

# Spelling Progress Bulletin Summer 1973

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

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Editor and General Manager,  
Newell W. Tune,  
5848 Alcove Ave,  
No. Hollywood, Calif. 91607

Assistant Editor,  
Helen Bonnema,  
The Wellshire, Apt.1107,  
2499 S. Colorado Blvd,  
Denver, Colo, 80222.

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## 1. An Example of a Letter to Send to your Congressman.

Dear Congressman:

I am sure you will agree that the war on poverty requires basic legislation to combat it. However, it is such a multi-lateral project that it has many roots. The most important of these is a good education, for without it the poor cannot better themselves. The basic foundation of education is reading. Without fluency in reading, progress is almost impossible, and the pupil eventually drops out of school. Statistics show that between 85% and 90% of school drop-outs are retarded in reading by from 2 to 6 years or more. Penologists are aware that the large majority of their inmates are school dropouts. Explore our jails and you will find that they contain three to four times as many illiterates and functionally non-readers as the national average. It stands to reason then that if we can make the learning of reading much easier, we will have fewer reading failures and dropouts.

Dr. John Downing, in his book, *Initial Teaching Alphabet* – results after six years, said, "The unequivocal conclusion is that the traditional orthography of English is a seriously defective instrument for the early stages of reading and writing instruction."

A great many European countries have simplified their spelling: Norway in 1912, Turkey in 1928, Denmark in 1948, Netherlands, several times, Russia, several times from the 17th century to the important reform of 1918. Finnish was simplified in the 19th century. Prof. Kyöstiö states: "Finnish is quite regular – each phoneme always has the same letter. This feature facilitates learning to read enormously." Ranta states that Finland has one of the most literate, if not the most literate, population of the world. Hildreth states regarding Turkey, "Whereas up to 1928, only about 9% of the total population was literate, by 1960 (only 30 years after the adoption of a new phonetic alphabet), the literacy was 59%, a tremendous gain, entirely due to the ease of learning with phonetic spelling." Makita has put forward a similar thesis to explain the difference in the frequency of cases of reading disability in Japan and the United States. A questionnaire sent to Japanese teachers led him to conclude that "the incidence of reading disability is extremely rare in Japan." This very high rate of literacy in Japan may be attributed to the initial use of phonetic symbols – Kana, which are easy to learn. He went on to compare the regularity of the written code for speech in Japanese and he postulates that it is the comparatively inconsistent relations between speech units and written units in English that cause the incidence of reading disability in English-speaking countries to be so much higher than in Japan (*Comparative Reading*, by John Downing, pg. 218).

I could go on and quote about several other European countries, all of whose languages were more nearly phonetic before they were simplified than English. All of these countries seem to have legislators who are concerned about the difficulties their children have in learning to read and had the wisdom and courage to pass legislation to alleviate the trouble. What is the matter with our legislators?

I might also point out that in none of these countries was there any clamoring by the general public for such reform – just as here. The unfortunate victims – the children – can't vote and don't know why their job is made so difficult for them.

Let's hope that someone has the wisdom to push this legislation thru Congress.

Yours sincerely,  
Newell Tune

[Spelling Progress Bulletin Summer 1973 p2 in the printed version]

## 2. Dr. Critchley on Dyslexia, by Ivor P. Stowe & Dr. Douglas Everingham\*

\* reprinted from Spelling Action, Jan. 1972

by Ivor F. Stowe

I attended a talk given by Dr. MacDonald Critchley, world famous authority on Specific Developmental Dyslexia held in Sydney Town Hall recently, and from the floor I asked the question:

"Does the archaic phonetic system, or non-system of English spelling cause a greater number of dyslexics per hed in English speaking countries than in other countries?"

Dr. Critchley's off the cuff reply was: "No, because specific developmental dyslexia is a condition not caused by eny outside agencies such as emotional upset, specific brain damage, difficulty of orthography, etc. but is an heredo-familial factor similar to for example, colour blindness. There is *thus theoretically the same number per hed English-speaking dyslexics as there are Russian or Spanish. But certainly the phonetic problems of English do greatly add to the burden of those who are specific developmental dyslexics.*"

Obviously Dr. Critchley wants the use of the word "dyslexia" very much restricted, which is certainly warranted since there has been a tendency, growing of late, to diagnose every person, adult or child, as dyslexic if they have eny sort of reading or spelling problem.

My experience as a school counsellor convinces me that there is a percentage of definite specific developmental dyslexics in accordance with Dr. Critchley's definition, but that they constitute only a small percentage of people with reading and spelling problems. I am convinced that the most urgently needed factor to reduce the % of reading and spelling difficulties is a reform of our impossible system. SRI is the breakthrough in this reform.

by Dr. Douglas Everingham, M.P.

I also attended the Critchley talk. Other salient points were:

Probably at least one Australian in ten lives under lifelong stress due to trouble in coping with English words. This includes a wide scatter of people at all levels of intelligence.

A large group of those who are "low achievers" where only reading is involved may suffer from an inborn cause. This cause is suspected because in this type of "word-blindedness," congenital or "specific developmental" dyslexia, about 3 times as meny males are affected as females, and close relatives are often affected.

The chief pointer to a structural or developmental defect (mimicked by some types of damage to the nerve paths linking the "dominant" brain centres and their mirror-image centres on the other side of the brain) is that the child is not strongly right- or left-handed or has crossed "laterality" – that is, his handedness, footedness and eyedness (using different tools, kicking, peering through small openings, etc.) may not be all on one side. He tends to have trouble telling the time before he is 7 whereas most of us do it at six. He is muddled in distinguishing right and left longer than other people. The diagnosis is rarely made before reading is found to be retarded – that is, at 7. Affected children typically write mirror letters like *b* for *d* and *p* for *q*, even mix up all four of these, and "mirror" words like was and saw. They also more seriously mix up letter order and shapes (*brunt* for *burnt*; *h*, *r* or *m* for *n*, etc.) So laterality is not the only problem, but I suppose it may be the main cause of delay in picking up other spatial relationships.

Mild early complications listed by Critchley are:

- excelling at sports to mask painful classroom failures.

- clowning in class,
- aggressive behaviour,
- "bad" company. If father is ambitious and finds the problem painful there may be undue clinging to the mother.

One doctor of my acquaintance who has one bright son affected finds he has become overactive and tries to do things too quickly or too many things at once. She is sure that this is a factor in the stammering so commonly found with cerebral dominance (laterality) disorders. It has seldom to do with "forcing" a child to use his right hand as he may have little preference for the left. Obscuring one half of the field of vision at a time should be investigated as a means of treatment, I think, especially as there is a tendency for a dyslexic when first drawing a clock to put all the figures on one side.

Critchley puts the aims of treatment in this order:

1. Earlier recognition. This relieves shame or resentment when the child knows he is not lazy, naughty or stupid.
2. Sympathy at home and school.
3. Special teaching methods. Special ½-year teacher courses are available in Britain. More are urgently needed. One teacher to each 1 to 6 pupils seems extravagant but is justified (for the few years required) by the enormous boost to life efficiency and satisfaction. Solid, textured or colored letters etc. are used to recruit senses other than sight and shape sensations. "Words in Color" (with the same sound colored the same way irrespective of spellings) are valuable and other special gear and exercises are used.

I believe Mrs. Smelt of Melbourne and Prof. Paul Hanna of Stanford have greatly lifted the burdens of learning English spelling where careful teaching is available. They've found statistically valid rules applying to large groups of sounds, letters, and other word components. However, SRI [1] is a step towards removing the need for most of their work for most future generations-if there are more than three generations to come.

### **Some Comments by Harry Lindgren**

- (1) Phonetic spelling should help dyslexics, as narrowly defined, in that fewer nerve-paths need to be established.
- (2) No matter how much ingenuity Smelt and Hanna and others put into devising spelling rules, they can never tell you whether to write *hear* or *here*, *meat* or *meet*, *taut* or *taught*, and a thousand other; they can never tell you how to pronounce *bow*, *lead*, *wind*, and a thousand other homographs. Without one rule per word, how can they? For the rules must cover meanings as well as spellings and sounds.

An article on illiteracy in Britain in the October, 1972 *Nova* paints an appalling picture. According to it, one expert claims that: "of the 8½ million children in school today half will never read well enough to enjoy a book, one in five will never be able to read more than comics, and one in ten will leave school virtually illiterate... after leaving school many people will lose what little skill in reading and writing they do have... after five years, up to 50% in some areas will be virtually illiterate."

The measures described for remedying this are clearly hopelessly inadequate, and clearly always will be. The desperate straits to which the victims can be reduced are also described. But, among all the experts quoted, does any single one breathe a single word about the most obvious cause? No! like ostriches they bury their heads in sand.

[1] Spelling reform, initial step.

[*Spelling Reform Anthology §8.5 pp135–137 in the printed version*]  
[*Spelling Progress Bulletin Summer 1973 pp3–5 in the printed version*]

### 3. Obscure Events in History: Anecdotes from Harry Veenstral's Autobiography

#### *Introduction*

"The historian needs to know what ordinary people are thinking and feeling," said Edward Fitzgerald. "I wish we had more biographies of obscure persons."

Lord Macaulay in his *History of England* states: "No man who is correctly informed as to the past will be disposed to take a morose or desponding view of the present!"

With these quotations in mind, I present a few incidents from the 300-page *Adventures* which my 93-year-old father, Harry M. Veenstra, wrote for his children. I hope this account will entertain, but more than that, I trust that its transliteration into World English Spelling will induce the readers of *Spelling Progress Bulletin* to draw some conclusions about the use of this orthographic system as an initial teaching medium for children.

The recently organized Phonemic Spelling Council, as successor to the Simpler Spelling Association, will continue the endorsement of World English Spelling until such time as the Council's research indicates that a different system is more practicable.

The spelling used herein is in accordance with the guide lines and vocabulary examples given in Godfrey Dewey's *World English Dictionary*, Lake Placid Club, New York: Simpler Spelling Association, 1969. 100 pages. \$2.00.

It differs somewhat from a strictly phonemic spelling because in order to be a valid comparison with Pitman's i.t.a., this example of World English as an Initial Teaching Medium must follow closely the deviations shown by i.t.a. from phonemic spelling. This means that the k-sound is represented by: *c*, or *k*, or *ck*, or *cc* according to whichever is used in T.O. Also the short-i sound in *plenty* is written by *y*. Consonants are doubled whenever they are doubled in T.O. regardless of whether they are sounded twice or not. Proper names are spelled in T.O.

*Helen Bonnema, Ass't Editor, Spelling Progress Bulletin.*

#### **advenchurz, 1880–1887**

reesently muther and **ie** droev from California to Colorado and then on to Michigan. wee maed the cumfortabl trip in our aercondishoned car, covering the distans from Los Angeles to Denver in three plezant daez.

**ie** recaull very different three-dae trips bie hors and buggy or uther veeiclz when **ie** woz yung. the form ov transportaeshon which standz out in mie urli.est recollectshonz iz the barj. **ie** livd in the Netherlands whaer a wied, deep canal floed oenly a fue feet from the front dor. it woz uezd bie barjez, each wun ov which woz draun bie a hors on the toe path, or bie the man boo oend it, and hoo livd aboard with hiz family. whot fraet woz stord in the hoeld, **ie** do not recaull, eksept in that ov the scavenjer barj which stoppt peeriodically in frunt ov each hoem. every family had a privy connected to the back ov the hous. beloe the seat woz a reseptacl which the scavenjer emptid when hee maed hiz periodic caul. hee then deliverd the contents to farmerz hoo spred it on thaer feeldz for fertilizer.

our family livd in roomz back ov a smaut paent and waullpaeper stor. among uther thingz, mie faather paented wuuden shooz. thaer wur aulmoest aulwaez a number ov them liend up near the dor redy for delivery to the customerz. thae wur a shieny black, probably for sundae waer. hou.ever in mie family, lether shooz wur worn on sundae. **ie** aulwaez had coeld feet then. wuuden shooz ar much waurmer.

each year faather baut a yung pig which, after beeing fattend, woz buucherd in the faull. this probably constitueted the maejor part ov our meet die.et. fish wur abundant, but **ie** recaul seeing mie muther prepaer oenly wun kind. theez wur freshly caut eelz which wur plentiful in the dichez. wee children wur fasinaeted bie thaer riething in the frie.ing pan aulthoe long sins ded.

**ie** woz fond ov a surten tuf cuuky, liek our jinjerbred men. on mie burthdae muther wuud tie wun ov theez to mie left arm with a ribbon and let mee figuer out hou to eet it bie twisting mie hed.

on mie wae to school wun dae, when crossing a medoe, mie bruther **nickolas** askt mee if **ie** wuud liek to see the moon. ov cors **ie** wuud. soe **nick** toeld mee to remoov mie jacket, lie on mie back and luuk throo the sleev which mie uther bruther, garret, held suspended abuv mie faes. in the meentiem, nick hurrid to a neerbie dich, filld hiz wuuden shoo with wauter, and pord that down the sleev into mie faes. **ie** cried. but laeter on when **ie** woz living in America, **ie** shoed the moon to sum ov mie plaemaets!

faather woz doo.ing well with hiz littl stor, but seeing noe fuetuer for hiz sunz in the Netherlands, hee desieded to emigraet to America, and did soe in 1887. the steemship voi.ej tuuk 21 daez. from New York wee had a sloe traen ried to Grand Rapids, Michigan. thaer woz a long stop at the Buffalo staeshon whaer a cupl ov swindlers, poezing az raelwae offishalz, tuuk from us unsuspushus forenerz, hoo wur not akwaented with the English langgweij or raelwae travel, the unuezd and transferabl parts ov our tickets.

### 1887–1892

upon settling in our nue hoem, wee boiz found meny interesting thingz. probably the best attracshon ov aull woz the fier staeshon. eech dae at noon, the bell in the enjin hous rang, the dorz in frunt ov the staebld horsez floo oepen, the horsez trotted out and stoppt under the harnessez suspended from the seeling. meenwhiel the fiermen caem from thaer kwaurterz, sum slieding down the shieny brass poel from upstaerz, and in noe tiem compleeted the harnessing ov the horsez, jumpt on the seats, and dasht out. for puer drama thaer ar fue seenz eekwal to a steem-pou.erd pumper cuming down a sity street, horsez galloping at top speed, beeing urjd to eeven graeter effort bie the whip ov the driever, with smoek and sparks belching from the enjin'z short smoek stack. wun fierman boested that thae attaend such speed at tiemz the sucshon cree.aeted bie thaer veehicl puuld the skurts off the laediz standing at the curb. well, bee that az it mae, **ie** did actueally see a pees ov ekwipment maek a dounhill left turn with such speed that the too riet wheelz left the ground moementarily.

when **ie** woz oenly thurteen **ie** got a job at the Kent Furniture Company duering the summer vaecaeshon. **ie** wurkt 60 ourz a week! from 7:00 in the morning to 12:00; from 12:50 to 6:00 for 5 daez. saterdaez till 5:00 o'clock. for the men hoo cuud not shaev themselvz with the straet-ej raezorz then uezd, saterdae afternoon woz the tiem to goe to the barber for thaer weekly shaev. getting off this our urlie.er on saterdae afternoon seemd liek a holiday.

ie urnd \$3.50 a week and woz paed every too weeks. when ie handed \$7.00 to mie muther and reseevd 70 sents az spending muny, ie woz proud and happy.

in the factory, the goeing woz ruf for a lad ov 13. ie tended a rip sau. ie stued behiend it and had to sort and plaes in pielz the mateerial which the man running the sau puusht throo. sorting the widths wuud not hav been espeshally hard to doo if the man had workt at a moderet stedy paes az uther ripperz did. but the wether woz hot and hee liekt to spend a lot ov tiem in the men'z toilet. this woz a long wuuden structuer partly supported bie pielz sunk in the river and ekstending oever it. wun long timber ran from end to end. on this the men sat sied bie sied. on a sunny, breezy dae, this plaes, in spiet ov its obvius defishensiz offerd welcum releef from the dusty, noizy factory -- a plaes whaer a man cuud sit for awhiel and indulj in tauk that woz not the kind a boi ov 13 shuud heer! mie man spent soe much tiem thaer that when hee returnd hee wuud bee far behiend hiz sceduel and had to wurk at a fuerius paes to cach up. hee puusht the lumber throo the sau soe rapidly that ie found it impossibl to keep up. the bordz pieling on the flor maed mee luuk laezy and ineffishent.

at that tiem factoriz wur not yet ekwippt with saefty deviesez, and meny men wer injerd or maemd. it woz sed that mor men in the furnituer sity ov Grand Rapids wur mienus fingerz than in eny uther sity in the uenivers. whiel ie wurkt at the Kent factory, ie sau a man get aull the fingerz ov wun hand cut off in a buzz plaener. the man stued in a daez, luuking at hiz bluudy fingerless hand. thaer wur uther seerius and gory accidents which ie doen't wish to descrieb.

neer our hoem livd a man hoo wuz a bie.er ov scrap ie.ern, ragz, boenz, and uther castoffs. boiz scourd the naeborhuud for such ietemz to sell for a fue pennyz. back ov the man'z hous woz a barn in which hee sorted and stord the stuff until it woz soeld to larjer dealerz. to him the boiz braut thaer bagz ov whotever mateerial thae had gatherd. hee wuud plaes it on a scael and after deturmining its waet and value giv them a littl pees ov paeper on which hee had ritten a 1, 2, 3, or whotever number ov pennyz the junk woz appraezd bie him. thae tuuk the noet to the hous whaer hiz wief paed them. an oelder boi with hoom ie becaem akwaented sum yeerz laeter recauld that sins thae wur shoor the rag bie.er woz cheeting them, thae sumtiemz aulterd the slip having a 2 or 3 on it bie plaesing a 1 befor the dijit and with it collected 12 or 13 sents.

sumtiemz the boiz hunted for scrap ie.ern along the neerbie raelroed tracks. sum ov the oelder boiz cliemd on the fraet carz, remoovd the wheel with which the braekman set the braeks, plaest the wheel on the ground and broek it into smaull peesez to sell. the rag bie.er must hav noen whaer thoez scraps caem from, but hee askt noe embarrassing kweschonz.

the rag bie.erz sun, a boi about mie aej, naemd toeny, akwierd the nicknaem "raggy." hee caem to a trajic end. our paerents had forbidden us to swim in the Grand River, but wun afternoon a groop cuudn't rezist the temptaeshon. the loecaeshon wee selected woz neer a saumill. wee undresst on wun ov the boomz ancord off shor and soon wur aull in the wauter. raggy tried to perswaed mee to swim with him to a spot farther awae in the river whaer, hee sed, it woz shalloe. wee cuud stand on a sand bar, rest a bit, and return to the boom. ie nue ie cuudn't swim that far and refuezd to goe along. raggy woz unaebl to get enywun els to swim with him soe hee went aloen. apparently hee lost hiz baeringz and when hee ekspected to tuch bottom hee must hav been terrified to discover hee woz in deep wauter. hee becaem panic stricken, thrasht in the wauter caulling for help which nun ov us boiz cuud giv. wee yelld to the men in the saumill, but the men ignord us. on uther occaeshonz oelder boiz hoo wur guud swimmerz had gon out a distans, and splasht around screeming for help. then when the men responded bie running out thaer boet, the boiz maed sport ov them, thinking it a

guud joek. raggy drown'd. wee wur horrified. wee wur scaerd that nou it wuud cum out that wee had disoebaed our paerents bie goeing in the forbidden river. wee hurriedly dresst and then thaut ov the pathetic littl piel ov cloethz ov the dround boi. whot wuud wee doo with that? eventueally sumwun pickt them up. wee tuuk the bundl to raggy'z hoem. without telling enywun, wee plaest the cloething under the back porch. **ie** doen't remember whot happend after this: hou the trajic nuez woz broeken to the paerents, or hoo toeld them about toeny'z cloething under the back porch. it mae bee that nun ov the boiz did, and that the cloethz wur discoverd acsidentally.

faather bilt up a paenting and decoraeting clie.entel. at furst hee uezd a puushcart tuu transport his ekwipment, but az hiz customers multiplied hee purchast a hors and delivery wagon. this maed it nessary to bild a smaull barn in which to staeb'l the hors and keep the wagon and feed. with the help ov a carpenter, faather droo a plan for hiz barn and had him bild it in the backyard. aull this woz dun without a bilding purmit, indicaeting hou fue wur the governmental reguelaeshonz. attacht to the barn woz a larj bin for the hors manuer. this becaem an iedeeal plaes for fliez. the backyard privy, situaeeted between the barn and the hous didnk help matterz eether. and this riet in the sity! thaer woz a well besied the kichen dor giving wauter for aull cuoking and drinking. aull the naeborz had thaer oen wellz, and it iz a wunder peepl maentaend eny degree ov helthh. probably meny ov thaer illnessesz wur braut on bie such condishonz.

it woz a never-ending battl to keep wun'z hoem free from fliez. muther wuud cut wun ov the 25-pound paeper flour sacks into long strips about an inch wied aulmoest to the ej and rap the end around a short stick. beeting the aer with this, shee wuud chaes awae az meny ov the fliez az possibl towaurd the screen dor, kwickly oepen it and driev out aull shee cuud. after repeating this operaeshon several tiemz, the number ov fliez in the hous wuud bee graetly redest. then shee wuud set out poizon flie paeper for the stragglers. the children liekt to sae: "a flie and a flee in a floo wur imprizond. sed the flie, 'let us flee.' sed the flee, 'let us flie.' soe thae floo throo a flau in the floo."

in scool wee lurnd a poe.em about the harmless littl flie hoo buzzez cheerily aull throo the summer dae. wee wur toeld to bee kiend to him az well az to uther littl creetuerz.

## 1900–1912

[editor'z noet: the author had meny interesting ekspeeriensez befor hee fienally reecht hiz goel ov becuming an artist. for lack ov spaes it will bee nessary to skip theez.]

in 1900 **ie** went to Chicago to wurk for the J. Manz cumpany which woz the best art stuedioe in the sity and had in its emploi sum ov the cuntry'z topnoch artists such az J.C. Leyendecker hoo woz a much saut-after illustraetor, and hoo paented nuemerus *Saturday Evening Post* cuverz. the furst pees ov wurk that woz assiend to mee at the Manz cumpany woz a multi-culord flour sack desien for a mill in mie hoemtoun ov Grand Rapids. bie a straenj coe-insidens, **ie** had draun a desien for the saem mill the week befor **ie** left the art stuedioe in Grand Rapids. evidently the flour mill had not acsepted mie iedeea and desieded to trie a big Chicago stuedioe. **ie** nou nue whot thae did *not* liek, and with that advantej turnd out wun thae did. **ie** feel that the presteezh ov the Chicago furn naem aulsoe helpt mateerially.

in 1910 **ie** secuerd a pozishon in New York Sity. **ie** recaull an insident which occurrd on the trip thaer. arrieving in Detroit at the Pere Marquette raelwae staeshon, **ie** wisht to goe to the D & C boet docks. **ie** had reservaeshonz on a Great Lakes steemer for Buffalo. **ie** didn't noe that the dock woz oenly a short block awae. as **ie** steppt out ov the staeshon, **ie** haeld a hack and toeld the driever to



taek mee to the D & C turminal. the drierer cuud hav pointed with hiz fingger and sed, "thaer it iz, mister." but hee oepend the carrej, and sed, "giddap" to hiz hors. **ie** had baerly got seeted when wee arrievd at the docks. **ie** had to pae oenly the minimum faer, but **ie** felt liek a hick.

in New York, **ie** woz to bee at the Bartlett-Orr stuedioe at 9 o'clock in the morning. **ie** reecht the plaes urly and sat down on a bench neer the entrans ov a subwae. woching the stroom ov peopl cuming out ov it, **ie** sau a man hoo remiended mee ov Allie Burg with hoom **ie** had wurkt sum yeeرز befor in Grand Rapids. **ie** whisld to him uezing the distinctiv for-noet caull which the felloez uezd with eech uther, but to which a straenjer wuud pae littl attenshon. the man lifted hiz hed, haulted moementarily, but then went riet on. **ie** woz convinst that mie impreshon woz correct, soe **ie** whisld agen. this braut the man to a fuull stop. it woz Allie hoo turnd around. "whot bringz yoo heer?" **ie** toeld him **ie** woz goeing to wurk at the Bartlett-Orr stuedioe. "whie, harry, that's whaer **ie** wurk. cum along with mee. but furst **ie**'ll tip yoo off to a fue thingz."

hee toeld mee ov the meny pitfaullz awaeting. Mr. Bartlett, hoo founded the stuedioe, had gathered about him a groep ov men hoo wur tops in thaer profeshon, and hee woz satisfied with nuthing short ov perfecshon. to wurk heer woz the goel ov just about every ambishus artist in the cuntry. natuerally the Bartlett-Orr men wur not happy about aull this potenshal competishon. thae tried to keep it to a minimum. for a nuecumer the goeing woz ruf. hee wuud bee given the moest undesierabl spot in the stuedioe, which woz at the front ov the room with everywun at hiz back. the men seemd to bee -- and reely wur -- a bunch ov normal, frendly men. after the introducshon to them bie the manajer, and reseeving an assienment, the nue man wuud becum soe absorbd in hiz wurk, and in hiz effort to maek guud that hee becaem oblivius to hiz serroundingz. just about that tiem sumwun back ov him miet cazhually remark, "sae, that nue felloe haz aufully big eeeرز, hazn't hee?" the nuecumer wuud bee arouzd from hiz absorbd staet and wunder about such roodness, but desied that sielens miet bee the best polisy, oenly to reseev further shock when sum uther vois chiemd in, "yes, and luuk at hiz haercut!" possibly everything wuud bee kwie.et for awhiel and hee wuud think this woz the end ov the matter, but far from it. for the rest ov the dae hiz appeerens or cloething or the possibility ov hiz maeking the graed wuud bee freely discusst. **ie** wuns sau a nuecumer get up in fuery and offer to lick enywun in the plaes, oenly to bee met with compleet sielens. noewun luukt up and thae aull seemd to bee absorbd in thaer wurk, oblivius to hiz tantrumz. it woz soe infueriaeting and frustraeting! sum men got soe upset that thae gatherd up thaer ekwipment and waukt out. it woz to this that Allie Burg alurtd mee. beeing forwaurnd, **ie** wetherd the storm and got along well thaer.

in mie recolleeshonz about autoez, thaer iz wun which standz out cleerly. it iz the 1912 combinaeshon bizness and plezhuer car which mie brutherz baut. it had noe windsheeld, oenly a dash liek a hors-draun buggy, and had to bee crankt bie hand, ov cors. wee wur very proud ov our hedliets -- a very injeenyus nue invenshon. thae had too chamberz. wun contaend calsium carbied, and the wun abov that woz filld with wauter. when it got dark, wee got out ov the car, oepend a littl valv which wuud start wauter dripping on the carbied, waet until the aseteleen gas woz jeneraeted, liet a mach and liet the gas lamp with it.

mie too brutherz and **ie** desieded to taek a trip from Grand Rapids, Michigan, whaer wee livd, to the farm ov our oeldest bruther in Wisconsin. wee started on a mundaе morning, travelling az far az Kalamazoo for lunch at noon, a distans ov 50 mielz. wee spent the niet in a hoetel in South Bend, Indiana. if yoo wonder whie such sloe progress, consider the fact that the roedz wur dusty, ratty, durt tracks. on tuezdae wee droev throo Chicago and on to Evanston, Illinois. in Evanston wee

roomd in a hoetel and put the car in a garaazh for the niet (thae didn't caull them garaazhez at that tiem). it woz a larj barn occupied bie a Cadillac deeler. wee left the car in a staull, just az wee wuud hav left our hors when maeking a trip. in our conversaeshon with the Cadillac deeler-mecanic, hee sed, "ie ran across an articl todae in an automobeel magazeen telling that the Packard cumpany iz goeing to instaull sum kind ov a contrapshon on thaer car which will crank it. it'll never wurk!"

the nekst dae, wenzdae, wee reecht a littl toun north ov Milwaukee. yoo mae still wonder whie such sloe progress. in addishon to poor roedz, wee wur delaed bie having too punctuerz. repairing a punctuer woz a maejor operaeshon. wee carryd noe spaerz as yet, and punctuerz had to bee fikst on the spot. wee puut on oeveraullz, jackt up the car, and remoovd the flat from the rim. that woz hard wurk. the tier had to bee pried off with a pees ov flat ie.ern. then the innertueb had to bee remoovd and pacht. this wozn't eezy. after the tier woz repaerd, plaest back in the caesing and on the rim, wee had the backbraeking job ov inflaeting the tier to a presher ov from 70 to 80 poundz. for this wee uezd a hand pump which woz standard ekwipment with every car. wee tuuk turnz at this becauz it woz such egzausting wurk. too punctuerz wur not at aull unuezhual. aull tierz wur ov infeerior kwolity. mie brutherz got oenly 1200 mielz out ov thaer furst set,

staeing on the riet roed wozn't eezy. wee had a map purchast befor leeving hoem. direcshonz went liek this: "set yoor odometer at 0. proseed north until yoo see a larj red barn on yoor left, mielaj 21.7. turn left and folloe foen poelz markt red and bloo to . . . and soe on. it tuuk wun man to driev the car and anuther to reed the map. eeven then wee frekwently had to ask the wae, for the red barn miet nou bee sum uther color or miet hav bin remoovd bie a siecloen, or a fier, or to maek room for a nue wun.

the nekst dae, thurzdae, wee got az far az Appleton. thaer wee sau our furst concreet paevment -- oenly a fue mielz long, wun car width -- just an eksperimental project.

on friedae nick woz perswaeded to taek the wheel, but after wun ekspeeriens, not agen! az wee reecht the crest ov a hill, wee sau a wagonloed ov hae approaching from the bottom. our car pickt up speed. when it aulmoest reecht the haeloed, nick lost hiz hed and darted to the left sied ov the roed, passing the farmer on the rong sied. hee had to goe partly in the dich to pass.

thaer wur noe filling staeshonz conveeniently spaest az thaer ar nou. on the running bord (which carz doen't hav enymor) wee carryd too 5-gallon canz filld with gasoleen, which woz needed offen. thaer woz noe gas gaej on the dash, and not seven wun on the tank. that caem laeter. peeriodically wee had to get out ov the car, wauk to the back and with a dip-stick determin the amount ov gas left.

wee fienally reecht bruther charley'z farm neer a small toun caulld Birnhamwood. wee had been on the roed 5 daez!

*[Spelling Progress Bulletin Summer 1973 pp6-9 in the printed version]*

Speech given at International Reading Association –  
Phonemic Spelling Council meeting in Denver, Colorado, May 1973

#### **4. MUSINGS OF A MALCONTENTED MAVERICK by Henry D. Fiske**

English has become the second language of the world without any particular effort on the part of the United States. This has become my opinion after contact of short duration with the problems presented in the Phonemic Spelling Council literature.

The sheer economic forces of an affluent nation in sending many of its people to other countries thru tourism, military maneuvers, and the power of its industrial structure in which factories are built in many nations of the world has made our language universal. Along with that universality comes the awesome responsibility of attempting to ease the learning of that language not only by our own children but also by people of the nations that have accepted English as their second language.

When I was a child I attended a Methodist Church which was Labor oriented. The hue and cry of that day was for a universal language to be used as a supplement to the first languages. Esperanto was chosen by this group as the medium most easily learned and most logical for supplementary use, and so classes were set up for teaching it to the Labor people. In the brief time from the twenties to the present seventies, the use of Esperanto as the second language seems to have subsided, although I am aware that there are those who continue to use it in business arrangements. I understand also that living languages are considered more effective than and preferable to scientifically constructed languages like Esperanto.

As a practicing engineer working for a Utility, I was too busily engaged in the day-to-day tasks of my profession to think much about the children's difficulty in learning to read but having recently retired and having been exposed to the intricacies of language. I find the subject most fascinating. I have come to realize the impact that language has on all of our contacts in the busy world. Some of my conclusions may be considered snap judgments, but it seems to me that our activities are becoming more and more complicated rather than more and more simplified. My first contact with the coordinator of the Phonemic Spelling Council called to my mind the classic phrase that we are "hoist by our own petard." In following that line of thinking, just merely researching the source of the phrase itself, I found allusions which shocked me and had formerly escaped me.

However, that does not answer the problem of foreigners learning English as a second language, or our children learning to read their native language. Although there are many, many children above average in intelligence who tackle the reading problem and come through with flying colors, there is 50% who do not have average ability and are left high and dry. We have difficulty in realizing that whenever there is an average, there is 50% of the people below that average. People who are present at this conference cannot feel this personally because they started out with above-average ability and are interested in the propagation of further knowledge.

The lower 50% is the subject of voluminous reports by members of your group. The lack of ability to read causes many pupils to end up as delinquents.

In the Denver Post of April 20 appeared an editorial indicating that all 100 children out of the 100 that were referred to the Educational Division of the Department of Institutions had identifiable learning disabilities, and 67% had such severe disabilities that they were unable to function in

normal class situations. Further, 83% of that figure, or 55 children, had never been diagnosed as having learning disabilities.

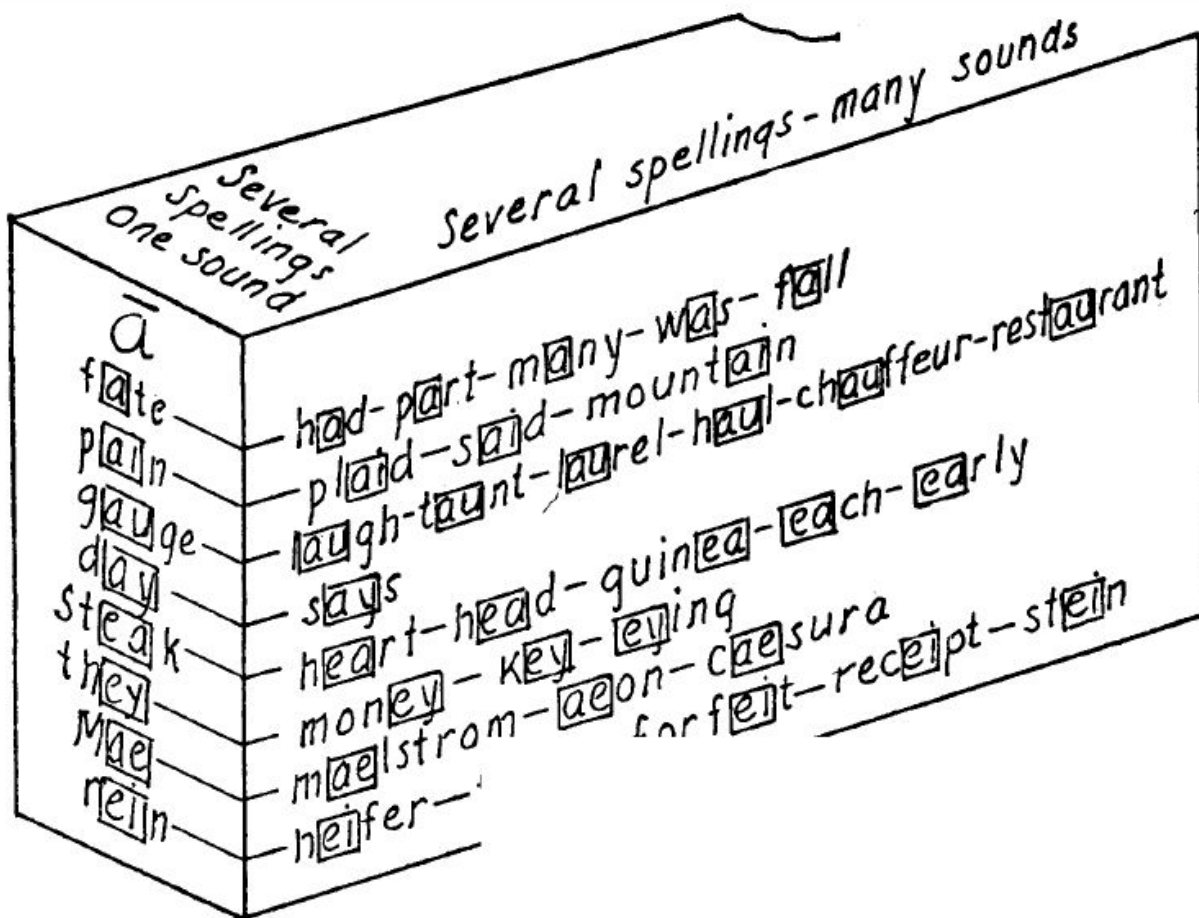
If we can bend our thinking to a plane where we view the group that has lower intelligence and build our systems to take care of them, we need have no fear of doing any harm to the more highly intelligent people.

This applies to people of foreign countries as well as to our children. If we want English to be a truly universal language we must take care that people in foreign nations, as well as children in our country, have an easily learned form of English orthography. In other words, we must improve spelling in such a manner that those with lower than average intelligence can easily master it.

So much for the challenge.

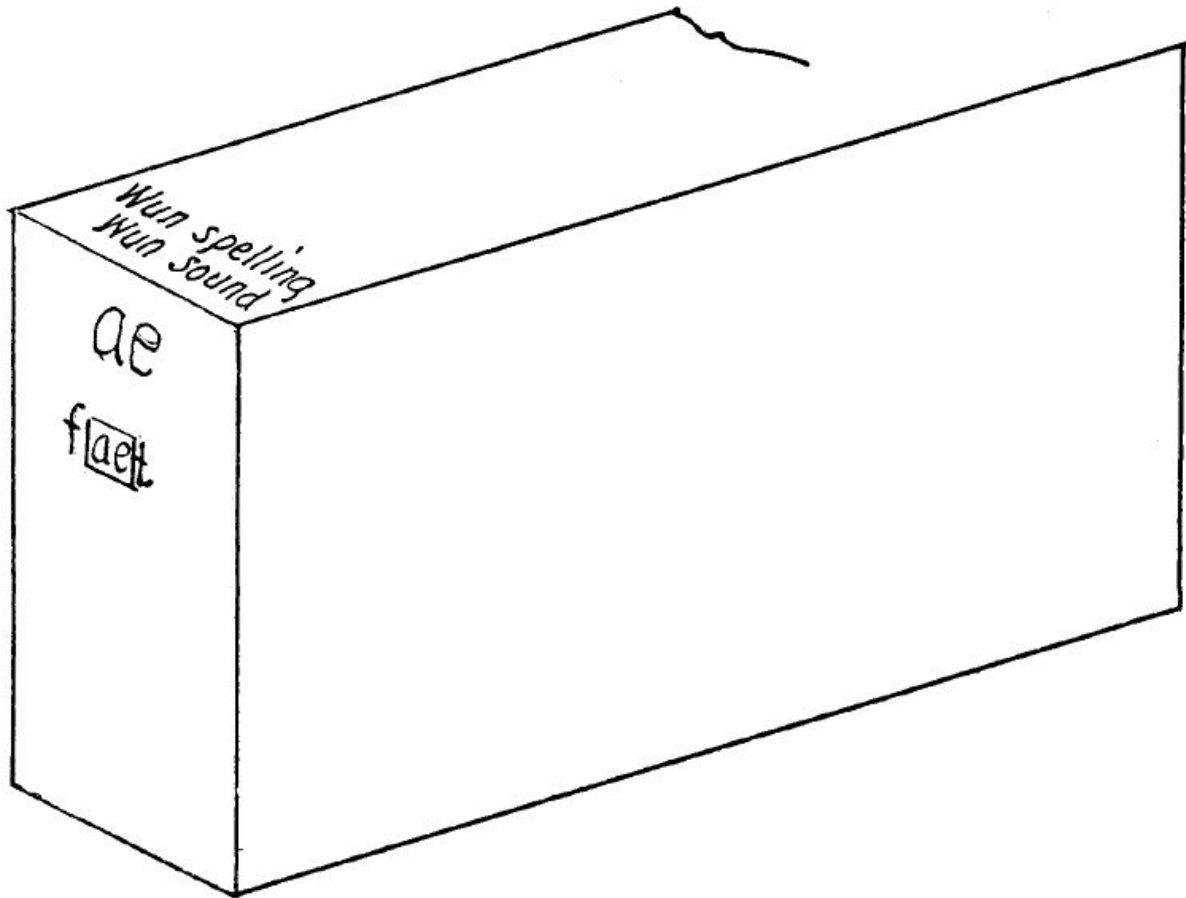
Further cursory acquaintance with methods of simplified spelling brought out the clear advantages of World English Spelling, or "WES," I am an engineer by profession, a draftsman at heart, and a linguist by love; so I have prepared several charts for demonstration.

**Chart 1** lists a number of different spellings which indicate the long /a/ sound. This list is formidable in itself. It is then projected into a third dimension to present many different sounds for the spellings previously used to denote long /a/, practically reaching into higher mathematics and higher powers of possibilities of error in the recognition of sounds.



**Traditional Orthography T.O.**

**Chart 2** shows that by using the digraph /ae/ from World English Spelling there are no third dimensional variations. There is only one way to spell the long /a/ of speech. This same illustration could be used for all other vowels and for consonants.



### **World English Spelling W.E.S.**

I have used WES orthography to demonstrate results because I am familiar with this system.

If implementing spelling reform is a valid proposal, we must create an efficient tool to be a "Manual of Arms," a "standard order of procedures."

Exhibit A shows page 519 copied from Webster's Elementary Dictionary.

Exhibit B shows page 92 copied from Godfrey Dewey's WES Dictionary with the box indicating the span of words appearing on the previously shown page 519 of Webster's Elementary Dictionary, Exhibit C modifies and merges these two dictionaries into a single source for the transliteration of traditional orthography (T.O.) into World English Spelling (WES). It might be called the *WEBSTER-DEWEY DYNAMIC ELEMENTARY DICTIONARY* and become the powerful tool that implements the transition to simplified spelling for pupils, teachers, scholars, and publishers.

The very worst it can do is to present one more easily understood, acceptable form of a phonemically-spelled word in an authoritative standard. In no way will it eliminate the presently sometimes almost impossibly-spelled and almost impossibly-found word reference.

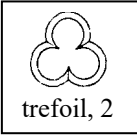
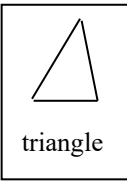
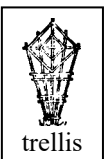
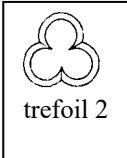
tree	519	tribunal
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Exhibit A shows page 519 copied from Webster's Elementary Dictionary.

	tray	World English Spelling	92
	tray	trae	tub
	tread	tred	tube
	treasure	trezher	tubes
	treat	treet	tuck
	treatment	treetment	Tuesday
	tree	tree	tug
	trees	treez	tugboat
Page 519 Webster's	tremble	trembl	tulip
	trench	trench	tumble
	trial	trial	tumbled
	triangle	trieanggl	tumbler
	tribe	trieb	tummy
	trick	trick	tune
	trickles	tricklz	tunnel
	tricycle	triesicl	turkey
	tried	tried	turn
	trifle	triefl	turned
	trigger	trigger	turnip
	trim	trim	turntable
	trimmings	trimmingz	turpentine
	trip	trip	turtle
	triumph	trieumf	tusk
	trolley	trolly	TV
	troop	troop	*teewee
	troops	troops	tweed
	trot	trot	twelve
	trotted	trotted	twenty
	trouble	trubl	twice
	trough	trof	twig
	trousers	trousers	twing
	trout	trout	twin
	trowel	trou.el	twine
	truck	truck	twinkle
	true	troo	twirl
	truly	trooly	twist
	trumpet	trumpet	twisted
	trunk	trunk	twitter
	trust	trust	two
	truth	troothh	tying
	try	trie	tieing
	trying	trieing	type
			typewriter
			tieprieter

**Exhibit B** shows page 92 copied from Godfrey Dewey's *WES Dictionary* with the box indicating the span of words appearing on the previously shown page 519 of *Webster's Elementary Dictionary*.

## 5. Webster-Dewey Dynamic Dictionary (Proposed)

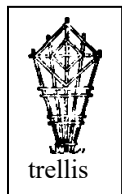
<b>tree</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>tribunal</b>
<p><i>treble</i> 2 The highest of the four voice parts or the music for it; soprano. 3 A singer or an instrument that performs this part. -<i>v.</i> To make or become three times as much.</p> <p><b>tree</b> \trē\ <i>n.</i> 1 A large woody plant commonly ten feet or more high, with a trunk, and a head of branches and leaves at the top. 2 Sometimes, a bush shaped like a tree; as, a rose <i>tree</i>. 3 A wooden pole, bar, or lever that forms a part of a structure or implement. 4 Something shaped like a tree, as a diagram (family tree) showing all the branches of a family. - <i>v.</i>; <b>treed</b>; <b>treeing</b>. To drive up a tree; as, to <i>tree</i> a cat.</p> <p><b>treefoil</b> WES <i>n.</i> 1 the clover. 2 an ornamental design with three leaflike parts.</p> <p><b>treet</b> WES <i>v.</i> 1 to negoeshiaet. 2 to deel with. 3 to pae for another's food or entertaenment. 4 to behaev toward. 5 to giv medical caer to win hoo iz sick. 6 to subject to sum aeshon.</p> <p><i>n.</i> 1 the act ov treeting. 2 free food or entertaenment. 3 anything that givz plezher.</p> <p><b>treatment</b> WES <i>n.</i> 1 the act or manner ov treeting a purson, animal, or thing. 2 an instans ov a particular kiend ov treatment.</p> <p><b>treaty</b> WES <i>n.</i> an agreement maed bie negoeshiaeting.</p> <p><b>treez</b> WES <i>n.</i> pl. more than wun tree.</p> <p><b>trefoil</b> \trē-,foil, 'tref-,oil\ <i>n.</i> 1 The clover; any related three-leaved plant. 2 An ornamental design with three leaflike parts.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">trefoil 2</p>	<p><b>tre·mor</b> \trem-r. 'trēm-r\ <i>n.</i> 1 A quivering or shaking. 2 A state of quivering excitement; a nervous thrill.</p> <p>tremuelus WES <i>adj.</i> 1 kwivering; shaeking. 2 feerful; timid. 3 unsteady.</p> <p><b>trem·u·lous</b> \trem-yə-ləs,) <i>adj.</i> 1 Quivering; shaking; as, a <i>tremulous</i> voice. 2 Fearful; timid. 3 Unsteady; as, a <i>tremulous</i> smile.</p> <p><b>trench</b> \trench\ <i>n.</i> 1 A long, narrow ditch; as, <i>trenches</i> for water pipes. 2 A long ditch protected by mounds of earth thrown before it, and used to shelter soldiers.</p> <p><b>trend</b> \trend\ <i>n.</i> The general direction taken by something that changes; drift. - <i>v.</i> To have or show a trend; to tend.</p> <p>tresl WES <i>n.</i> a fraemwurk ov timberz or steel that supports sumthing.</p> <p><b>tres·pass</b> \tres-pəs, -,pas\ <i>a.</i> 1 To go beyond what is lawful, just, or right; to commit an offense; to sin; as, to <i>trespass</i> against the Lord. 2 To intrude on another's rights or privileges. 3 To go onto another's property unlawfully; as, to <i>trespass</i> on a lawn or in a vacant house. - \-pəs, -,pas\ <i>n.</i> The act of trespassing; in offense; a sin.</p> <p><b>tress</b> \tres\ <i>n.</i> A long lock of hair.</p> <p><b>tres·tle</b> \tres-1\ <i>n.</i> 1 A braced frame that supports something, as a table top. 2 A framework of timbers or steel for carrying a road or railroad over a depth.</p> <p><b>trial</b> \trī-əl, 'trīl\ <i>n.</i> 1 The act of testing. 2 A test of virtue, patience, or faith; something that afflicts or causes worry; as, during, one's time of <i>trial</i>. 3 A temporary use to find out the quality of something; as, to give a snip a <i>trial</i> for fifteen days. 4 The hearing and judgment of a case in a law court.</p>



**trek** \ˈtrek\ v.; **trekked**; **trekking**.

1 To travel by ox wagon; to migrate in wagons or a wagon train. 2 To travel slowly or painfully. – *n.* A slow journey.

**trellis** \ˈtrel-.)s\ n. A frame or lattice used as a screen, or as a support for climbing plants.



trembl *WES* v. 1 to shaek, to shiver; to shudder. 2 to moov or sound az if shaeken, to kwiver.

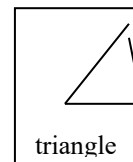
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**tre·men·dous** \trə-ˈmen-dəs\ *adj.* Astonishingly large, great, or powerful.

tremendus *WES* *adj.* aston-  
ishingly larj, graet, or pou.erful.

**tri·an·gle** \ˈtri-,ang-gl\ n. 1 A figure that has three sides and three angles.

2 Any object that has three sides; and three angles; as, a *triangle* of Land. 3 A musical instrument, made of steel rod bent in the shape of a triangle with one open angle, which hangs on a string and is sounded by striking with a small metal rod.



**tri·an·gu·lar** \tri-ˈang-gyəl-r\ *adj.* I having to do with or consisting of a triangle; having three angles, sides, or corners; as, a *triangular* building. 2 Having or having to do with three parts or persons.

**trib·al** \ˈtrib-l\ *adj.* Of or relating to a tribe or tribes; as, *tribal* customs.

**tribe** \ˈtrib\ *n.* 1 A group of people, especially a group with a primitive way of life, whose members believe themselves to come from a common stock and which acts as a unit, often tinder a chief; as, an Indian *tribe*. 2 A group of persons whose members have the same occupation or are alike in one thing; as, the whole *tribe* of baseball fans. 3 A group of related plants or animals; as, the cat *tribe*, including lions and tigers.

**tribes·man** \ˈtrībz-mən\ *n.*; *pl.* **tribes·men** \-mən\. A member of a tribe.

**tri·bu·nal** \trī-ˈbyün-1, tri-\ *n.* 1 A court of justice. 2 Something that decides or judges; its, the *tribunal* of public opinion.

**Exhibit C** modifies and merges these two dictionaries into a single source for the transliteration of traditional orthography (T.O.) into World English Spelling (WES). It might be called the *WEBSTER -DEWEY DYNAMIC ELEMENTARY DICTIONARY* and become the powerful tool that implements the transition to simplified spelling for pupils, teachers, scholars, and publishers.

## 6. Who's Leading Who, or the Saga of the Goter and the Goatee, by Harvie Barnard

When father went to college, he was "loaded," – brain-washed, that is, with the theory that if and when eny true progress was to occur on erth, it would be the product of the college, the university, or certainly from the graduates thereof, and of course from the Ph D's, those fountainheds of all knowledge, (rimes with college), on whom we have bin depending to lead us to the promised land of progress, peace, and prosperity.

But somehow, sumthing seems to have gone amiss. Reeding and riting, and espeshily spelling, seem to have gotten worser and werset; yeah man, even by college graduates! Who is to blame? – We gotta have a skape gote yoo no, and so it iz my plezure to submit, az follows, a report of th onerabl kommittee on th long-lost art of spelling az a kummunikativ meedium.

First Konkluzhun, IA: Th Gote (This depends on whether yoor konserned with hoo dun it, or to hoom it waz dun) So az to satisfy all, we must have 2 gotes, – th Goatee, and th Goter.

Rekognizing this lerned distinkshun, th kommittee haz konkluded az follows:

Konkluzhun I.1A: Th Goter, – th wun hoo dun it, – waz B\*B, BIG Biznes! But B\*B haz kum up with a 1st klas alabi, and haz filed an appeal.

This appeal haz bin filed with th Library of Congress, Division of Copyrights, and iz therefor ipso facto, Q.E.D. and untuchabl in the ies of the law. "So, whatcha gonna do, spit in biz ie?"

Konkluzhun II: Th Goatee, – to boom it waz dun, – Mr. Jon Q. Publik, no less!

An whats more, th litl stinker sez he *likes* it, and furthermor haz refuzed to file charges, and haz lined up sum 120 milyun witnesses to prove he likes it.

But th kolege crowd wer not konvinsed until hoo shood kum marching in, – like th saints no less, – but th Long Lost Souls quartet: Mark Twain, Teddy Roosevelt, Andrew Carnegie, and shouting th loudest of all, George B. Shaw! and to fully konvinse all konsernd, they wer giving out with a nu number from "My Fare Ladee," which went sumthing like this:

"Nobodi noez hou ded Ie am  
And nobodi seems to giv a dam,

So all of yoo kan go to hel  
Until yoo lern th way to spel!"

And that did it! Kase dismiss.

And the moral to this litl skit is more than a simple moral! It is an inescapable fact of life in these United States, namely, in 3 parts, that: 1) If you can *say* it (pronounce it), you can recognize it; 2) If you can *recognize* it, you can read it; 3) If you can *read* it, you can *remember* it. But, if you *can't* say, recognize, read, or remember it, the odds are that you *will not buy it!*

Big Business, therefore, has snatched the initiativ from our Department of Education, (division of spelling), and haz taken the lead in sensibl, lojikal spelling so yoo can redily pronounce, read, remember, and hopefully, – buy *it!* So why don't you buy *fonetik spelling!*

Following is an abbreviated listing of U.S. Copyrighted names and trademarks.

Section 1 of Copyrighted and/or Trademarked names taken from "*This Pore Ol' Mixed-up Alphabet*," by Jerrilyn Black and Ellen C. Henderson, publisht in Vol. 1, No. 2, of the *Spelling Progress Bulletin*, June, 1961.

**Acro, Antrol, Apl-Butter, Apl-Jell, Bif, Bizmac, Bug-Gets, Cocomalt, Drano, Dreft, DUZ, Ever-Fresh, E-Z-Creme, Flit, Foto, Frenz, Go-Go-Mobile, Gro-Master, Fulvita, Handi-Pak, Jello, Jiffy-Jell, Karo, Kid-E-Skool, Kip, Kix, Kodak, Korn Krispies, Klek, Kremel, Krispy Kake Kones, Kwik Snax, Lux, Mum, Nu Life, Odor-O-No, Par, Pard, Penit, Pepto Bizmal, Prem, Presto Lite, Presto Log, Pro Tek Sorb, Punch-N'-Gro, Rinso, Roi Tan, Saran, Skat, Spam, Staf, Sun-Kist, Surf, Swel, Thermos, Tiz, Tod-I, Trig, Vel, Wel-Bill.**

Look up U.S. Patent No. 282,294, (Preshus), and No. 535,314 (Klass). "The preceding names are patented, copyrighted or registered as Trademarks. Why? Because private industry recognizes the value of such phonetically spelled names, because they *cannot* be mispronounced:" (Hence, they can be readily spoken, pronounced and remembered.)

Black and Henderson continue as follows:

"When the time comes that our written language can be made to approach more closely our spoken sounds, then Americans (and all English-speaking people), will be able to sound out written words. It will stimulate the pupil's use of logical reasoning instead of suppressing it and causing confusion, embarrassment and frustration. Spelling will come easily, naturally, in English-speaking countries as it has for generations in Italy, Spain, Czecho-Slovakia, Finland, and other countries whose alphabets more consistently represent the sounds of their speech. Much time now used in learning to read and spell, can be used more efficiently in creative and scientific use of the language. Our alphabet can then become an efficient helper rather than a hinderance to two of the basic 3 R's."

Here is an additional listing of some of the many Trademarked names as presently recorded in the U. S. Patent Office,-not complete, for want of space, but significant, and indicative of the value placed upon phonetic (fonetik) spelling by an enlightened industry:

**Hi C, Hi Q, Hi Tex, Hi Tone, Hi Top, Holsum, Kant Miss Foods, Kandy Kettle, Klear, Kleen, Kool, Kool Aid, Kozy Kitten, Krispies, Kurley Kate, Kwick Lite, Ful Valu, Fill Rite, Flav-R-Pact, FloChilled, Flo Rex, Flow Rite, Frozn-Spred, Delishus, My-T-Fine, Nutrishus, Nu Pak, Nu Glu, Nu Sweet, Onli One, Par-T-Pak, Pick-L-Barl, Pic-N-Pac, Pic N Save, Pay-n-Pak, Pre-Cote, Pyro, Quick Kut, Quickie, Rainbo, Saf-T-Pop, Spred, Spred Satin, Tuf-n-Ruf, and many others are conspicuous for the use of simplified spelling, and notable for easy pronounceability.**

It appears from the above wide spread use of foniks and fonetikally spelt names that industry has anticipated the application of lojik to spelling. And undoubtedly it will be industry which will lead the way into improved international spelling methods-whether it be in English, Spanish, Russian or Esperanto.

The world is waiting for an acceptable international language, and when, whether by the process of evolution or by "common sense" (lojik), one is accepted it will be a language using an alfabet and a sistem of speling which will be based on the consistent and dependable relationship of **one symbol to one sound. Nothing else is good enuf for our children!**

-o0o-

*[Spelling Progress Bulletin Summer 1973 p10 in the printed version]*

### **From Rimes Without Reason**

Said the horse, as he neighed a loud neigh,  
To the hound as he beighed a loud beigh,  
    'I don't like my oats,

No one likes your high noats,  
So why shouldn't we both go aweigh?'  
    So they did, the same deigh.

-o0o-

## 7. Written Finnish and its Development, by O. K. Kyöstiö

Dean, Teachers College, Univ. of Oulu, Oulu 10, Finland.

As with other languages, Finnish has a long history of development to the present spoken and written form. In its first form, the roots go back to the original Finno-Ugric language group some thousands of years ago. Its nearest relative languages are Estonian and some smaller tribal tongues which still exist in Russia. Examples of other related languages are Hungarian, Mordvian and Cheremis. The present Finnish language comes from Proto-Finnic which was spoken east of the Baltic Sea in the first few centuries B.C. People who moved from there to Finland, pushing the Lapps to the north, during the first centuries A.D. made up, in the course of time, some tribes that spoke their own dialects. Linguists are of the opinion that the Finnish language in the proper sense took on its structure between the 11th and 15th centuries, a time linguistically called the period of Early-Finnish. This continued until the middle of the 16th century when the first Finnish books were printed though some manuscripts existed in Finnish in the late Middle Ages. In the course of time the Finnish language received many loan words (from Swedish and Russian) as it had done earlier from other Indo-European languages.

The larger beginning of written Finnish in the 16th century first provided a good basis for the development of the Finnish language. In 1548 Bishop Agricola translated The New Testament into Finnish and wrote many other religious books (altogether 2400 printed pages). The whole Bible was translated in 1642. Written Finnish was at that time somewhat different from that of the present day. The difficulties Agricola and his followers had to overcome were very great because the written patterns they used (Latin, German, Swedish) were in many respects foreign to the structure of the Finnish language. Of course the then spoken Finnish was different compared with the present one, e.g. the formulation of diphthongs and gemination of consonants and long vowels were not quite developed and some sounds (e.g.  $\delta$  and  $\theta$ , comparable to English phonemes in words *mother* and *nothing*), which later disappeared, still existed. If we read Agricola's orthography, we have difficulty in understanding its message, as will be shown later. The basic difficulties of the spelling at that time were orthographic irregularity, foreign patterns, and dialect forms.

To illustrate the development of Finnish spelling, the same extract has been taken from the Bible, beginning from the first translation (1548) until the most recent version (1972). This way of presentation has of course some weaknesses: the language of the Bible is often archaic; it is also not original but only a style and does not use everyday language to express thought. But such an extract has also great advantages when spelling examples are in question: the translators have always expressed the same thing according to the standard of their time; the changes in spelling, acceptable words and sentence structure are easy to compare. From the point of view of a developing language, as Finnish was at that time, this method seems to be suitable. The author has chosen a verse from the gospel according to Matthew (Matt. 5,44) which in the present English form is as follows: "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (The Holy Bible, Collins' Press, London & New York, 1957). As a matter of fact this version has remained in the same form for over three hundred years.

The earliest Finnish versions are indicated in [Fig. 1](#). They are printed in Old Gothic script and represent the period in which the foundations of written Finnish were laid (a period called old literary Finnish, see Rapola, 1962). Differences from the present spelling include many

irregularities, dialectal forms and foreign expressions. [Figure 2](#) shows the three latest versions when the Latin script had come into common use. Up to now nine different versions have been published, of which three (1685, 1758, and 1859) are not presented here because the changes in these are not very great.

Figure 1. (extracts from old Finnish Bibles) Version of 1548

~~h~~ermin ~~w~~iholij~~is~~as. Waan mine sanon teille / Rakastacat teiden wiholij~~is~~i. Syuesti~~s~~iug~~h~~nacat ni~~j~~e / jotca teite sadhatta~~s~~uat. Syuesti~~s~~ite~~ch~~ket ni~~j~~nen / jotca teite wihauat. Rucolcat ni~~j~~nen edhest / jotca teite wahingoittauat ia wainouat. ~~Et~~ ~~te~~

Version of 1642

44. Mutta minä sanon teille: rakastakaa vihollisianne / suunatcat ni~~j~~eä jotka teitä sadattaw~~at~~: tehkät niille hy~~w~~ia jotka teitä wihaw~~at~~: rukoilkat niiden edest / jotca teitä wainowat ja wahingoittaw~~at~~. ~~Et~~ ~~te~~

Version of 1776

44. Waan minä sanon teille: rakastakaa wihollisianne, suundikat niitä, jotka teitä sadattaw~~at~~: tehkät niille hy~~w~~in, jotka teitä wihaw~~at~~: Ja rukoilkat niiden edestä, jotka teitä wainowat ja wahingoittaw~~at~~.

Figure 2. Extracts (Matt. 5:44) from the new Finnish Bibles

Version of 1913

Mutta minä sanon teille:  
rakastakaa vihollisianne  
ja rukoilkaa niiden edestä,  
jotka teitä vainoavat.

Version of 1933

Mutta minä sanon teille:  
rakastakaa vihollisianne  
ja rukoilkaa niiden puolesta,  
jotka teitä vainoavat.

Version of 1972

Mutta minä sanon teille:  
rakastakaa vihollisianne  
ja rukoilkaa niiden puolesta,  
jotka ahdistavat teitä.

Irregularities are most numerous in Agricola's translation (1548). E.g. the sound *k* was indicated in eight different ways (*c*, *ch*, *ck*, *g*, *k*, *ki*, *q*, *x*). Usage was irregular, though some rules can be traced, e.g. *c* was used only before a back vowel, *ki* before a front vowel, and *q* before the *u*-sound. In the version of 1776 we can see that the other ways (apart from *k*) to indicate the *k*-sound have almost disappeared. (Exception: *x* was still used in consonant combination *ks* e.g. "kaxi" = two, instead of "kaksi" in the present Finnish. So also the word *taxi* is in Finnish always written "kaksi" because *x* does not belong to the Finnish alphabet). Examples of some other irregularities are: the letter *e* signified both *e* and *ä* sounds; *i* indicated both *i* and *j*-sounds, *w* both *v* and *u*-sounds, *u* both *v* and *u*-sounds. All these irregularities disappeared in the 17th century. Irregularities in consonantal gradation ( $\eta=\eta\eta$ ,  $\kappa=y$  and  $t=d$ ) were on the contrary, too difficult to find any reliable solution for at that time.

As mentioned previously, sounds like *th* ( $\delta$ ) in the English word 'mother' and *th* ( $\theta$ ) in 'nothing' existed earlier in Finnish. In our quotation words "sadhattacat" (curse) and "edhest" (for) show how Agricola wrote with *dh* in the first one. This sound disappeared later and was replaced by *d* (in the 1642 version). The other *th*-sound ( $\theta$ ) was indicated by *tz*, e.g. in the word ( $\theta\theta$ ) "metze" which is now written "metsa" (woods).

The worst weaknesses in the old literary Finnish were due to the writing of long vowels, geminata consonants and diphthong sounds. The long vowel was sometimes indicated with two vowels in the first syllable (see e.g. the word "waan"=but, in the quotation) but not in later syllables. This pattern

can be seen in all versions in [Fig. 1](#), e.g. in the word "rakastakat" (love) in which the last *a*-sound is now written with two *a*'s and without *t* (originally probably "rakastakaatte" which was shortened according to the south-west dialect aspiration to the form "rakastakat." In general, long vowels in any syllable other than the first are secondary; they are also the result of assimilation, omission of a consonant, etc.). So also in the words "wihavat" (hate), and "wainovat" (persecute). In the word *nijtä* > (*nijtä* > *niitä* = them) the long *i* vowel has been indicated by *ii* showing that *i* was still used as a half-vowel.

The quotation offers examples of the irregularities indicating geminata consonants, e.g. the word 'teille' (unto you) is written in all versions quite correctly. But from the word "wiholisi" (enemies) the second *l* has been dropped out in Agricola's version (according to south-west dialect) but was included in the 1642 translation. The word "wihollosian" (1642) represents an aspiratory form of the word "wihollisianne" (1776) which we now accept.

At Agricola's time some present diphthongs were indicated only by one letter (e.g. *suola* < *soola* < *sola* = salt). In the example, the word "rucolcat" (bless) represents the shortest possibility (*rukoilkaa* < *rucoolcat* < *rucolcat*). The word "wainowat" (> *wainoowat* > *vainoavat*) also indicates assimilation of vowels, though in this case there is not a diphthong in question. Sometimes the result of an assimilation in speech was a long vowel (*tarpeet* < *tarpehet* = needs), sometimes a diphthong (*teit* < *teghit* = did).

Some of the irregularities mentioned previously are results of the dialect spoken in the southwestern part of Finland the idioms of which were later not so acceptable in the written language. The typical way to shorten words either in conjugation or declension belongs to these cases.

The influence of foreign languages was very strong in the old versions. Agricola's Bible was full of errors of this kind. One typical one was the use of prepositions or prefixes (e.g. *for*, *in*, *out*, or whole words) which do not belong to the Finnish structure at all. For these purposes we must use cases (altogether 15), separate words or sometimes prepositions. In our quotation we can find two examples of this kind. Agricola has translated according to Swedish (welsigner) "hyuestisiughnacat" (with some spelling errors) and analogously "hyvestitechket" (though in Swedish words were separate, "görer wel," so also in the German translation "thut wol") of which the later translators have dropped the first "hyvesti" as being completely unnecessary and taken it from the second word separately as an adverb (*hyvin*). The use of agent, formal subject, articles, verbs with a prefix and possessive pronouns (instead of poss. suffix) belong to foreign patterns and are foreign to the Finnish language. It has involved much work to purge Finnish spelling of these influences.

Rapola has described (1967) the development of Finnish prose during the Swedish period. As a matter of fact we cannot speak about prose in an independent sense because the influence of scriptural pattern was so strong that secular literature hardly existed. Therefore the spelling of Finnish was during that time closely associated with the language of the Bible and the reforms made in it. Of course sermons and tracts (Sorolainen, Wegelius) were published but their roots were in the Bible. More important were attempts beginning from the 17th century to write a Finnish lexicon (Juslenius) and grammar (Vhaël), to collect Finnish folklore (Ganander) and publish a newspaper (Lizelius). Their greatest merits were in the enrichment of vocabulary, not in the reform of spelling.

Pulkkinen's study (1972) sheds light on the development of Finnish spelling since the beginning of the "battle" of the dialects (1820 onwards) with many extracts of authors from this period. The second newspaper (the first one was published only for about a year) in Finnish (1820) was some

kind of a starting point for this battle because it took the reform of Finnish spelling into its program. The editor (Becker) of this newspaper brought into use many new words from eastern dialects and corrected the biblical sentence structure. He also wrote a new Finnish grammar. Later, as an official translator of the Finnish government, he had an influence on public documents at a time when the official language was still Swedish. The important spelling reforms of the time were the writing of long vowel-sound with two vowel signs, the use of 'ks' instead of 'x' and 'ts' instead of 'tz.' These reforms were introduced into scriptural texts much later. The interest in Finnish spelling was very keen in the first half of the 19th century, but not until the decade 1840-50 were about a half dozen new Finnish grammars published.

Elias Lönnrot has sometimes been called "the second founder of the book-Finnish," so decisive was his significance for the development of the Finnish language in the middle of the 19th century. The basis for this work was his collection of Finnish folklore (Kalevala) which alone has made his name of great importance in the history of Finnish literature. He has probably introduced the greatest number of new words into written Finnish. His Finnish-Swedish Lexicon (1867-80) has been until recently the greatest source of Finnish vocabulary. It was first exceeded by the Nykysuomen Sanakirja (Dictionary) (1951-61) initiated by the Finnish Parliament. As editor of some newspapers, and as a professor of Finnish language at the university, Lönnrot's influence was very various and aimed at different needs. His main merits are, however, in the field of vocabulary and syntax, not so much in spelling.

In the 19th century first the newspapers and secular prose began to replace the Bible and other religious literature as patterns of spelling and literary expression in general. In this way consonantal gradation of 'k' and 'd' found their final stability after much discussion and different proposals of leading philologists. This matter was extremely difficult because the usage in spoken dialects was so different. 'D' was for a long time accepted only as a letter (cf. what has been said previously) but not as a sound, as 'g' still is. Probably for this reason the pronunciation and writing of these sounds and letters still sometimes cause difficulty even for 'educated' people too. Other spelling reforms of that time were the disappearance of two consonants at the beginning of words (e.g. koulu < skoulu = school), short inessive-forms (talossa < talosa < talos = in house), and short imperfect-forms (antoiivat < antoit = gave) as well as short abessive-forms (talotta < talota = without house). These changes were made through the influence of eastern dialects which have the more frequent use of potential mood and changes in object cases.

Many prominent individuals could be listed as developers of the Finnish language during the last 150 years: professors of Finnish such as Ahlqvist, Setälä (whose grammar, 1898, is still in use), Kettunen, Rapola, Penttilä and Hakulinen or more practically oriented linguists as Tunkelo, Kannisto, Cannelin, Airila, Saarimaa and Sadenniemi or famous writers like Kivi, Aho and Sillanpää (Nobel-winner). Setälä was of the opinion that as a pattern for language usage the expressions of leading writers should be adopted, a point of view linguists hardly accept.

Alongside the deliberate work of linguists, the Finnish language has developed spontaneously. The vocabulary especially is continuously being renewed in this way. So many old western dialect forms in written Finnish have been replaced by eastern expressions e.g. ehtoo ≈ ilta (evening), huomen ≈ aamu (morning), suvi ≈ kesä (summer) etc. Many long and awkward expressions have been shortened e.g. yleinen katsaus > yleiskatsaus (general view), merkittävä tapaus > merkkitapaus (important event), ravintopaikka > ravintola (restaurant), keskusteleminen > keskustelu (discussion), eroavaisuus > eroavuus (difference), etc. Such long forms of verbs e.g. 'saapi' (3 pers. ind.), have been in the course of time spontaneously replaced by 'saa'; again imperative forms like 'tulkaatte' (see above) > tulkaa. Partitive forms e.g. 'matalata' have during this century become

shortened e.g. *matalaa* (low). The letter 'h' has dropped out from such forms as *rakkahin* > *rakkain* (dearest).

In recent years the above mentioned *Nykysuomen Sanakirja* (Dictionary of Modern Finnish) has had a very normative influence on everyday language use. In its 4,000 pages, all common Finnish words have a thorough presentation and spelling form.

The three latest versions (Fig. 2) show on a small scale how Finnish spelling had developed in the 19th century, at a time when Finnish literature in a real sense was created. Instead of using Gothic script, religious books began to be printed in Latin style. Looking at the quotation, we can see that the verse has been considerably shortened (the English version is in comparison with the Finnish one a little old-fashioned). It indicates that the translators do not consider their task only as that of translators but also as communicators. In this respect the latest version goes deeper, though the changes in our example are rather small. Its aim is namely to present the message of the Bible in everyday language. From the point of view of spelling, it does not, however, contain any considerable changes. But the selection of words and sentence structure is closer to current language.

The development of literature caused especially reconstruction of vocabulary. The peculiar structure of the Finnish language presented a good opportunity for deriving new words with suffixes from the same stem. The 13 following examples give an idea of this feature.

The Finnish word "kirja" means book. From this word we can derive many other words, e.g. *kirje* (letter), *kirjallisuus* (literature), *kirjasto* (library), *kirjoittaa* (write), *kirjaaja* (registrar), *kirjuri* (clerk), *kirjaimisto* (alphabet), *kirjain* (character), *kirjailija* (author), etc. The other way is to combine words, e.g. *kirjakaapi* (bookcase), *kirjakauppa* (bookshop), *kirjapaino* (printing office), *kirjakieli* (literary language), *kirjeenvaihto* (correspondence), *kirjekortti* (post card), *kirjekuori* (envelope), *kirjelaatikko* (pillar-box) etc.

It is difficult to say how many Finnish words are derivatives, compound words or stem words. According to a small investigation about half may belong to the last category, especially when the everyday text is in question (Hakulinen 1961). Concerning the origin of words, Finnish might be one of the purest languages. Only about 20% of its vocabulary being clearly loan words; indirect foreign influence on spoken and written expression is of course far greater. The whole Finnish vocabulary has been estimated to be about 320,000 words.

The following features characterize the Finnish alphabet and certainly have something to do with its spelling.

- Standard Finnish has only 13 consonants (d, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v) and 8 vowels (a, e, i, o, u, y, ä, ö); foreign letters b, c, f, g, x and z are used in some loan words.
- The relative frequency of the use of vowels compared to consonants is greater than in other languages. The preference for vowels is also reflected in the prevalence of diphthongs, of which there are 16, more than in other European languages.
- A dominant principle in the formation of words out of sounds is the avoidance of all phonemes which are difficult to articulate. Applications of this principle are: the phenomenon of vowel harmony (back and front vowels do not occur together in the same non-compound word), a syllable never begins with a cluster of consonants, a limited number of consonant clusters which appear at the end of a syllable, avoidance of final consonants other than dentals in all words.



- The main stress is always on the first syllable.
- Finnish words generally consist of a relatively large number of syllables; and the number of monosyllabic words is very limited (about 50).
- The word order in Finnish sentences is comparatively free without changes in the essential meaning of the thought (Hakulinen 1961).

The development of the Finnish language from roughly 1540 to 1820 was rather slow for many reasons: the official language, as well as the means of school education, was Swedish, the country was politically a part of the Swedish kingdom and economically neglected, Finnish literature was scarce and predominately religious. The 19th century meant in many respects a transitional period which gave a strong impetus to the development of the Finnish language. The country became an autonomous part of Russia and could use its resources for its own benefit. The Finns began to feel that they were a nation, and national literature was created. The richness of Finnish folklore (Kalevala) was brought together and instead of the predominance of south-west dialect, other idioms influenced the spelling. The time has therefore often been called an era of the 'battle of the dialects.' In this period modern Finnish developed and took impulses from all parts of the country. Scientific research into the Finnish language has its roots in the 19th century.

During the last century the spelling reached its present regularity in all essential points, concerning e.g. writing of long vowels, geminated consonants, consonantal gradation, declension and conjugation. The most important tasks of so-called modern Finnish are concentrated on the increasing of special vocabulary, the spelling of loan words and on the refinement of sentence structure. As a result of this developmental work the Finnish language, both in spoken and written form, can be considered a fully suitable medium for everyday life, science and culture, administration and information. The Finnish Academy of Science has a department of language development which has aided in this work. Its recommendations are not considered official orders but are often accepted.

Finnish spelling is quite regular, e.g. each sound has always the same sign (letter) irrespective of its place in a word. The present spelling is considered so nearly perfect that no future changes are deemed necessary.

The orthographic simplicity certainly has a very facilitating influence on learning to read (for more about reading in Finland, see Kyostiö 1973).

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- Rapola, Martti: *Vanha kirjasuomi* (Old Literary Finnish). Helsinki, 1962 [2]
- English, Finnish, German & Swedish Bible – versions from different times.

[*Spelling Progress Bulletin Summer 1973 pp14,15 in the printed version*]

## 8. Two Dreams, by Harry Lindgren\*

\**Narrabundah ACT, Australia.*

\**SR-1 used. Reprinted from Spelling Action, April, 1973.*

*Norm Everage is like 90% of his fellow Australians; he seldom reads anything but newspapers and popular periodicals. (Don't take this as a slur on Australians, for the same or worse can be said about any other nationality.)*

*One morning at breakfast he unwrapped his Canberra Times and stared at it in amazement. The familiar title had been replaced by*

### **DHE KANBERA TIEMZ**

and the headline below it was

### **STRIEKERZ DEMAAND WAEJ INKREES**

Hastily scanning the paper, he found the same queer spelling throughout. With an effort he could decipher it, but he found the going heavy and slow and he soon gave up. He had had a lot of trouble learning one spelling system, and quailed at the prospect of learning a second.

His neighbours took in *The Australian* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*. To his relief he found that these papers still used the familiar spelling. So he threw away his *Times*, and called in at the newsagent's to cancel his subscription to it in favour of one of the other newspapers. Then he woke up.

It could only be a dream, for the proprietors of *The Canberra Times* would know what Norm Everage's reaction to such a spelling would certainly be, and not being crazy would never make the suicidal change to this, the New Spelling. Nor would those of any other newspaper. Nor would all of them in concert, with radio and TV around.

But even if they were so crazy, it still could only be a dream. Before the paper could reach Norm Everage, it would have to be printed, and the compositors, if given copy in the New Spelling to set, would promptly lay down tools.

But even if the compositors were docile, it still could only be a dream, for with copy in the unfamiliar spelling to set they would take a week to set the daily paper.

But even if by a miracle the compositors could do a week's work in a day, it still could be only a dream, for there would be no printer's copy to set. It has to be prepared by journalists and clerical staff, and they too, like the compositors, would lay down tools or take a week to do a day's work.

The difficulty confronting the compositors, journalists, clerical staff, and for that matter, all of us who read and write extensively in our jobs, is that we need to read and write effortlessly. Acquiring this effortless in the present spelling took several years, and acquiring equal effortless in

the New Spelling will take at least a year or two. Meanwhile we must get on with our jobs, *using the present spelling*. It simply can't be done.

How on earth then is Norm Everage to be introduced to the New Spelling? It's no use saying we needn't bother about him; 90% of us are Norm Everages, and no spelling system can be sed to be in use if 90% of us don't know it and use it. This 90% can get to know it only through newspapers and popular periodicals. And these, as we have shown, will never use it.

Worse is to come. Could even the 10% of us who are not Norm Everages, who also read books, get to know it and use it? In the foregoing, change *newspaper* to *book*. The argument, with only minor changes such as *authors* insted of *journalists*, is equally valid.

It should be painfully clear that the New Spelling cannot possibly be introduced all at once. Nor can it be introduced gradually, in the sense that the number of books and other publications using it could gradually increase, until all of them do. On the contrary, if there were publications available in both the familiar spelling and an unfamiliar one, the latter would never get a look-in. The number of such publications red by the general public would remain permanently at zero.

Could a clientele for the New Spelling be created by teaching it in the schools? Teachers already have all the trouble they could crave, teaching the present spelling; they don't want another, nor do their pupils. Especially when the other is used nowhere outside school.

What a hopeless outlook! Does it mean then that spelling reform is impossible?

\* \* \* \*

Norm Everage never suffered the nightmare just described. For all that, it gradually dawned on him that something was afoot with our spelling.

He was used to seeing an occasional spelling mistake, he was used to reading that a prisoner was sent to goal (though not in *The Canberra Times*), and that Gallup polls guage public opinion. He hadn't had much schooling, and was shaky himself at spelling; still he could see that *goal* and *guage* were wrong. But he took such mistakes in his stride. What gradually dawned on him was that there was a method behind some of the mistakes.

The two that set him thinking were *eny* and *meny*. These are common words, which is why he often noticed these mis-spellings. His curiosity being aroused, he watched out for these words, and found that they were *always* mis-spelled, that *any* and *many* had given way to *eny* and *meny*.

He linked this discovery with a further one that came more slowly, the discovery that *alredy* and *insted* and *sed* had given way to *alredy* and *insted* and *sed*. Though not an intellectual giant, he could see something common to all these spellings, the letter *e*. He could also hear something common to all these words, the vowel-sound as in *bet*.

"Norm," he sed to his son who was at primary school, "spell *hed*."

"*H-e-d*," replied his son.

"Spel sed."

"*S-e-d*."

"When I was at school, we were taught to spell them h-e-a-d and s-a-i-d."

"So were we, but this year they changed them to h-e-d and s-e-d."

"Don't you find it hard? First you learn one spelling, and then you have to learn another."

"Aw come off it, Dad. We now spell them the sensible way. It's easy!"

Next day Norm senior was imbibing refreshment with his friend and old schoolmate Barry. Barry had done well at school and worked in an office, so Norm thought he would know about this spelling business, and he asked him about it.

"They call it SR-1," explained Barry, "and it means that wherever you say *e* as in *bet* you write *e*. You no longer write *ie* in *frend*, or *ea* in *hed*, or *ai* in *sed*. In all these words the sound is the same, so you make the letter the same."

I shall skip the rest of the talk that Norm had with Barry. It suffices to say that when it was over he fully understood the rationale of step-by-step reform. This is not surprising, even though Norm was no scholar, for there is nothing difficult about it. I make do with the tail-end of their talk.

"So you see, Norm, the professors and other literary blokes were agin it. They sed our spelling was part of our priceless cultural heritage. They write a *g* in *gnash* and a *k* in *knife* though we don't say them -that's culture. We say *pritty* but write *pretty* – that's more culture."

"These ----- professors," growled Norm. " --- their ---- culture!" He continued,

"You know yourself, Barry, I wasn't much good at school; the only thing I was at all good at was geography; I *liked* it; I tried to read books about it, but I had to give up because reading them was too hard for me."

"Well, it's alrely a little easier for your young Norm and my young Barry, and it'll go on getting still easier for them. And in another ten years or so they'll be getting married and having kids, and soon these kids of theirs will be going to school. They'll do a lot better than we did, if they have anything in them at all. At eny rate, they won't be held up by *reading*."

\* \* \* \* \*

The second part of<sup>\*</sup> this article, like the first, is a dream. Unlike the first, it *could* become a reality.

The use of the New Spelling by way of example does not imply approval.

(Reprinted with minor alterations from the *Modern Teaching* published by the Modern Education Forum of Canberra, which may presently reform as the Canberra Section of the World Education Fellowship.)

[Spelling Progress Bulletin Summer 1973 pp15–17 in the printed version]

## 9. Research on Orthographies; Priorities, by Emmett A. Betts\*

\*Presented at the combined meeting of the International Reading Assoc. and the Phonemic Spelling Council, Denver, Colo., May 2, 1973.

The Phonemic Spelling Council is a new educational organization with a difference – a purpose which may contribute to a research-based orthography at least for beginners in reading. Antecedents to P.S.C. are the Spelling Reform Association founded in 1876, the Simplified Spelling Board founded in 1906, and the Simpler Spelling Association founded in 1946 – all of which cooperated with the British Simplified Spelling Society founded in 1908. The major orientation of P.S.C. is on RESEARCH.

One of the outcomes of the efforts of the antecedent organizations of P.S.C. in this country is a growing awareness of the limitations of traditional spelling representations (T.O.) of speech. Perhaps not the least of this increasingly popular support is from the reading establishment represented by the International Reading Association. But linguists, orthographers, and alfabetees are sources of healthy differences of *opinion* which tend to cause confusion in our ranks. While we can achieve *unity* of opinion regarding the *need* for a thoro updating of spellings, we have not achieved UNANIMITY regarding basic premises and approaches to this very serious roadblock to effective reading instruction.

Perhaps one of the most significant outcomes of the efforts of antecedent organizations is the research of Dr. Godfrey Dewey, a giant in his field on both sides of the Atlantic. His landmark study, *Relative Frequency of English Speech Sounds* was first published by Harvard Univ. Press in 1923 and revised in 1950. This contribution became an indispensable source of information for scholars concerned with the theoretical aspects of orthography, the teaching of reading and spelling, the psychology of language (speech) and writing (the encoding of speech sounds), and communication engineering. Unfortunately authors of books on the teaching of reading – too seldom being neither teachers nor scholars--have been unaware of this focal point in the teaching of reading so ably delineated by Dr. Dewey. As a result, reading instruction has been de-escalated by futile attempts to promote ridiculous, unrealistic phonic rules as clues to the pronunciation of words, too often irregularly spelled. (Witness the number of \$100,000 a year radio newscasters who pronounce the last syllable of temperature as /tyur/ rather than as /chur/ or /chər/. They haven't discovered the fact that spelling pronunciations produce erratic results,)

In 1970, the Teachers College Press, of Columbia Univ. published Dr. Godfrey Dewey's *Relative Frequency of English Spellings* which complements his first study. On the basis of this study psychologists can approach word perception of T.O. spelled words in terms of types of perceptual learning rather than unfruitful phonic rules: (1) category learning (e.g. *it-big-fish-ship*), (2) cue learning (e.g. *ou* of *out*), (3) probability learning (e.g. *oo* of *moon* and *look*), (4) alternation learning (e.g. *nationnational*). But more important to spelling reform, Dr. Dewey offers a statistical analysis of the spellings of speech sounds; for example, the frequency of each spelling of the sound /sh/ in (s/ure), (sh)ore, o(c)ean, (ch)aise, (sch)wa, and so on. These data are especially significant for those orthographers who, in the interests of compatibility, wish to make maximum use of the present alphabet for an initial learning medium.

In 1971, Teachers College Press also published Dr. Godfrey Dewey's *English Spelling: Roadblock to Reading*. Over the years Dr. Dewey has applied his unique scholarship to the statistical evaluation of initial learning orthographies, including the development of a WES (World English Spelling) version for beginners in reading. In this 1971 volume, he also presents statistical data on

the pronunciation of spellings (e.g., the sounds represented by *ew* in *sew* and *crew*), on previous investigations, and on practical applications.

On these solid foundations laid by Dr. Dewey, P.S.C. can project needed research on discriminability and perceptibility of symbols for an initial learning medium. Furthermore, the architects of reading instruction – authors, administrators, supervisors, teachers, and publishers plus manufacturers of typewriters, and typographers – have access to lucid and scholarly writings on the perils of the status quo of English orthography. This legacy is to be cherished and respected as one of the significant monuments on the road to the improvement of reading instruction. That is, it can be when we do the necessary hard work to understand its full meaning and the urgently needed follow-up research to remove the irrational orthographic roadblock to reading and spelling.

### **Need for Reform**

A spate of publications, dating back to at least the sixteenth century, have called attention to the fact that the English language has changed, especially the vowel sounds, so that many conventional spellings no longer fit the speech sounds. This loose "fit" between conventional orthography and speech sounds has given beginners in reading and spelling another kind of "fit," as witnessed by the high incidence of failures in the primary school.

In this electronic age, there appears an increasing interest in a consistent spelling system which facilitates "computer" use. Scholars in this discipline may become staunch allies, contributors, and supporters.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of solutions have been proposed, but the opposition to spelling reform has quite effectively muted the authors and inventors of these proposals. That something needs to be done about escalating reading instruction is recognized in the National Reading Improvement Act of 1972 which proposed to distribute more than one-half a billion dollars, mostly to perpetuate the status quo which creates the reading problems. Furthermore, huge sums from the U.S. Treasury have been squandered in the name of "The Right-to-Read" program. These fruitless, ineffective efforts to maintain the status quo, which has been defined as the mess we are in, have been misdirected away from one of the *local* points of reading instruction: conventional spellings.

Only one approach to circumventing the irrational aspects of our spelling achieved a very small degree of success during the last decade: Sir James Pitman's i.t.a. This system, introducing new symbols, has been demonstrated to be more efficient than T.O. But so has a diacritical marking system devised by Dr. Edward Fry.

To achieve a spelling reform for beginning reading materials, there is an urgent need for an interdisciplinary approach to the experimental evaluation of orthographic symbols for both stressed and unstressed syllables. This experimental research will be focused on the discriminability of symbols for beginners, on the perceptibility of symbols, on both syllable stress and phase stress, on uses of capital and/or lower case letters, on compatibility of symbols with T.O. for easy transition from a revised initial learning medium to T.O., and other crucial considerations. Perhaps as a starter, special attention needs to be given to experimental studies of i.t.a. and World English Spelling (W.E.S., i.t.m. ).

### **Research**

In 1969, the Grant Foundation funded an international meeting of scholars at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida to consider orthographic reform – especially an initial learning medium for beginners. Following this fruitful interdisciplinary conference, two types of research proposals were outlined: (1) teacher education and (2) pupil learning.

The first series of studies is focused on "the effect on pupil achievement in the classroom when the teacher – via demonstration-laboratory courses – attain measurable functional skills and/or knowledge in phoneme-grapheme perception, motivation of verbal learning, educational psychology as a basis for verbal learning, differential psychology as a basis for differentiated instruction, concept formation and thinking (comprehension, or cognition), and other relevant learnings: 'One of the complexity of problems relevant to this series is the identification of crucial and essential components of phonemics, orthography, educational psychology, and other relevant disciplines. The purpose of the evaluation of essentials is to screen out the minutiae of interest only to specialists in these disciplines so that classroom teachers are neither overwhelmed nor underwhelmed. Significant progress on these problems is being reported, but the experimental designs for the comprehensive approach to teacher education remain under intensive study.

The second series of experimental research – pupil learning – parallels the series on teacher education. Here again, the complexity of problems requires unique experimental designs, the development of evaluation measures, and the preparation of basic instructional materials. Both case study and group approaches are used. These research proposals and progress in them are being reported elsewhere.

Studies of pupil learning are focused on the stimuli in reading: orthographic symbols. The emphasis is on the experimental evaluation of symbols which tend to interfere with or to facilitate the reading processes. Succinctly stated, the focus is on the *experimental* study of the motivated perceptual and cognitive processing of graphic symbols at the phoneme-grapheme and higher linguistic and cognitive levels.

At the 1972 meeting of the Board of Trustees, Phonemic Spelling Council, the University of Miami was selected as one center for a post-doctoral reading/writing research institute. As a first step the Dr. Godfrey Dewey Archives, embracing a century of research and study, were transferred from Lake Placid Club Education Foundation to the library of the Reading Research Laboratory, Univ. of Miami. From this new location the publications of the Phonemic Spelling Council and its antecedent organizations are distributed to the members.

### **Phonemic Orthography**

For generations, the goal of scholars in linguistics, orthography, and cognate areas has been "one sound, one sign." But progress toward this goal has left no turn unstoned. Protagonists of different reform proposals are adamant regarding the introduction of new symbols on the one hand and the use of a no-new-letter alphabet on the other hand. Some extremists appear to deviate from the concept of a phonemic based orthography when they insist that decoding writing into speech is not a component of the reading processes. Then there are those who insist on retaining certain spellings for etymological reasons, because the ancestry of a word sometimes helps to reveal its meaning. But it is difficult to reconcile these opinions with the perception needs of *beginners* in reading!

The following is a summary of principles, premises, and opinions that require *experimental* evaluation. Lively discussions of these opinions yield more heat than light.

1. A practical, phonemic orthography has only one symbol, or spelling, for each *significant* sound.
  - a. A phonemic orthography is a system of consistent spellings, regardless of the "freely fluctuating varieties of a phoneme."
  - b. The more frequently and consistently used phoneme is symbolized.
  - c. Phonemes with the widest dialectal distribution are symbolized.
  - d. In general, complex phonemes are written with single symbols.
  - e. A practical, phonemic orthography represents a compromise somewhere between extremely rapid speech and extremely slow speech – for a consistent symbolization of significant speech sounds.

- f. Loan words (e.g. *orange, grippe, sponge*) in the assimilated language are spelled as they are pronounced; incompletely assimilated words in the language may require the use of additional symbols to represent the extra sounds.
  - g. In English, considerable experimentation is needed on representing in a practical way the complex and complicated intonation patterns which convey meaning in speech.
2. A phonemic orthography reduces spellings to the symbolization of significant speech sounds.
    - a. Traditional orthography requires the memorization of an arbitrary set of rules: e.g. the so-called final *e* rule for *made, cake, ate, tape* spelling pattern.
    - b. Traditional orthography requires the memorization of an arbitrary list of spellings: e.g. *you, come, have, of, said, here, one, might, many, would, again*.
  3. A phonemic alphabet utilizes to the best advantage the letters of the Roman alphabet.
    - a. The use of diacritics, especially those not in common use as the modified macron and the breve circumflex versus the macron and breve, is avoided – to reduce confusion, to increase speed of writing, and to make printing easy.
    - b. A minimum of new letters (orthographic innovations) is introduced.
    - c. Capital letter forms may be omitted to reduce confusion and frustration. (Perhaps i.t.a. has a practical answer which reduces the number of characters used.)
  4. A phonemic orthography facilitates learning to read by beginners via consistent spelling patterns, eliminating or reducing cue and probability learning.
    - a. When the beginner has learned consistent associations between symbols and significant sounds, he reads rather than guesses the word from its syntactic, semantic, and/or pragmatic constraints (contexts).
    - b. Reduction in the types of learning required for word perception can drastically reduce both frustration and instructional time.
  5. A phonemic orthography facilitates learning to write and, therefore, may improve communication via better composition; spelling is automatic so the writer who has only one mind can attend to this message. (Actually the idea of "divided attention" is a mythnomer!)
  6. A phonemic orthography facilitates rapid reading via a continuous flow of consistent associations between symbol and sound.

### **In Conclusion**

In our symbol minded society, some studies have demonstrated that certain proposed, initial learning media (for beginners in reading) are mastered as easily or with greater ease than traditional orthography (T.O.). But experimental research on the basic characteristics of spelling symbols remains virgin territory. It is this territory that P.S.C. has laid plans to explore and to map in terms of teachers and learners.

The chief purpose of this presentation is to focus attention on (1) the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach to spelling reform and (2) the urgent need for experimental research. A corollary purpose is to isolate conventional spelling as one major source of interferences in learning to read. Hence, no real purpose is served by pestering legislators to adopt a given reform proposal at this point in time; instead, there is need to demonstrate the desirability of funding *experimental RESEARCH* unimpeded by political interference. Eventually, a phonemic initial learning alphabet is inevitable, leading to spelling reform.



## Who says our spelling is no problem?

WRONG ON TWO COUNTS – A misspelled street sign at the intersection of Crescent Heights Blvd. and Hollywood Blvd. has kept residents of the Sunset Strip area chuckling since its appearance this week. Only the street sign division of the city could explain the error – and it was closed Wednesday!

[A picture of the street sign, "CRESENT HIEGHTS BL". The quality is too poor for scanning.]

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Summer 1973 pp18-20 in the printed version]

### 10. Book Reviews, by Helen Bonnema

i.t.a. as a Tool for Preventing Cumulative Language Deficit in Disadvantaged Children, by Eleanor R. Kirkland and Frank Bautista; a chapter in: Figurel, J. Allen, Editor, *Better Reading in the Urban Schools*, International Reading Assoc. Newark, Del. 1971, 78 pp, 1972, members \$2.00, others, \$3.00.

The Dos Rios School in the North Sacramento, Calif. School District was chosen by Sacramento State College to serve as a demonstration school in the Mexican-American Experienced Teacher Fellowship Program. This school has a large population of children of Mexican descent with a heavy concentration from the lower socioeconomic group. The rest of the school population is composed of Anglo, Negro, and Oriental children from approximately the same socioeconomic level. The Mary Smythe School, with a similar population, in the same school district was added as a demonstration school during the second year of the program.

Research has shown that many children from the lower socioeconomic groups suffer a severe language deficit at the time they enter the first grade. David P. Ausubel found that children from a culturally deprived environment were handicapped by "an improvised language-symbolic system. . . In the area of language development, and particularly with respect to the abstract dimensions of verbal functioning, the culturally deprived child manifests the greatest degree of intellectual retardation." He further stated that this deficit in verbal functioning tends to become cumulative in effect. With reference to the development of reading skills, this conclusion is born out by an examination of the school records of these children which often show a lag of from three to five years in reading achievement on completion of elementary school.

However, Ausubel hypothesized that "an optimal learning environment could arrest and reverse in part the existing degree of retardation." The demonstration schools were to serve as a testing ground for a variety of materials and methods which would fill the gaps in the children's pre-school experience.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this particular study was to assess the effectiveness of i.t.a. combined with a language experience approach as a tool for the development of oral and written language and reading, particularly for groups of disadvantaged learners having a bilingual and non-standard English speaking element.

The sample consisted of 102 children divided into two groups consisting of an experimental group of 51 first grade children from the two schools. In addition, the children in the demonstration class at the Dos Rios School were chosen on the basis of their language deficit in English, low

performance in kindergarten or pre-first based on testing and teacher judgement, or because they had no previous school experience. As such, they represented the lower and less capable half of the incoming first grade. During the school year two boys who had recently arrived from Mexico with their families, were added to this class.

### **Tests Used**

The Cooperative Primary Reading Test, Form 12A, was used to measure reading achievement. The children using i.t.a. were administered the i.t.a. version of the test. The oral and written developments of the child were measured by teacher evaluation of vocabulary, number of words used, word meaning, length of sentences, sentence patterns, and length of stories written.

### **Description of the Program**

The primary objective was to provide sequence of experiences for all bilingual and disadvantaged children which would lead them to the efficient acquisition of the basic skills of reading, language and number concepts, and the social understanding and behavior which form the objectives of the curriculum at this level, and second, to provide for each child a consistent pattern of success and to avoid insofar as possible the frustrations and failure met by so many of these children in the conventional classroom.

Since the greatest single deficit was in the area of language development, the experimental group was taught bilingually. Both teachers spoke Spanish as did the aides and students from the college who were involved in the program. Some of the most interesting results were noted in the experimental first grade at the Dos Rios School.

The teacher in this classroom was a Mexican-American with a fluent command of Spanish. He had been an elementary teacher in the district for 12 years, altho not always at the Dos Rios School. Thruout the year he spent many hours working with families and leaders in the Mexican-American community. As a result he had a keen awareness and understanding of the problems faced by these children when they enter school. The objectives and philosophy of this study were developed as a result of this experience.

Since the greatest single deficit of the children in achieving school success was in language skills, the main focus was in this area. The class was taught bilingually in that all explanations and responses from the children were given in both Spanish and English with frequent translation to insure comprehension. The class did not hold bilingualism as a goal for the children, but as a tool for encouraging children to use the language in which they had the background necessary for clarifying meaning, and developing the language skills of speaking, writing, and to a limited degree, reading. At the beginning of the year considerable time was devoted to the use of the Peabody Language Kit, particularly the picture cards, inquiry discussions, singing games, story time, puppets, dramatization, and role playing. These activities were presented in both English and Spanish with constant translation back and forth. i.t.a. symbols were used for all writing.

Gradually, as the children became familiar with the sound-symbol relationship of the characters, they were asked to draw pictures of things beginning with the sound they represented. The Spanish-speaking children were encouraged to find Spanish words beginning with the sounds being studied. In this way the children were using the language which they brought from home as the basis for learning early reading skills. Whenever possible, words with the same beginning sound in both Spanish and English were used as examples.

As the children began to write simple sentences independently, it was noted that those children with a Spanish speaking background were writing Spanish words and phrases in i.t.a. This practice was encouraged, and it led to the development of parallel stories written in both English and Spanish

using i.t.a. With the children's help, it was not difficult to find i.t.a. symbols for each of the Spanish sounds. Stories were written on the blackboard side by side in both English and Spanish, and the children were asked to find the same phrase or word in both versions. The stories were transferred to a tagboard and became a permanent addition to the classroom in the form of *Our Big Book o/ Stories*. Comparisons were made in the grammatical structure, word order, agreement of modifiers, and the gender of nouns in Spanish, etc.

The rationale for using i.t.a. symbols in both languages simultaneously was that thru the use of a single set of characters arranged in a one-sound-for-one-symbol relationship for both languages, the development of both reading and writing skills could proceed much more rapidly than would otherwise be the case. Altho the primary objective was the acquisition of language skills in English, the opportunity to begin a second language under optimum conditions was offered to the English speaking child.

### **Outcomes**

In May 1970, all children in the primary grades in the North Sacramento School District were tested for reading achievement. The Primary Cooperative Reading Test was administered to all first grade pupils. The i.t.a. classes used the i.t.a. version. From the analysis of data it was concluded that there was a significant difference in reading in favor of the experimental group. The mean grade equivalent achievement in reading for the class was 2.0 or one month above the grade level of 1.9 for the May testing. In terms of the number of children reading at or above grade level as compared to those reading below grade level, 15 of the 24 children tested were reading at or above grade level. Four others showed a lag of one month, and no one scored below 1.5. As was anticipated, the children with the least command of English were found to be in the lower quartile of the class ranking. However, the highest score in the class was achieved by a child who had spoken no English until entrance into kindergarten the previous year.

Many observations of the bilingual i.t.a. class revealed the high degree of enthusiasm and confidence which both teacher and pupils had for the i.t.a. program were delighted with the results of the use of i.t.a. in Spanish as well as in English and especially by the sense of discovery which accompanied its use.

### **Conclusions**

The use of i.t.a. would appear to be a more effective means of teaching reading to disadvantaged children than the use of t.o. There seemed to be a more positive reinforcement, in terms of successful experiences, built into the i.t.a. program. This outcome may account in part for the enhanced self-confidence observed in children in the i.t.a. classes. A real difference in reading achievement was demonstrated by the ability of those i.t.a. pupils who made the transfer to t.o. to read from second and third grade basal readers.

'With reference to the ability of the two reading programs to overcome the initial language deficit in disadvantaged children and to prevent the cumulative effects of this deficit upon later academic achievement, the results indicate that the i.t.a. program, particularly when used within the framework of a language experience approach, shows definite promise and, within the limits of the present sample, a demonstrated ability to prevent the onset of this cumulative deficit in the area of reading.

For the complete report, with its implications, and bibliography, see the book *Better Reading in Urban Schools* cited at the beginning of this review.

Escape to Elysium, by L. J. J. Nye. paperback, 154 pp. \$1.90. Copyright 1972. Printed at Wentworth Press, Walter Stone & Sons, 48 Cooper St, Surrey Hills, Australia, 2010.

In Greek mythology, Elysium was the abode of the blessed after death. Today, Elysium is a term denoting any place of perfect happiness.

Dr. L. J. J. Nye of Brisbane, Australia, using his observations as a physician, wrote this series of narrative essays because of his concern about the needless ill-health of people thruout the world. He shows that unwise living may be changed thru proper understanding and the use of medical knowledge, psychology, eugenics, sexual and other human relationships, citizenship, religion, world history, and politics.

Many of his views are unorthodox and all are most thought-provoking.

The foreword is an appeal for the reformation of English spelling and explains SR 1 (Spelling Reform Step One) which is used thruout. If for no other reason than as an example of such a minimal use of rational spelling, the book is worth having.

We think our readers would like to see the foreword:

The greatest need in the world today is the free use of an international language so that people of all nations can converse freely with one another.

Meny men of vision have recognized this need, and over 700 artificial languages have been created. The most popular have been Volapiik, Esperanto, Ido, Interlingua, Interlingue and Neo. Of these, Esperanto is the most frequently used. Even when I was a student, before World War 1, I was an enthusiastic Esperantist. Yet, in spite of the strenuous efforts of their supporters, none has made significant hedway.

To meny of us, the logical solution to the problem appeared to be that UNESCO should appoint a committee of philologists and phoneticians to decide which was the most practical of all the existing artificial languages, and then encourage educational authorities in every country to teach it as its second language. With the sponsorship of several Rotary Clubs which supported the idea, I lectured in some leading towns in South East Asia, Ceylon and Pakistan.

Nowhere could I gain eny support from internationally minded Rotarians for what appeared to us to be the logical solution to the problem. They were adamant that they would not give eny thought to studying an artificial language because English is now the accepted international language. They realized that they must learn English if they wished to be well educated and successful because English is now the language of higher education and the language used for commerce, science, international organizations, conferences and diplomacy, though they all deplored its absurd, illogical, unphonetic spelling.

In the *Spelling Progress Bulletin* in 1969, I red an article by a Japanese scholar, Yoshisaburo Okakura, in which he stressed the need for an international auxiliary language. While admitting the undoubted merits of English for this purpose, he sed, "The chief obstacle (and a tremendous one it is) which hinders present-day English from universal adoption as an international auxiliary language is the lamentably chaotic conditions of its conventional spellings. The amount of wasted time and energy that accompanies lessons in English orthography is simply appalling.

"It is amazing to us foreigners that the English Government, so logical and far sighted in meny respects, should be so slow to see the need for simplifying English spelling."

Apart from spelling reform making English a more readily acceptable international language for foreigners, many medical men give strong support to reform, for we have observed how needlessly cruel the present spelling is to our children, especially those with dyslexia or poor rote memory. Such children may be gifted with all the attributes for success; they are often diligent and can reason logically, but they have this failing in their mental equipment. Our illogical, irregular spelling confuses them so much that most of them never become sufficiently literate to enjoy reading, and psychologists consider that much of child delinquency is due to this cause.

It is also annoying and time-wasting when even experienced writers and secretaries have to consult a dictionary so often to avoid exhibiting unpardonable ignorance.

Since the sixteenth century, many thoughtful scholars have made attempts at spelling reform, all without success. More widely organized societies have existed in England and in the U.S.A. since the turn of the century. Today these movements have been united in the Simpler Spelling Society (S.S.S.) in the United Kingdom and in the Simplified Spelling Association (S.S.A.) of the U.S.A.

Together, these societies have produced World English Spelling (W.E.S.). This has made little headway because people have an innate objection to undertaking major reforms.

In 1969 Harry Lindgren, a philologist and phonetician of Canberra, published a book entitled *Spelling Reform A New Approach*. In this he advocates a logical and acceptable plan for introducing changes gradually over a period of many years. The first stage he calls SRI. When these new spellings have been generally accepted the next step, SR2, will be introduced and so on. The changes will be so few and so logical that students will soon learn to use them and will look forward to the next step.

If education authorities agree, the new spelling will be all that the new generation will know, but they will still be able to read our present orthography because the changes will be gradually introduced over a long period of years. This reform when completed would not only save much mental suffering for some children, but the average child of 8 years would read as freely as the average child of 10 years today.

It would also establish English firmly as the international language and thus help people throughout the world to live together in goodwill, friendship, and peace.

As a step towards this goal I am publishing this book in SR1 (spelling reform, stage one) in which the short vowel sound as in *bet* is denoted by *e*, as in *frend*, *ded*, *tresure*, *meny*, *spred*, etc.

I also use the more logical spellings commonly called Americanisms, such as *thru*, *maneuver*, *program*, *catalog*, *labor*, etc. and *ize* instead of *ise*, as in "realize".

## 11. Letters to the Editor

### Get our Youth interested

Dear Mr. Tune:

Barnett Russell, M.D.

I visited relatives last night and my teen-age niece mentioned that she always spells *nite* for "night", *tho* for "though" because she likes the shorter forms. This of course is in her personal correspondence.

This gave me an idea. Youth is the source of rebellion against authority. They would be the first to adopt reformed spellings. When I was active in International Language Magazine, many of my enthusiasts were of high school age. So *that* should be your target. Go after the youth.

Perhaps a "promotion" expert could be obtained to volunteer some help. It should not be too difficult to organize Reformed Spelling Clubs in every high school. They could publish a page of reformed text in their high school paper. They could and probably would enjoy forcing the school authorities to accept work written in simplified spelling, at least not to be marked wrong unless they are wrong in the new system.

I don't have the time to get involved, but those that do can accomplish much with these high school youths. Perhaps you could send me some literature that I could give to my teenage nieces to pass the word on. Perhaps try the idea locally at a local high school first. Then if it succeeds, I could tell my nieces, they already have "Spelling clubs" in California.

No system is perfect, but by this time one or more of the systems must be workable. Good or bad, the new system would be a vast improvement--so let's get on with at least the most *powerful* one (the one with the most money behind it).

They talk about the schwa, but I have never seen a script symbol for it. How would you write one in script?

At random I take the word "dialect" as I have page 11 of your Bulletin before me. In World English Spelling it is 'die.alekt.' If we used a schwa, die ə lekt. Has anyone a solution to the script and typed form of the schwa (for pen and typewriter)? Perhaps the *u* is a solution: die u lekt. The speaker who "er--er--s" really sounds like "uh-uh."

Also why don't you include a page of reformed spellings in each Bulletin? If you can't decide on a system, print at least two of the best you like, offering ¼ page spaces to any rival systems.

What system do you favor? Can you send me literature on that system?

**Yours, Barnett Russell**

P. S. The system *RIT* on page 19 of your last Bulletin, Spring, 73, is not for the present. I believe a shorthand script will eventually be possible but it's a long way off. It's difficult enough to introduce a reform of spelling, much less reform of script also. Perhaps permitting an undotted *i* or uncrossed *t* may be accepted by our high schools.

How would the i.t.a. system appeal to high schoolers? I've forgotten what a text in i.t.a. looks like.

And, oh yes, if we are going to appeal to high school youth, we have to catch their eye and zeal with proper attractive ideas, especially *brevity* and *simplicity*. They probably won't accept too radical a change, or maybe they would! ??

Anyway, you will never get very far with appeals to adults. Average adults resist change. What advantage is there in it for them?

What is the latest version of simplified spelling put out by the Phonemic Spelling Council, which should at least spell its name "*foneemikly*." B. R.

**Dear Dr. Russell:**

You have some good ideas which we appreciate.

I found a couple of examples of writing in i.t.a. which are enclosed.

There is no system which has any amount of money backing it. However, the most thoroly tested system and the most sensible one is World English Spelling. A three page example of it is shown in this issue in the biography of Helen Bonnema's father. WES does not include the schwa symbol because that would require alterations to all typewriters.

We have generally refrained from giving space to the many systems devised because if we gave free space to one, we'd be swamped with dozens of requests to give publicity to all others. Then we wouldn't have space for scholarly articles. However, if someone wants to write a humorous article in their system, we will print it if possible.

Sincerely, the Editor.

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