means of a phonetic alphabet.*

Mr. H. G. WELLS heartily approved the idea, suggesting a phonetic alphabet and urging the prompt appointment of a committee.

### **The Need for a Simplified Spelling**

Nearly 100 years ago, JACOB GRIMM, the world-famous philologist, expressed himself as follows on the chances of English as a world language: "When we consider its richness, intellectuality, and condensed adaptability, not one of all other living languages maybe placed at the side of English. *Did not a whimsical, antiquated orthography stand in the way, the universality of this language would be still more evident.*"

Not only Jacob Grimm but everybody who has had the time and opportunity of seriously considering these matters - from Queen Elizabeth's Chancellor Sir THOMAS SMITH, who in 1568 published the first printed work we possess on English spelling reform, till any modern representatives of English philology - will have to admit that of all languages of culture *English has the most antiquated, inconsistent, and illogical spelling.* It is *antiquated*, because it pictures a pronunciation which had become obsolete long before Shakespeare's time, it is *inconsistent* because its forty odd sounds are spelt in no less than 500 different ways, it is *illogical* because many of its forms, e.g., *debt, victuals, delight, heart, hearken* are false, in so far as they do not record pronunciations which were in current use at a very early date - such spellings are from a linguistic point of view mere Frankenstein monsters.

The various orthographical systems which have been framed recently for the purpose of reforming the English spelling are admirably thought out and are worthy of the greatest consideration, but unfortunately they either deviate too much from the existing spelling or *are as regards many details, in too incomplete a state to be used for immediate practical purposes.*

If we want to succeed we must work according to the maxim, "Build for the masses, and you will win."

This maxim applied to phonetic spelling of English can also be expressed pertinently as follows: *a maximum of efficiency with a minimum of change.*

For immediate practical purposes, our good judgement tells us that it will not be advisable to adopt an entirely phonetic alphabet with 42 letters or rather symbols for the 42 recognized sounds of the English language, or the addition of some 19 new symbols to the useful 23 Roman letters.

In the first place, this would at once bring to the fore the difficult question of divergencies in the many existing varieties of English speech, Northern British, Southern British, different kinds of American-English, and so on.

Secondly, such a spelling would have little practical value until some particular dialect was officially recognized in England and the United States as the *Standard Dialect*. In any case, it could not be used for English as an international auxiliary language, for it would not gain the confidence of Continental people anxious to learn one particular English (which English?). This points out the need for a system that will be common to all dialects - not so rigidly phonetic as to depend upon one dialect, and yet one that will be suitably recognized by all English speakers. And for this purpose, *no orthographical scheme can be adopted which does not admit of easy transition to a reading knowledge of the present conventional spelling*. (Ed. note: The truth of this statement is not self-evident and requires proof. It depends upon the degree of ease of transition).

Thirdly, a great many people will agree with me that the adoption of a phonetic alphabet for a language of such world-wide circulation as World-English is largely a matter of international agreement. At present, the Roman alphabet is used for practically all European languages. The adoption of a phonetic alphabet for English only, would tend to isolate this language and those who use it from all other European languages of culture. I see and fully appreciate the advantages of a phonetic alphabet for any ultimate co-operative scheme, and I am convinced that no entirely satisfactory solution to the whole spelling problem can be achieved until the States of Europe unite in recommending a common phonetic alphabet for their respective languages, but I cannot find that such a scheme has any immediate practicability.

Lastly, it can be shown that the Roman alphabet can be adopted for a reasonably phonetic spelling of English if we use not only single letters but also letter combinations in order to represent each particular sound in accordance with common usage.

Here again, a few modifications will have to be made (1) in order to keep the continuity with the present spelling, (2) in order to find a common means of representing the different kinds of pronunciation.

An entirely phonetic spelling of English, based upon the Roman alphabet, where 23 useful letters would have to do duty for at least 40 sounds, would make such a revolutionary and complete change on the printed page that even those who are converted to the principle of spelling reform might balk at its practice.

The great problem is to find an orthography which is phonetic in principle, but which at the same time bears sufficient resemblance to the present spelling so that the new system will be easy for present readers to make the transition from the old.

Anglic, which is based on an analysis of all English words in general use, supplies the demand for an *agreed method of simplified spelling without adding new letters to the alphabet*, and at the same time keeps a reasonably close continuity with the conventional orthography.

Anglic brings order into the present confusion by *generalizing the most common or serviceable of the existing spelling variants*, but necessarily introducing at the same time a few new digraphs (*un, dh, zh*), which have to do the duty of new letters.

The concessions\* made to the existing spelling consist chiefly in leaving about 40 of the commonest words unchanged as *word-signs* to be memorized, and in a few simple rules which minimize change in the familiar spellings of unstressed vowels. The net result is that *practically 60 to 75% of the words on an average printed page are left unchanged, at the same time that most of the practical advantages of complete and exact phonetic spelling reform are achieved. Space is saved to the extent of about one line on every page.*

\*These concessions consist of 40 rules for compromises to stay as close to T.O. as possible, plus 40 rules for pronunciation of letters (for foreign learners), plus 43 word-signs - non-phonetic words spelled as in T.O. - unchanged so as to make a less strange appearance in the printed page. It is by this subterfuge that he achieves the remarkable result of 60% of the words unchanged. This is partly because these 43 word-signs are among the most frequently occurring words on the printed page in random text. (Notes by the Editor).

**Anglic** is a simplified spelling of English which is carefully worked out and agreed upon in every detail and consequently can immediately be used for all practical purposes.

Our traditional orthography (T.O.) has more than 500 ways of spelling the 40 odd sounds that occur in English words in current use. Anglic has 50 letters or letter combinations to represent these sounds, and if we except the word-signs, 30 sounds are always written the same way.

If Anglic is taught, at least as an optional subject, in all continental elementary schools, if courses are arranged for adults to learn it all over the world, if it gains a world-wide currency through the talking film and the wireless, we shall have solved the problem of an international language. With its present spelling, English is too difficult to be commonly learnt by those who have not had the opportunity of a previous training in Secondary or Public Schools.

It will never be the vehicle of common speech, until its spelling is radically improved, whereas Anglic will be accessible to everybody after a few weeks or months of study. Anyone who is desirous of learning it will be able to do so and to write it with ease. Increased facilities to become acquainted with the World Language will be given to millions of people who cannot afford to throw away time and money in order to learn the present absurd English spelling. Primers in Anglic have been published, or are being published, for Germany, France, and Scandinavia. A dictionary is also in preparation, altho the main principles of the new system of spelling can easily be learnt from the 40 rules (omitted for lack of space). Americans and British will be able to read their mother tongue in the new spelling without any previous training. With a little practice, those who have learned Anglic will be able to read books in the ordinary orthography (which in some of the primers will be printed parallel with the text in Anglic).

Anglic, which represents sounds not by means of phonetic symbols but by the medium of the neutral Roman alphabet, *does not favor either the British or the American Standard Pronunciation*, but can be used in New York as well as in London, in Aberdeen as well as in San Francisco. In point of fact, Anglic is English spelt according to traditions which go back to CHAUCER and SHAKESPEARE, the two fountains of 'English undefiled.' A considerable number of its forms are met with in manuscripts of early literary works or in the correspondence of royalty and noblemen. Thus to give only a few illustrations, HENRY VIII repeatedly wrote *won* for one in holograph letters, and his daughter QUEEN ELIZABETH went in for such spellings as *stauke* for *stalk* and *clark*, *hart* for clerk, *heart*. Shakespeare and the Bible are good enough for me," says the average Englishman and raises his hands in holy horror at the very thought of spelling reform. But in the *Folio Edition* of Shakespeare's works, which at least in some cases reproduces his own orthography, we note *tach* for *touch*, *vane*, *hare*, *sale*, *tanted* for *vain*, *hair*, *sail*, *tainted*, and in contemporary letters and manuscripts we often see such spellings as *groe*, *bloe*, *dae* for *grow*, *blow*, *day*.

In the opinion of some scholars, phonetic spelling will help to maintain the purity of Standard English and check the invasion of Cockney and other degraded forms of speech which at present are threatening to establish themselves among all classes of the community. During repeated visits to London, I have had ample opportunities of studying the progress of this evil. It is true that habits of vulgar speech which originally were dialectal, such as the dropping of *h's* or the pronunciation of *like* as *loik*, are, as a rule, avoided by educated speakers. But the main features of Cockney,

especially the broad diphthongic pronunciation of such words as *name*, *go*, *be* and *do*, are rapidly finding their way into educated speech, and are freely used by men in eminent or leading positions, yea, even by scholars and educators. Masters at one of the best Public Schools in London pronounced *found* and *now* as *farnd* and *nar*, in blissful ignorance that they were pouring ditchwater into the 'well of English undefiled.' A world-famous divine treated his mother tongue exactly as if it had been a foreign language.

With the present 'beautiful' English spelling, the pronunciation of numerous so-called hard words is a mystery to the majority of the working classes. In a recently published article on English spelling Sir GEORGE HUNTER remarked: "I would add that our bad spelling causes bad pronunciation, encourages provincialisms, and discourages the diffusion among the people generally of purer and more consistent English speech. With a simple phonetic spelling, I think our working classes would insensibly learn to speak as good English as those who have been educated at our great public schools and universities."

Other Germanic languages often go in for phonetic spelling of loan-words in current use. Witness *poäng* (point), *rut* (route), *byffé* (buffet), *byrå* (bureau) in Swedish, and *Scharm* (charm), *Maschine* (machine), *Zirkas* (circus), *kapriziös* (capricious), *Kapazität* (capacity) in German, to mention only a few cases. No other country has been so unfortunate in its spelling as England. Those who were primarily responsible, i.e. the XIVth and XVth century scribes of the Royal Chancery of London, the early printers, and last but not least, Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, showed a denseness and lack of adaptability in matters orthographical which led to the wholesale adoption of foreign words, especially from French. The spelling of these new words was seldom changed to conform to the rules of the native words. With the revival of learning, things grew even worse. It was then that such etymological or quasi-etymological forms as *debt*, *doubt*, *receipt*, *victuals*, *advance*, *enterprins(!)*, *abominable* were introduced. It is characteristic of the English attitude toward spelling reform that nearly all these anomalies were allowed to remain even after they were shown to be incorrectly derived.

Thus it should be clear that the present English spelling prevents the English people from learning and using fully their own language, and retards the chances of English as an international commercial language, which again leads to increased unemployment and a deterrent of trade not only in England and the United States but in the whole world. It is incumbent on those who have to look after the needs of the people, to remove as soon as possible this unrealized obstacle to social welfare and national prosperity. *Videant consules - - - !*

On more than one occasion history has taught us that the English-speaking race is broad-minded enough to sacrifice cherished ideas and personal prejudices in order to serve a noble cause, which will benefit the whole world, thus living up to the proud motto of every successor to the throne of England - ICH DIEN.

Spelling reforms have been passed in Germany and Sweden, systems of phonetic spelling have been adopted for Turkish, Russian, and designed for Chinese, but England and the United States persist in inflicting their antiquated and illogical orthography not only on their own kith and kin but also on everybody who wishes to travel in or do business with their countries.

A few years ago a petition for a reform of the English spelling was signed by 15,000 people: public men, scholars, and educators. From a postcard pool conducted by Commander CARLYON BELLAIRS, R.N., M.P., it appears that 142 Members of Parliament were in favor of spelling reform. In 1924, a Memorial on Spelling Reform was presented to the Rt. Hon. C. P. TREVELYAN, President of the Board of Education. Mr. Trevelyan in replying to the deputation stated that he approached the problem with an open mind. No one could have any doubt about the

difficulties of the present system. The problem was how to improve upon it. He felt that no commission could be expected to find a scientific solution, unless the supporters of spelling reform were able, as a preliminary, to decide upon an agreed and definite scheme. (Ed. note: the illogicality of this statement should be obvious). This obstacle is now removed. Anglic is such a scheme settled in every detail, purified from every doubt and ambiguity.

Should all appeals to common sense be in vain, we shall have to fall back upon Mr. HAMILTON's splendid suggestion that the new spelling should be adopted only *for the purposes of World English*, i.e. in all parts of the world where English is *not* the native speech of the population. In this way the value of the two systems of orthography could be tested by practical comparison. In a few years' time we shall then have a language in every respect fitted to be the common vehicle of speech and thought, infinitely superior to the imperfect instruments which now usurp the name but do not perform the work required of an international language.

### Some Notes on Anglic

In presenting an easy, simple, phonetic scheme for English spelling on the basis of the Roman alphabet, it is very important to choose letters or letter combinations

- (1) which are unambiguous, i.e. can only be pronounced in one way,
- (2) which suggests to the English reader the pronunciation they are meant to convey,
- (3) which are not too strange or offensive to the eye,
- (4) which will not deter people abroad from learning the new spelling by its deviating too much from the old.

Anglic, fixed at the London Conference, June 1930, has all these features.

The following alternatives were not *adopted* by the Conference for reasons stated below.

1. *th* written for both the sound in *think* and in *father*. With such a scheme, there will be numerous words on every printed page which are not spelt phonetically. The fact that *the, this, that, then, etc. are kept as word-signs*, makes *dh* a comparatively rare, and for this reason, not too offensive spelling.

2. *iu* (*Yu, en*) for *me*. We took upon *iu* as an ambiguous and consequently not phonetic spelling. Note the different pronunciations of *iu* in *nim, endiur, fiutiur, jeniuin* (ju:), and in *seerius, biutius, oedius* (iə). *Yu* is also ambiguous. Ex. *yumer* (ju:m or jəm?). *Eu* is a rare, learned spelling, cumbersome and strange in such words as: *eus* (use), *deual* (dual), *meuteual* (mutual), etc.

3. *y* for *ie* is ambiguous, as it must be used both for in *yes, yeast, yield, yonder, lawyer*, etc., and for (ai) in *ion, iodine, iambic, Ionic, Isis, I'll, isle, enticed, iron* (yon, yodyn, yambik, Yonik, Ysis Y'l y'l, entyst, yern) etc. Such spellings as *syt* (sight), *fyt* (fight), *yst* (iced) hardly suggest to the English reader the pronunciation of long-i (ai), and *yern* (iron) is confusable with *yurn* (yearn).

4. *ai* for *ae* is easily associated, with such vulgar spellings as *maik, taik*, and is neither pretty nor serviceable in the usual combination (eii), e.g. *betraiiing, staiing, paiing, daiis, laiik, kaios*; *i* is a length mark only in *rain, maid*, etc., spellings which are few in number compared with *name, day*. After the time of Chaucer, *-e* came to be generally looked upon as a length mark. This very much speaks in favor of the uniform length mark (e) and the unambiguous spellings *ae, ee, ie, oe, me*.

5. *aw* and *ow* are much rarer than *au* and *ou* for the sounds in *haul, out*. *ow* is confusable because of such words as *slow, low*.



6. *uu* for *oo* in *good, look, put* looks awkward in the very common words *could, should, would* (kuud, shuud, wuud). *oo* is a common spelling for (u) in *good, etc.*, but it is not the commonest spelling for (u:) in *too, do, blue, rude, flew, etc.* (He failed to notice that the very common word *full*, with its suffix *-ful*, would appear as *fool*, thus causing many embarrassing spellings in the Bible).
7. *sistr, oevr* saves space and is about as phonetic as *sister, oever, etc.*
8. *angry* for *anggry* is not phonetic.
9. *kween* and *taks* for *queen* and *tax* look strange, and are unnecessary changes of the existing spelling where they are unambiguous.
10. *c* for *k* will not do because of *kiss, key, kill, talking, etc.* (cis, cee, cil, tacing!).
11. *dais, real, dial, poët, duël*, are more effective and closer to T.O. than *daeis, reeal, poeet, dueel, dieal*, but require diacritic marks. When a long vowel immediately proceeds a short vowel, the length mark is omitted. But *se, fo, li, da, to*, for *see, foe, lie, dae, told*, will not do in inflected forms: *sez, foz, liz, daz, toing!*
12. final *-i* for *-y* looks strange, and would be ambiguous in such words as *snowy* (snoi), *showy* (shoi), etc. They are not ambiguous in Anglic, where *y* is used only for (j) and *final* (i). This spelling device also shows the difference in pronunciation between *triing, justifiing* and *karying, pitying*. (This shows what trouble develops when you drop the *e* modifier in double vowel words; snoei would not be ambiguous). (Ed. note)
13. *faum* for *form* and *ort* for *aut* will not do, because *r* is pronounced properly in some dialects of English, particularly Northern English and American English.
14. We have not left out of our scheme the unstressed vowels. More than 90% of all suffixes are spelt phonetically or uniformly. The interchange seen in *komen-Kristian, present-obeediant, etc.* safeguards against the pronunciation of *ie* as (ai), etc. and dispenses with the use of a diaeresis.

**Our motto has been to secure a maximum of efficiency with a minimum of change.**

### **Word-signs**

The use of word signs is considered essential for an easy transition to a reading knowledge of the present spelling. The existing spelling is retained in actual proper names and in adjectives formed from such proper names (England, English, etc), in foreign words which have not been naturalized (régime, table d'hôte), and in the following very common words used as word-signs:

*as, be, been, by, do, has, he, her, his, how, I, is, me, my, now, of, off, she, than, that, the, their, them, then, there, these, they, this, tho, those, tcl, was, we, were, what, who, whole, whom, whose, why, with, you, your*, also use *ful* for *full*, and in suffixes, *-ful*. (total - 43).

### **To our Reederz - the prouf of the pooding**

Meny a reedr, aaftr having glaanst at these spesimenz, wil probably poot down the book exklaeming, "Who is this impurtinent Scandinavian who wonts me to spel difrently from what I hav been uzed to seeing. What biznes has he to interfereer with our buetiful English speling?"

If an apolojy be needed, I wish to apolojiez moest humbly for the keen interest I hav taekn in the history of the English langgwij for mor than twenty yeers, for the nuemerus books and paeprz I hav ritn, and the meny theoriz I hav advaanst on this fasinaeting subjekt, books and theoriz which ar

noen and perhaps even apreshiated by nuemerus stuedents of the historikal development of your langgwij. Now my wish is to pae your langgwij the hiest kompliment posibl by endeivering to maek it noen, uzed, luvd, and apreeshiated aul oevr the wurid. It mae be 'a greevus fault' that Anglic is a chield of my invenshon, but it has a fien English pedigree, and it has sum very distinguisht English and American sponsorz.

Anglic duz not stand aloen. It has nuemerus predeserz in your oen kuntry. Alexander Ellis, Walter Skeat, Walter Ripman, and William Archer - to menshon oenly a fue faemus naemz - hav fraemd similr sistemz for a fonetik speling of English. Anglic oez not a litl to these pieoneerz. Anglic has aulsoe been modified and aksepted by aul the leeding fonetishonz in England and the United States. At prezent, English is not oenly the property of the English-speaking naeshonz, it is aulsoe the property of the meny milyonz of peepl, who uez it as an aquierd tung. Konsequently, it is oenly natueral that its speling shood be maed the subjekt of internashonal debaets or konferensez.

Anglic is not a *bad* speling of English, aaftr the manr of Eliza Doolittle or Mr. Drinkwater, striving in vaen to maastr the intrikasiz of the prezent orthografy, and for this reezon the butts of our ridikuel - Anglic is a rezonably fonetik, konsistent speling of English, revealing kleeerly the pronunsiashon of evry wurd, not a mumery, disgiezing and obskuering it. "Peepl mae disliek the look of the nue wurdz and the violent breech with the tradishon of the langgwij involvd." Twenty yeerz agoe meny Swedish peepl took a violent disliek to such nue spelinz as 'valv, hava, gott, etc. for 'hvalf, hafva, godt'; now we took upon the latr as dereliktz, raadhr than reliks. We beleev that when the furst straenjnes of the Anglic speling has worn off, and you hav kum to realiz the enormus advaantijez of its simplisity and konformity with the spoekn wurd, you tuu, wil join this muuvment for promoeting konkord and fraternity among the naeshonz thruu the meedium of a komen tung.

For Anglic is not intended to be oenly a komurshl langgwij. It has been bilt up by iedealists for iedealistik purposez, to help to remuuv the kurs of Babel and to sekur pees, progress and prosperity. At the saem tiem the importers of internashonal traed as a promoetr of pees must not be underraeted. The adopshon of Anglic as the internashonal langgwij of komers wil paev the wae for its adopshon as an internashonal augzilyery langgwij.

Those who at ankshus that the wel of English speech shood remaen undefield, hav nuthing to feer from Anglic. A foenetik speling wil oenly help to maentaen the uenity and puerity of the English langgwij.

Laast but not leest, it shood be rememberd that we do not wont eny Englishman or American who noez, uezes, and apreeshiaets the prezent speling - the Prodigal Sun has ofn mor frendz than his betr-behaevd brudhr - to goe in for Anglic speling. We sujest that the chaenj shood be gradual and opshonal. The nue speling shood be tested in a numbr of skuulz, and those who hav lurnt it shood be aloud to uez it in egzaminaeshonz and for aul praktikal purposez. They wil aulsoe hav to aquier a reeding nolij of the oeld speling. In this wae the tuu sistemz wil be kompaerd and tested, and the betr of the tuu wil suplant the infeerior. Just giv Anglic a faer chaans!

**(Ed. note.** The American Simpler Spelling Assoc. has modernized this system to make it closer in appearance to our present spelling by using the vowels in *good food* as in *guud food* and the symbols for the *th*-sounds as in- *thhin, then*. These changes were discussed in SPB March 1963. It is now called World English.

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## 10. The Wealth of i.t.a. Teaching Reading Material, by Helen Bowyer

i.t.a. is not the first wun-sien-wun-sound alphabet to magic the teaching of reading in the American schools. Way back in 1844 - 122 years ago - Zalmon Richards, first President of the National Education Assoc. was discovering that he could do that job with a phonemic alphabet in a quarter of the time required by the conventional ABC's. Just a few years later, a Dr. James W. Stone of Boston was trying the fonotypy of Sir Isaac Pitman in various schools of Massachusetts, of one of which no less a luminary than Horace Mann had this to say in a congratulatory note to him:

"Dear Sir: Having witnessed the exercises of a class of nine children under your care in reading phonetic print, it gives me pleasure to assure you of the delight their performance gave me... The children you exhibited had certainly made most wonderful proficiency and in several of the essentials of good enunciation and reading were *years* in advance of most children who had been taught in the old way.

From the Massachusetts' town of Waltham, comes this in its annual report for the school year 1852-53.

"We advocate Pitman's phonetics simply as an aid to education and an introduction to ordinary orthography. It has been proven in repeated experiments that if a child, upon his first learning his letters, is taught the phonetic alphabet, and is confined to phonetic books for the first six to eight months of schooling, he will, at the end of his first year, read in common print, and spell in common spelling, better than children ordinarily do at the end of four or five years of instruction."

Then in 1866 - a whole century ago-phonemic spelling took over the first grades of its big city-St. Louis. And tho it passed up the Pitman fonotypy in favor of a home-grown medium devised by its own Dr. Edwin Leigh, the results were much the same. Its education authorities were convinced that thru phonemic spelling, the children saved a year in learning to read.

Why then, was this spelling dropped in St. Louis? Why, after 20 years of such a showing, were its first graders again up against the time-wasting, mind-corroding *one, tow, eight-son, do, great-pour, our, shower-door, poor, your?* How many hundreds of thousands of children have entered its first grades since that disastrous retreat from consistence, from the recognition of analogy and the sequence of cause and effect? And how many in those Massachusetts towns where, a century and more ago, the same disaster occurred? Has anyone ever seriously considered what the culture of our country might be today, if those pioneer schools had not hauled down their flag? For surely the rest of the school system would long ago have joined them, and so ... But I'll leave that to some adventurous Ph.D. candidate to dream up for his thesis.

To be sure, phonemic spelling survived longer in England, where Sir Isaac Pitman's fonotypy had come to birth. As late as 1924, the British Simplified Spelling Society reported on a number of schools using an alphabet essentially similar to its own World English. But when, the summer of 1961, the British Ministry of Education sounded the all-clear for a try-out of i.t.a., the whole English-speaking world was virgin territory for Sir Isaac's grandson and his little coterie of colleagues.

You may be sure they asked him that WHY, and what could be done to keep this new alphabet from following its predecessors to an untimely end. If the basic trouble was man's inherent conservatism - his hallowing of the old, his rejection of the new - there wasn't much that could be done about it yet awhile. But there was one simple and immediate way, Sir James thought, in which i.t.a. could so

improve on its predecessors that perhaps ... For, beyond a primer and a reader or two, what *books* had they put into the children's hands? What fairy tales and hero stories, what legends or treasure hunts, what gay absurdities of beast, bird and fish, what loveliness of rhythm and rhyme? In short, how much of that whole great heritage of childhood lore to which children listen so avidly and would read for themselves if they could? Well, in i.t.a. they could read it for themselves, so why not give them all of it they can make away with, and see what effect *that* might have on parents, grandparents, teachers, administrators, and the public in general.

It was not till the Fall of 1963 that the new medium got its first sizeable try-out in the United States - with one third of the first graders of Bethlehem, Pa. as its lucky little guinea pigs. From there it has spread north and south, east and west, up and down the land even if, this fourth year later, the proportion of first graders enrolled in it is still all too small. Most of them are using the basic material prepared in advance for the Bethlehem experiment and now revised and extended into such a wealth of reading material as never before have whole classes of six-or seven-year old Americans had the chance to revel in.

The basic classroom material is the *Early-to-Read* series prepared by Dr. Albert J. Mazurkiewicz, then of Lehigh Univ., and Dr. Harold J. Tanyzer of Hofstra Univ. It consists of nine little readers with accompanying work-books, teacher's manuals, and a wealth of vocabulary cards, sound-symbol cards and other teacher aids. The whole series is put out by the Initial Teaching Alphabet Publications Inc, an affiliate of the world-wide Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons of which Sir James Pitman is the present head.

The first five readers and their workbooks introduce the new alphabet, not in the sequence of the old alphabetic days but in the order which will most quickly equip the child with words for meaningful reading. Thus along with *Rides*, his first little reader, comes a workbook thru whose engrossing exercises he learns the shapes and sounds of *a, n, t, e, b, s, r*, in that priority. Along with *Dinosaur Ben*, his second reader, comes a workbook acquainting him with the shapes and sounds of *j, d, l, th, oe, s, o, m, c*. The three following readers, *Houses, A Game of Ball, and The Yo-yo Contest* have workbooks which present the other 28 symbols of the i.t.a. medium, always in a manner to bring out the wun-sien-wun-sound character of each. Already, in their very first workbook, the children have begun the writing of the symbols they are learning - on well-ruled lines which make proper provision for ascenders and descenders. Thus they acquire a mechanical facility which may go some way to explain that eager, spontaneous story writing which so amazed the earlier i.t.a. teachers, but which the new recruit can now take delightedly for granted.

His 44 symbols now fairly mastered, and the one and only sound of each well fixed in his awareness, the child is now ready for Phase 2 of his i.t.a. course. It comes in *Reader 4 and 5*. Together they comprise 20 stories of whose caliber one need only say that 12 of them originally appeared in *Humpty Dumpty's Magazine* and that the remaining 8 are on much the same fine level. Of the 402 new words they add to the child's vocabulary, quite a few are three syllable ones, such as *animal, cærfully; elephant, friendliest, parashuet, Halloween, wheelbarrae, desideded, delieted*. How many first graders in the T.O. classrooms of the land are tackling the like of these early in their second semester?

The workbooks which accompany these two readers devote themselves to developing skills along the line of compound words and contractions, of the possessives and plurals of nouns and pronouns, of the *er* and *est* which indicate the comparative and superlative of adjectives, of the *ly* which turns the adjective into an adverb and other such indispensables of good speech and writing. If this sounds like a pretty tall order for youngsters still only half-past six or going on seven, let's remember that most of them were *talking* these forms before they entered school - its the fault of T.O. if they don't come easily in reading and writing.

Meanwhile something has been happening to the i.t.a. child which originally neither Sir James nor his early collaborators had expected. Not only is he reading (in i.t.a.) stories of a vocabulary and content far beyond those of his T.O. counterparts, but he is *reading in T.O. also* - and sometimes surprisingly well. Tho really, there's nothing surprising about it. Thru the signs and ads, in the streets and shops, thru the headlines on the news-stands, the readers of his older siblings, the books, magazines and never-ending stream of advertizing mail in his home, he is immersed in traditional spelling. With his delight in the reading of his i.t.a. print, it is inevitable that much of this variant encoding should register on his mind.

None the less, experience in England had demonstrated the value of a planned transition from i.t.a. to T.O. and the *Early-to-Read* series was planned with that in view. The process starts with *Reader 6*. On page 1 of its workbook stands the 26 letters of our conventional alphabet, with its thus-far disregarded *q* and *x*, with its *c* given the values of both *cat* and *city*, its *g* those of both *goat* and *giraffe*, its *i* those of *lion* and *Indian*, its *u* the same in *sun* and *United States*. Moreover, side by side with the small letters, stand the capitals, less than half of which bear any close resemblance to their lower case brothers. In i.t.a. all the functions of the capitals are discharged by a simple enlargement of its small counterpart, *a la* the good sense of our current *C, O, P, S, V, W, X, Z*. But as for the other 18, precious time must be spent to make sure the i.t.a. youngster will be expert with his *B, D, F, G*, etc. by this coming September. And still more time wasted in learning the *gh, ph, dg, qu, wr, kn, gn, ps, ti*, and how many more unphonetic combinations he will be running into - not to mention the shifts T.O. must use to stretch its five overworked little vowels to cover the 18 speech sounds we now force them to represent.

*Reader 6* consists of 11 *Humpty Dampty* stories, the last of which is a gay example of rhyme:

### **The Moon Mous**

A modern yung fellow woz Mortimer Mous.  
He didnt liek the iedea ov a niec waurm hous,  
With a comfortabl attic just riet for miec.  
He sed he had tried that wuns or twiec  
And an old black cat with a gleam in her ie  
Had chased him awae and told him good-bie.  
So Mortimer packed his overniet caes,  
The com for his whiskers, the soap for his face,  
His ties and his shoos, his raencoat and hat  
And his book caulled The Sience ov Fooling a Cat.

The story relates how his quest for a safe dwelling place had led to a rocket flight to the moon, from whence he returned "with a larg piec ov the moon's green chees!"

Nou Mortimer's faemus as well he miet be,  
His naem's in the paepers; he's on T.V.  
The moovis wont him as wun ov the stars  
In a pictuer thae'r riiackeing in culor on Mars.

If this seems a queer mixture of i.t.a. and T.O., that's just what it's meant to be. It is i.t.a. on its way to changing into conventional orthography and this is as far as it has got by the end of *Reader 6*. But *Workbook 6* is all in this. Since it follows the pattern of its predecessors (underlining the correct usage, filling in blank spaces, choosing the word which makes good sense, etc.) the children know most of its directions by heart and have little trouble decoding them in T.O.

*Reader 7* starts out with much the same mixture, but gradually leans more and more to T.O. till, beginning with story 6, it deserts the Pitman medium entirely and beckons the children to a feast of 7 stories wholly in our customary print. Besides which the second of the two work-books which come along with this Reader abounds in hilarious little verses such as this one by Edward Lear:

There was an old man of Peru  
Who dreamed he was chewing his shoe.  
    He awoke in the night  
    In a terrible fright  
And found it was perfectly true.

And this one by Hilaire Belloc:

The whale that wanders round the pole  
Is not a table fish.  
You cannot bake or broil him whole,  
Nor serve him in a dish.

Were these 9 Readers and their workbooks all that i.t.a. offered its little neophytes, they would constitute a literary diet beyond anything the usual classroom can offer by whatever method - whole word, phonics, linguistics - it seeks to serve it. But these 9 are not all. Along with them comes a vertible library of little books for free reading. It is divided into five sets, successively adjusted to the progress the child has made with his alphabet and reading skills to the end of Reader 5. By the time he reaches Reader 6, he is ready for library books in the conventional spelling.

This unique little library deserves a write-up of its own - would that this issue of the SPB had the space to give it that. But this seems certain - only in phonemic spelling could a class of first graders begin to read on their own so early in the year the first set - would you believe it? - is there in the book corner as soon as a handful of the youngsters have learned their first ten characters - *a, n, t, e, b, s, r, i, d, l*. Much of its vocabulary is built up from these letters and the words that aren't are handled as sight words which will be learned phonemically a little later on. The great objective is that each little book shall be so intriguing that the child just *must* read it to the end. How happily this desideratum is achieved, one gathers from the inpour of teacher's letters to the i.t.a. Publication's headquarters in New York. A common - and delighted - complaint is that you can hardly drive some of the little hookworms out to play at recess - Bobbie is lost to the world in *Bill and the Fish* and Gertie begs to finish *Bess the Ballerina*. The big, gay pictures go a long way to elucidate the words spelled with letters still unlearned, and tho the ideal is that each child shall read his story by himself, it is not a hanging matter for teacher to help out if one is really stuck.

The second set of 10 little books are designed for free reading during the classroom study of *Readers 2* and *3*, whose workbooks devote themselves largely to teaching the shapes and sounds of the 34 other i.t.a. symbols. Nine of these books are prose stories - the tenth is a selection of child poems, such as

Stevenson's *The River*:

dark broun iz the river,  
goelden iz the sand,  
it floez along forever  
with treez on eether hand.

And Cristina Rossetti's *the wind*:

hoo haz seen the wind?  
neether yoo nor ie.  
but when the treez bou doun thaer heds  
the wind iz passing bie.

The last selection is this anonymous little treasure:

**the nut tree**

ie had a littl nut tree.  
nuthing wood it baer  
but a silver nutmeg  
and a goelden paer.

the king ov spaen's dauter  
caem to vizeit mee,  
and aul woz becauz  
ov mie littl nut tree.

Library set 3 is designed to accompany *Reader 4*. It consists of 10 books about twice the size of the two earlier sets. Among its 10 stories is *The Dog and the Wolf*, a moving account of how long ago an ancestor of our present trusty housemate deserted his wild brothers to become the friend of man.

The two last Library sets (five larger books each) accompany *Reader 5*. The first of these is another selection of childhood poems, which range from the four lines:

Ie'm glad the skie iz paented bloo,  
And the erth iz paented green,  
With such a lot ov fresh aer  
Aull sandwicht in between.

to the 48 lines of *The Blind Men and the Elephant*, a classic which surely every first grader should have in the way of reading. But it is the last 5 books of the 40 which clinch the demonstration of what the six-seven year old *can* read, if given an honest chance - a chance, that is, with an honest alphabet. Under the guise of bookcorner stories - and good stories - these books constitute a vertible course in elementary zoology. The looks, habits, the doings of Paul's pet hamster, lead naturally to the discovery that, along with every mouse and rat in the home or in the woods, Squeaky is a rodent. That being so, he is *ipso facto*, a mammal, along with the dog and cat in our home, along with the giraffe and elephant at the zoo, and - would you believe it? - along with the "whale that circles around the pole." From there on, it's no great distance to the realization that "we are mammals, too."

Barry's pijeon, Bobby's turtl, Jim's moth, and Bob's goeldfish feature in turn the other four books in this Library set and differentiate the rest of the animal kingdom into its respective categories of bird, reptile, insect, fish. And does it on a level of such wonder and absorption as no first grader should miss. So why shouldn't the T.O. mommy or daddy get a hold of at least these five little books of the i.t.a. Library, spend a few half-hours in learning the i.t.a. characters and read these stories to their child?

But I warn such parents that if they do, they'll never be able to take "the reading problem of our schools" solely again.

\*From Initial Teaching Alphabet Publications, Inc. New York, N.Y.

-o0o-

**The Lieon, by Hilaire Belloc**

The lieon, the lieon, he dwellz in the wæst  
He haz a big hed and a very smaual wæst,  
But hiz shoelderz at stark,hiz jauz they ar grim,  
And a guud litl chield will not play with him.

**Jack's Cat**

Why can't Jack's cat  
Catch a mous or rat?  
Iz it becauz he'z crazy?  
The milk he drinks  
Taests bettr; and he'z lazy.

-o0o-

## 11. Rules for Spelling in Anglic (as revised in 1932)

Anglic spelling has been revised with a view of fulfilling the following conditions:

- (1) to represent every word in one harmonious spelling, reflecting a pronunciation or pronunciations which are commonly used in standard speech,
- (2) to be phonetic in principle but at the same time to deviate as little as possible from the existing spelling,
- (3) to take into account different standards of pronunciation,
- (4) to be easily learnt by necessitating as few rules as possible,
- (5) to save space in some words.

### Vowels and diphthongs in stresst syllables

1. to 5. Short vowels as in *man, men, him, not, tub*.
6. to 10. The long vowels merely add a lengthening mark (e) to the short vowel letters, as in *maelstrom, see, die, sloe, fuel*. When followed by another vowel, the length sign is omitted (as in present spelling): *dais, paabl, graer, seing, thoari, real, bier, diet, poet, snoing (sno.i), nuer, going, fuest, duel, plaing, diing, vuing*.
11. Short-oo in *good, bull* is written: *good, bool*.
12. Long-oo in *moon, lunatic, rude, fool* is written: *mun, lmunatik, rund, fuul*.
13. Intermediate ur found in *girl, fern, occur, furry* is written *gurl, furn, okur, furri*.
14. Broad *a (Italian)* in *father, palm, starry, card* is written (1) *aa*, (2) *ar*, where the existing spelling contains an *r* pronounced in some dialects, as *laadher, paam, starri, kard*.
15. Broad *o* in *all, haunt, caught* is written *au*. *o* broad or long in *more, for, course, story* is written (1) *or*, where the existing spelling contains an *r*: *for, mor, kors*, (2) *oe* before *r* followed by a vowel: *aul, haunt, kaut: stoeri*.
16. The diphthong in *coin, boy* is written *koin, boi*.
17. The diphthong in *house, cow, sound* is written *hous, kou, sound*.
18. The schwa or lightly pronounced obscure vowel is generally written (1) *a*: *about, admier, data, aeria, iedea, trial*. (2) *-er*, in prefixes and endings where the existing spelling has an *r*: *perfekt, saleri, efert, modern, western, iern* (iron). (3) Occasionally *o* or *u*: *kustodi, matrimoni, rekogniez, solueshon, difikult, fakulti, surkumstans*. (4) Sometimes *e*, as in the endings *-el, -en*: *barel, komen, korel, parchment, aba,ans, reli.ans, parsuans, oeriol*.
19. Written *o* occurs chiefly before a single consonant, as in: *-ok, -dom, -som, -on, -(i)ot, -uous, -ion, -shon, -yon, -jon, -zhon*; as in: *matok, freedom, random, seldom, abot, balot, chariot, bishop, galop, tempestmos, karion, reejon, naeshon, nashonal, opinyon, vizhon*.
20. Written *u* occurs chiefly in the endings *-(i)us, -(i)um*, as in: *boenus, sensus, surkus, oedius, raedius, buetius, kurtius, kolum, album, meedium, faemus*.
21. Short *i* is written generally (1) *i*, also finally and before a vowel: *mistaek, distrakt, mesinjer, solid, horid, palis, kurij, linin, thikit, forist, muezik; miniatuer, miriad, peeriod, negoeshiaet, raedius, stuedio, aeria, selestial, rufian, oedius, konveenians, piano, fiasko, kordialiti, piti, pitiabl, taxi, muni, hevi, kofi, enemi*. (2) *e* in pretonic syllables, especially in certain prefixes: *be-, de-, e-, en-, ex-, egz-, pre-, re-, se-*, and in the following endings: *-est, -ez, -ed; -nes, -les*, as in: *beleev, deseev, elastik, entier, exes, egzit, egzamin, prepaer, retier, selekt; hardest, kaesez, haunted, faernes, kountles*.
22. *o* is written *o*: *obskuer*, (but *oebae*), *folo, naroest, foloer, ominus*, (but *oemen*), *oliv*, (but *oelio*).



23. The vowel often appears with its full value in a more stressed position in cognate words. *kordial*, but *kordialiti*, *method-methodikal*, *industri-industrial*, *koloni-koioenial*. This is regularly the case in words stressed as follows: *admiraeshon* but *admier*, *supozishon-supoez*, *relativ-relaet*. In spite of this we should write: *mentl-mentaliti*, *speshl-speshaliti*, *mortl-mortaliti*, *simbl-simbolikal*, *similer-similariti*, *injeri-injuurius*.
24. Suffixes not found on the above lists (*-dom*, *-som*, *-ful*, *-aet*, *-abl*, *-ibl*, etc.) are only changed so as to conform with the general rules of Anglic spelling.

## Consonants

Only the sounds of *k* and *ng*, are written in more than one way.

25. The sound of *ch* is written: *chin*, *hach*, *much*, *waach*, *belch*, *bench*, *church*; except where the old spelling gives a close proximation of the sound: *maetuer*, *fuetur*, *murmer*.
26. The hard *g* in *get*, *guide*, *bag*, *vague* is written *g*: *get*, *gied*, *bag*, *vaeg*.
27. The soft sound of *g* (*j*) in *bridge*, *strange*, *large*, *jam*, *gentle*, is written: *brij*, *straenj*, *jam*, *jentl*.
28. The sound of *k* in *keen*, *cat*, *act*, *accent*, *school*, *kiss*, is written: *keen*, *kat*, *akt*, *aksent*, *skuul*, *kiss*, *komikl*.
29. *l*, *n*, *t*, at the end of words after a consonant, except in such combinations as *rl*, *rn*, where a vowel, generally *e*, must be inserted, are written: *-apl*, *orakl*, *ofishl*, *muuvabl*, *maepl*, *madn*, *maedn*; but *quarel*, *squirrel*, *squodren*. Write *al* (*el*) after a vowel or diphthong as well as after unstressed syllables: *trial*, *loial*, *aktual*, *admiral*, *jeneral*; *kruuel* (*cruel*). Where the ending is pronounced *t*, use *t* in place of *ed*, as in: *passed*, *stressed*, *missed*, write *past*, *strest*, *mist*; but not in *weded*, *wanted*, *rieted*.
30. The sound of *ng* in *sing*, *stronger*, *language*, *bank*, *lynx*, *vanquish* is written: (1) *ng*, (2) *n* before *k*, *x*, and *qu*: (1) *sing*, *strongger*, *langgwii*, (2) *bank*, *linx*, *vanquish*.
31. The sound of *kw* in *quite*, *acquaint* is written *qu*: *quiet*, *aquaent*. But not when *k* and *w* are in different syllables, as in *awkward*-*aukwerd*.
32. The hard sound of *sh* in *shall*, *shine*, *sure*, *nation*, *procession*, *special* is written: *shal*, *shien*, *shnur*, *naeshon*, *speshl*.
33. The hard *th* in *think*, *both* is written *th*, as: *think*, *boeth*. The soft *th* in *bathe* is written *dh*, as: *baedh*.
34. The sound of *w* in *wet*, *wine*, *anguish*, *persuade*, is written: *wet*, *wien*, *anggwish*, *perswaed*.
35. The sound of *wh* in *white*, *whet*, *whine*, is written: *whiet*, *whet*, *whien*.
36. The sound of *x* (*ks*) is written *x* when the existing spelling has *x*; in other cases, *ks*, as in: *box*, *ax*, *aksent*, *akshun*, *sukses*.
37. The sound of *y* in *yes* is written *y*, as in: *yes*, *yet*, *yonder*, *milyon*, *lauyer*, *uenyon*. But not in: *ues*, *uezing*.
38. The hard sound of *s* (*c*) in *sit*, *boss*, *circle*, *cedar*, *city*, *civil* is written *s*: *sit*, *bos*, *surkl*, *seeder*, *siti*, *sivil*.
39. The soft sound of *s* (*z*) in *rose*, *hoses*, *zeal*, *zoos*, is written *z*: *roez*, *hoezez*, *zeel*, *zuuz*, *kumz*, *handz*.
40. The soft sound of *sh* in *usual*, *vision* is written *zh*: *uezhooal*, *vizhon*.

The following rule was added at a later date when a few words were noticed that could be confused:

41. Separate with a dot adjacent letters which are not in the same syllable and which might be mistaken for a usual digraph, as in: *shorthand*, *mishap*, *outhouse*, *engage*, *gaety*, *reelect*, *quiet*, *lower*, *influence*, *power* - *short.hand*, *mis.hap*, *ou.thouse* *en.gaej*, *ree.elekt*, *kwie.et*, *en.gaej*, *loe.er*, *influu.ens*, *pou.er*.

The *mis.hap* started when the *en.gaejing* yung politishan with *pou.er* and *influe.ens* was *quie.etli* *ree.elekted* to the *gae.eti* of the *winerz* and the *loe.er* spirits of the *luuzerz*.

The *oenli* soundz in the *luuzerz* den were the *groenz* of those *suun* to be *dispoezest*, while the *winerz* were *planing* their next *strateji* in the *legislaetiv* *hautz*.

## 12. The Davis-McGuffey Fonetik First Reader, reviewed by Denham Court

Using the capitals, A, E, I, O, U, to transcribe the long vowel sounds is an old dodge of the spelling reformer. And not such a bad one as far as *printed* matter goes. To be sure, a sentence like, "NO rEzn for thOz flAgrant abUsez waz evr qult frankli diskIOzd" looks a bit queer, but one would get used to it. So had Mr. Davis kept his caps at their customary upper case height, this reviewer would have considered them not well advised, perhaps, but permissible. But Davis reduces them to lower case level and thereby lets himself in for trouble. You can cut down A and E to the height of a and e, give them the vowel sounds in *page* and *pete* and still have a and e for *Pat* and *pet*. But when you cut down O to o and use it for the long vowel sound of *dote* and *note*, what are you going to use for that of *dot* and *not*?

Among Davis' claims for the unrivaled superiority of his system, is the assertion that it makes no unorthodox use of any symbol. Can he mean no unorthodox *printed* symbol? For, faced with this need of a short vowel for *cof*, *hot*, *rot*, he lifts *a* from the written alphabet and prints these as *kat*, *hat*, *vat*. But then he gets out of the frying pan and into the fire by making these same spellings stand for the words, *caught*, *baut*, *wrought*. This makes homographs out of many words needing discrimination. How's that for an affabeteer forever crying out against any "radical change" in our present orthography? Especially as, once committed to this written substitute for the *printed o* he must turn *bow*, *cow*, *how* into *bau*, *kau*, *hau*. Then, one might ask, what do the children do for a small a when learning to write? Oh, Davis shelves that problem for 2 years by stipulating that penmanship is not used in the primary grades.

Another regrettable feature of this book is its stilted pronunciation of the definite and indefinite articles. Did you ever hear a six year old remark that "thee dog and thee cat are asleep by thee fire." Or ask mother for "A cooky and A glass of milk." Yet to the very last sentence of the very last lesson, this prissy pronunciation is forced on the child.

Moreover, one can't help but question the value of the content of McGuffey's First Reader for the first grader of 1966 - was it adequate a century ago? It is innocuous enough, Heaven knows, but what of beauty and wonder is there in it, or what wakening of the little mind to the on-sweep of modern science, and the broadening of man's outlook, social, economic and racial, on the whole of his planet, not to mention his exploration of the universe beyond. How much of this a phonemic print *can* convey to a six-year old, the i.t.a. first grade readers discloses.

But the i.t.a. material runs into some 57 readers, workbooks, free-reading library books for the first grader. Is it possible that Davis thinks that his one little book - 96 pgs of big print and widely spaced lines - sufficient for a year's reading for a normal child? To be sure his preface speaks of his earlier book *k-a-t spells cat*, which he suggests as 'excellent supplementary reading.' Also he speaks of a second McGuffey Reader in the near offing which 'could carry through to 3rd grade traditional literature.' But does that mean that this new Davis McGuffey is to be the sole second grade fare for these First Reader children? Or is it to round out their reading in this first grade? But surely a phonemic system should offer more than that!

*[Spelling Progress Bulletin Winter 1966 p24 in the printed version]*

### **13. "T-V" PRIMARY ORTHOGRAFY (LEO G. DAVIS)**

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