

# Spelling Progress Bulletin

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

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

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

Assistant Editor,  
Ivor Darreg,  
3426 Winslow Dr,  
Los Angeles, Calif. 9026.

## Table of Contents

1. From the Editor's Desk.
2. The Future of English as THE World Language, by Yoshisaburo Okakura.
11. Why Johnny Can't Spell, by Mildred Vandenberg.
13. Shortcuts for the Improvement of Reading Instruction, by Ellen C. Henderson
17. Wealth Amplifiers, by Ivor Darreg.
18. Learning to Read - an Analysis, by Beatrix Tudor-Hart.
19. World language. Sistemizd English.
20. Wanted = = Crusaders, by Leo G. Davis.

## Coming Attractions

Spelling and Reading - the Siamese Twins.  
Alphabetamation (optical character recognition by machines) by Ivor Darreg  
Rules used in Teaching Spelling.  
Half a loaf is better than no bread at all.  
Numalittera -or how to write in Math for the Computer, by Ivor Darreg.  
A minimal change system of simplified spelling.  
A study of Spelling Errors.

## From the Editor's Desk

We think the following letter should be of some interest to our readers:

Mrs. Patricia Gilson Green,  
Naval Air Sta., Norfolk, Va., U.S.A.  
Feb. 25, 1969

Professor Kiyoshi Makita,  
Dept. of Neuropsychiatry, Keio Gijuku University,  
Tokyo, Japan.

Subject: Reference to Press release about the difficulty of American students to learn reading in relation to Japanese students.

Dear Professor:

Though I am only schooled to the extent of one year's college, I write to you because we share concern for the children of the future. By copy of this letter, I am asking the Editor of the Spelling Progress Bulletin, Mr. Newell W. Tune, North Hollywood, Calif. to write to you and send you a

back copy of his magazine. Perhaps you would like to write an article for his magazine as I have had the pleasure of doing.

Since I spent a happy year in Tokyo (Minami, Shinagawa) I can well see the contrast in our learning systems and our ways to live, and in many ways I prefer the Japanese way to the American. When you speak of the children learning to read more easily in Japan, I think you mentally include the obvious benefits of a common culture (as opposed to the melting pot of American people - many children speak one language at school and another at home). The comfortable uniforms of the Japanese children should be used here so that economic competition and outward appearance are not so important, and inner things like intellect and virtue regain their stature.

I would also like to see American classrooms made cooler in the winter so that the children, breaching fresh air, could think more easily than they would in a heated room. Then our air conditioning sometimes makes it uncomfortable to think in the summer. The fact that a lot of our children ride instead of waking up their senses by walking, is a contributing factor that our children get sleepy in class. The participation and concern of the parents seems more apparent there (I knew many parents who studied with their children, freely admitting their weakness in a subject - in America a parent rarely admits this and he rarely shares the child's studies).

If I had the chance, I would bring my children back to Japan today but I have neither the job there nor the command of the language that would make this feasible.

Nevertheless, I hope to talk with oriental people often, absorbing their serenity. I hope to travel to Hawaii with the children where East and West meet.

If you have the time, I will welcome a letter from you. I wish that America would simplify its printing as you Japanese have done (at least eliminate lower case and use just upper case). I wish our grammar were more simple, and our spelling more regular. If you have any literature published on this subject, I am sure Mr. Tune would like to print it, and I know I would be grateful for a copy.

Thanking you for your time, I am,  
Yours sincerely,  
Mrs. Patricia Gilson Green,

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[Spelling Reform Anthology §19.5 pp255-263]  
[Spelling Progress Bulletin Fall 1969 pp2-10]

### **The Future of English as THE World Language, by Yoshisaburo Okakura\***

\*Reprinted from *Studies in English Literature*, Vol. XII, No. 4. Copyright 1932, by Kenkyusha, Tokyo.

\*Professor of English Literature, St. Paul's University, Tokyo.

#### **1. My concern over the spelling of English.**

It seems as if it takes a foreigner to appreciate the simplicity of English grammar and to deprecate the anomalies of its spelling. But "Why this meddlesome hand on the trough, and that stretched out of the Far East? As if you were not aware of the fact that we already have had enough 'upsetters' both at home and abroad, you old 'boat-rocker!'" Perhaps a piece of eloquence of this description will be the only reward I might expect for all my pains. And yet the deep-rooted love in me of this sublunary life, with all its innocent vanities, would not allow me to enjoy it in peace till I could see

English freed, if not from all, at least from its remediable evils. How could a physician as a true apostle of the noble "art of mercy," as his practice is called in the Orient, ever have one single hour of real rest, so long as he has within his easy reach a curable patient calling for his help? Just as if in his senses he will not (and surely ought not!) pass by a man with a bleeding arm without taking some immediate step to provide relief, so anyone with a heart to feel for human frailties in general, and some warm drops of compassion to spare for his fellow-travellers on life's solitary way, more especially one in the teaching profession, naturally will not, if made of the true metal at all, endure the piteous sight of the physical torture as well as mental energy wasted on an irrational spelling in an otherwise rational nation. Especially is this the case when the greatest sufferers are its tender members of the rising generation, and merely because their elders, who are under the narcotic influence of custom, are ready to feel in the deed a smack of patriotism and a dash of scholarly flavor into the bargain.

All this, however, may not be sufficient as a reason for my particular interest in English spelling, as, if one might with great reason say, the Japanese writing itself, with its own traditional usages of the native syllabics, and what is most lamentable, with an enormous number (12,000 at the lowest estimate) of the Chinese characters in their manifold phonetico-semantic as well as calligraphic forms, it is this very hopeless condition of the native mechanism of the graphic expression of thought that strongly draws my attention towards the spelling question in English. For it is this language that is taught as one of the most important subjects of study in middle-grade schools all throughout Japan, and as such, every single item in English grammar (i.e. its phonological, orthographical, syntactical, and other linguistic as well as stylistic facts) has its special meaning as a means both of culture and training. The less tainted by linguistic and other unreason, the better of course for the learner. But alas for the young learners of English in Japan! After they have fought for six complete years against the most fearful orthological odds in the whole world, they have to face anew, poor things, a fresh set of spelling abnormalities that beset them on their entrance into secondary school. Only yesterday a young beginner of English in my household was overheard confiding his secret to his aunt concerning the right hits at spelling exercises, which was, according to his boyish idea, to go by contraries of what the logic of the literal arrangement most naturally suggested. This is simply horrible as a mental tendency, since it leads to a nebulous mind, so contrary to the way of thinking aimed at by educationists. A Japanese child just beginning his English first reader at school may in the truest sense be said to be leaping out of the frying-pan into the fire.

This state of things in our educational curriculum, as you can easily understand, is by itself serious enough to a thinking member of Japanese society; indeed too much so to let him look with indifference upon the appalling mass of heterogeneity whose name is English orthography. Is that not a sufficient reason for my claim to have a finger in the pie, even if I may thereby burn my nail off? But there is another consideration that has sharpened my interest in things English in their linguistic beatings. That, of all the modern European languages of wide political as well as cultural importance brought under our notice in the early years of the Meiji Era, English has come to be crowned with the glory of being the one officially sanctioned as eligible for introduction in practically all of the secondary schools and there taught with an almost pathetic assiduity, is perhaps to be attributed more to the result of the political status of Japan in those early days than to any act of prophetic foresight on the part of the men at the rudder. As good luck would have it, however, English, with all its orthological imperfections, has, during the last fifty years, been steadily making its triumphal march around the whole habitable earth, thus by gradual steps promising to win for itself the glorious prestige of being an interlanguage in no very distant future. That English happens to be the vernacular of two of the greatest world-powers on both sides of the Atlantic, is only one half of the explanation of her ascendancy. The other half, and a more enduring one, is to be found in the linguistic structure of the language itself in its modern development, which, notwithstanding its most erratic spelling, is pretty simple in pronunciation and highly analytic in its syntactic

framework. When I speak in this manner about the ease that attends the learning of English, the reader will remember that I have in view some such influential languages of Europe as French, German, Italian, and Spanish as objects of comparison. If put side by side with any of these, you will find that *English always comes out the brighter for the test*. Statistical researches of the most impartial description have of recent years repeatedly revealed the undeniable fact that it has been fast gaining ground on all of the above-mentioned rival languages.

## **2. The Future of English as The World Language.**

The international disturbances that trouble us at present are chiefly the outcome of international misunderstanding. This latter is chiefly due to difficulties of communication between the peoples themselves. Some better means of international transmission of thought is necessary for the possible realization of world peace. Hence the need for an international auxiliary language. Attempts have been to produce an artificial language: Volapuk, Langue Bleue, etc. in the past, and Esperanto, Ido, Novial, Interlingua, etc. at present. Being artificial, and sponsored by no one country, they all seem doomed to go the same way as the Frankenstein monster - to be historical relics of vain hopes. Each of these artificial languages is the brainstorm of one person. Being human and not infallible, they all have their faults - so apparent to others but invisible to the complacent author.

Great Britain and the United States of America are undoubtedly the two most powerful nations on earth at present; with the biggest territorial extent. Though with the inevitable dialectic divergences in either of its two principal types, the language used by the educated classes of the two nations, viz, the English tongue, is, principally as well as practically, one and the same in its main linguistic features. English has, now for centuries, been regarded as one of the most influential and handy verbal auxiliaries for the international communication of ideas. Post-war conditions have been favorable to this tendency to a very marked degree. As an auxiliary for the international exchange of thought, English can by no means claim any such regularity and logical consistency as an artificial language specialty schemed for such features and advantages. English, however, has this advantage over Esperanto and all the other artificial languages now in use: that it is provided with every facility of its own, peculiar to a highly cultivated modern language made ready for further developments by centuries of embellishments, assimilations, and innovations. These offer several words with closely similar meanings, yet sufficient differing so as to provide several shades of meaning - something the artificial languages overlooked because they are geared to simplicity. The worst example of carrying simplicity to an extreme is Ogden's *Basic English*, where meaning is distorted like a Chinese woman's bound foot, in order to have a minimal vocabulary to learn. Our regular and complete English has all the tools the word-merchant needs to express any condition of law, science, literature or emotion. In English, one can feel and be emotional just as well as think and be precise. It is, in its present state of development, quite simple in its grammatical structure, incomparably more so than French or German, which are its only potential rivals in the whole field of competition. Yet its phonetic conditions may be said to be much worse than any of its close competitors.

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 spelling. Historical researches of scholars show us that most of the orthographical anomalies met with in English are simply the result of lifting of spellings from foreign words without respelling into the sounds of the spoken words. Greek spellings conflict with Latin, and these with French, German and Spanish - all of whom are heavily represented in Modern English. This makes it appear to be a capricious use, of the letters for whimsical and conflicting sound values - all of which must be learned by sight rather than by rules or sounding out the letters. *The amount of wasted time and energy that accompanies lessons in English orthography is simply appalling.* Along with the hardships gone through by the American as well as the British children, we must not forget the tortures those poor young foreigners suffer whose fate it is to swallow the bitter, and

often poisonous, cup to the dregs; this being actually the case, for instance, with boys and girls in Japan, where English is obligatory in all the middle-grade schools. It is amazing to us foreigners that the English government, so logical and far-sighted in many respects, should be so slow to see the need for simplifying English spelling.

The movement for the simplification of English spelling has in recent years been severally started, so far with no appreciable results. Why are people so easily scared by an innovation in spelling which is different from the accustomed form, and prone to look askance at some such publications, for instance, as the "*Buletins ov the Spelling Reform Asoshiashun*, preparad and publisht under the ospises ov the Asoshiashun'z Publishing Comiti," which were started in 1887? The Simplified Spelling Society of England, which was brought into existence in London 25 years ago, has now dwindled into a mere name, though at its start it seemed rather promising, as it could count among its charter members many great names in different spheres of humanistic activity; Andrew Carnegie with his great love of peace and mankind, supporting the movement as one of its Vice-Presidents. Not any lack of ardour, but the disastrous consequences of the Great War, with perhaps a dash of well-meaning inadvertence in the system itself. The need for further investigations in this field of study is keenly felt, so that some workable system of spelling reform may be achieved. One fine morning in the not too distant future, we may be writing what one might tentatively call "World English" (or, shall it be christened "Brit-Americ"?).

Before the desired unification of the two, however, something else might be done besides rationalization of spelling in order to qualify present day English better for its exalted position as an (and eventually *the*) international auxiliary language. That something will naturally be done in the form of a thoro revision of the entire structure of English as a type of human speech, so that the lowest extent of vocabulary and grammatical mechanism absolutely necessary for our civic life may approximately be ascertained. Without this kind of linguistic survey, the unification and final establishment of English as a well-organized means of thought conveyance for cosmopolitan use, may necessarily be greatly retarded. The need for taking immediate steps in the direction of a thoro verbal as well as grammatical readjustment is urgent in view of the fact that English forms, in many Asiatic as well as European countries, a serious item in the school curriculum, bitter tears often being shed, merely because the language has never been properly altered to become a manageable means of linguistic expression well within the reach of a foreign learner, etc....

It was therefore no small satisfaction to me to find these somewhat dreamy ideas and conjectures of mine endorsed and numerically proved so thoroly in Dr. Erwin Ritter's pamphlet, *Die Sprache im internationalen Verkehr* (2 auflage, S. Braun, Karlsruhe, Baden, 1932), where the author winds up his argument with the following (trans.):

"In virtue of my experience in the Federal Assembly and the International Worker's Conference, I might personally attest that the English language is becoming a language of world-wide intercourse. The spoken English in Europe, America, and other parts of the world is related to the new *World English* in much the same way that official language is related to dialects.

The greater part of the delegates to international congresses already can speak English or at least understand it. Also, English is widely spread geographically: Not only is it the official language in England and the United States, but it can be found in Central and South America, in Australia, India, China, Japan, and South Africa as a trade language in practical use.

In the last hundred years its growth has surpassed that of all other languages. While, for example, in 1830 French and German had 32 million speakers each, whereas English had only 24 million speakers, the French statistics given on pages 5 and 6 show that on the 31st of Dec. there were 170 million English-speakers, while; German had 80 million and French 45 million.

Thus English enjoys many of the advantages that a world-language must possess. As shown on page 20, English grammar and syntax are very simple and easy to learn. There is only one form of the article for all genders, alike for singular and plural. The adjectives are uninflected. Except for the possessive in -'s, the nouns have only one case-form. The Latin alphabet is used, and there is no excessive capitalization [this refers to the way that all German nouns are capitalized].

However, it is obvious that English can become the world language, only if *thoroughgoing reforms* are undertaken. This particularly concerns English *orthography*, a very painful aspect of English - indeed, *the* reason why English has not enjoyed even wider diffusion throughout the world. Our basic principle must be: write as you speak! Also, English has numerous exceptions to its grammatical rules. An international language cannot afford such exceptions - in particular, it must not have irregular verbs!

Through a reform of English, the world would most swiftly and easily reach an urgently needed goal: a world language."

But whether a great living language like English will suffer in peace any such deliberate acts of artificial liberation at all, and if practicable, where and how and to what extent to begin the alteration, are questions to be settled by a competent body of scholars and experts, representative of peoples whose mother-tongue is English, with a number of those foreigners whose opinion may seem likely to have important bearing upon the research. Hence the urgent need and desirability of having some big international corporation with educational and humanitarian purposes that would stand by the noble cause, at once philanthropic and cosmopolitan!

In this connection, I feel it a duty here to call the reader's attention to the fact that an English scholar of international fame as the indefatigable editor of many important series of works on history, philosophy, psychology, linguistics, and kindred subjects of study, and himself an author of no small caliber, Mr. C. K. Ogden, of Magdalene College, Cambridge, has just succeeded in giving the world what might cursorily be described as a "portable" auxiliary international language, cut with marvelous skill out of the whole rock-bed of solid old English. He calls the new vehicle of thought "Basic," the first idea of which was incidentally suggested to his vigilant mind in the course of his study of Jeremy Bentham's writings on verbal functions, and after painstaking research work extending now over nearly 15 years, he was ready, in 1930, to face the general public with the first of his booklets on the new *lingua franca*, entitled "*Basic English*," a General Introduction with Rules and Grammar." The volume makes itself remarkable in this, that it is written entirely in Basic, a taste of which can be had from the following description of it in the opening words of Mr. Ogden's *Debabelization*:

"Basic English is an attempt to give everyone a second, or international, language, which will take as little of the learner's time as possible.

To the eye and ear it will not seem much different from normal English, which is now the language of 500 million persons.

There are only 850 words in the complete list, which maybe clearly printed on one side of a piece of note-paper. But simple rules are given for making other words with the help of those in the list....

It is an English in which 850 words do all the work of 20,000, and has been formed by taking out everything which is not necessary to the sense. *Disembark*, for example, is broken up into *get off the ship*....

By putting together the names of simple operations - such as *get, give, come, go, put, take* - with the words for directions like *in, over, through*, and the rest, 2 or 3,000 complex ideas, like *insert* which becomes *put in*, are made part of the learner's store of words...

In addition to the Basic words themselves, the learner has, at the start, about 50 words which are now so common in all languages that they may be freely used for any purpose. Examples are *radio, hotel, telephone, bar, club*.....

For the needs of any science, a short special list gets the expert to a stage where international words are ready to hand..."

From this we learn that "Basic" forms a detached world by itself like a small but fertile island in a calm sea, rich in marine products, where a reasonable amount of labor is sure to supply their daily necessities to the contented inhabitants. It is a complete, self-sufficient, independent entity of vocabulary and grammar, quite different from any arbitrary collection of words and phrases gathered into a mass merely because they happen or seem to happen to occur with greater frequency in the current writings.

**(Editor's note:** But it is not intended nor is it practical for a complex civilization of modern empires with manufacturing, politics, laws, and social problems.)

(A glance at a composition in Basic compared with our regular English reveals that Basic requires nearly twice as many words to poorly or incompletely express the ideas of any but a very simple writer. The awkwardness of Basic becomes noticeable in this comparison. But this main weakness is not its only weakness. Shades of meaning usually are not possible.)

"The 850 sounds (i.e. sound-groups, or words)," Ogden tells us, "being fixed by the gramophone records, their written forms can be memorized as individual entities, with no need for special emphasis on the principles, if any, by which they are related to an infinity of other unessential oddities. Phonetic (spelling) reform can thus be left to pursue its separate path. It may find Basic a useful ally, and Basic may later profit by its progress, but at this time I do not want to fight a revolution on two fronts. Hence the importance of Basic for educational work which cannot allow itself to be involved in controversies such as any violent departure from the habits of centuries must always engender."

**(Ed. comment:** He is self-contradictory. What can be more controversial than changing the speaking habits of Englishmen, or the grammatical construction of irregular verbs, which have stood for centuries?)

But it happens that no small number (almost half) of his 850 words are anomalous in spelling, or just because the number of such anomalies unfortunately happens to be almost overwhelming, would it not be wiser for one whose interest in Basic is principally educational, to begin his approach towards it by thinking out some workable means of freeing it of its orthological aberrations? This is the more desirable when we consider that some of the "Basic" islanders, on their reaching manhood of linguistic attainment, are to be ferried over to the mainland where English speech is found in its fuller and much wider exuberance of growth. And it is, indeed, from this point of view, that I now ask the reader's permission to take a fresh start and consider the more important subject of this modest essay:

### **3. The latest moves in English Spelling Reform.**

The history of English spelling reform is as long as it is complicated. Already in the latter half of the 16th century, pioneers are seen coming forth with their several ideas about an emendation of the

English spelling as it was then practised, some reformers going in for phonetic script while others thought the step too radical and wanted to go on with their work unaided by any new sound-symbols. It is hardly necessary to mention that the new movement was called into life only because the anarchical state of English orthography, as bad in those days as at present, was too much for a thinking mind to bear in peace.

The cause of the curse, which is not very likely to disappear very soon, is not far to seek. In an admirable little book on "*English spelling, its rules and reasons*," (F.S. Crofts & Co, New York, 1927), Dr. Cragie tells us that the "irregularities of English spelling, and the difficulty of reducing it to any fixed rules, are in great part due to the variety of the elements of which the language is composed." Out of the whole world of heterogeneity, he distinguishes seven types, which are:

- A. The native English type (*sun, moon, heaven, earth, day*, etc.).
- B. The early French type (*age, chance, chamber, circle, guard*, etc.).
- C. The adapted Latin type (*capital, censure, decision, effect, religion*, etc.).
- D. The unadapted Latin and Romanic type (*arena, formula, inertia, larva, spatula*, etc.).
- E. The Greek type, adapted and unadapted. (1. *aeronaut, aphorism, architect*, etc. 2. *asphyxia, hysteria, lithia*, etc.).
- F. The modern French type (*cigarette, bean, belle, bureau, crochet, machine*, etc.).
- G. The exotic element, miscellaneous in origin (*llama, manna, mazurka, pagoda, pajama*, etc.).

Actually this should be broken up into: Spanish, Hebrew, Russian, Chinese, Eskimo, African, Amer-Indian, to name just a few. When the winds are to blow simultaneously from these seven quarters of orthographical heaven, the head of the poor learner-cock is not likely to remain unmuddled in the constant whirl!

The turbulence, we are to remember, has been brought about not only because there happened to be more than one single letter for each sound, but because each single letter was necessitated to stand for more than two, nay often several sounds. Hence the pathetic sight of a "rough-coated, dough-faced ploughman from Poughkeepsie plodding homewards, puffing, coughing and hiccupping, through the streets of Scarborough!" In this connection, it may not be altogether out of place to call the reader's attention to the number of ways the speech sounds now in use among those who speak the so-called "standard" English can be written:

- 1. p as in *pup*, can be written: *pup, happy, shepherd, hope, hiccup* - 5 ways.
- 2. b as in *bib, robber, cupboard, robe* - 4 ways.
- 3. m as in *man, summer, phlegm, autumn, lamb, attempt, home* - 7 ways.
- 4. t as in *tea, mitten, thyme, doubt, indict, late* - 6 ways.
- 5. d as in *deed, add, could, bdellium, dhow, mezzo* - 6 ways.
- 6. n as in *nun, penny, Wednesday, sign, knife, Lincoln, mnemonics, pneumatic, mane* - 9 ways.
- 7. k as in *kink, cant, back, account, monarch, acquire, hough, exception, make, ache* - 10 ways.
- 8. g as in *grog, egg, ghost, guest, exit* - 5 ways.
- 9. ng as in *ring, ink, handkerchief, tongue, gingham* - 5 ways
- 10. f as in *fun, off, photo, rough, often, sapphire, wife* - 7 ways.
- 11. v as in *view, of, nephew, stove, halve, navy, rendezvous* - 7 ways.
- 12. th as sounded in *path, eighth, phthisis* - 3 ways.
- 13. th as sounded in *that, bathe, ye* - 3 ways.
- 14. s as in *sister, cell, city, mercy, miss, science, schism, waistcoat, sword, psalm, cease, peace* - 10 ways.
- 15. z as in *zeal, buzz, was, scissors, discern, raspberry, Czar, asthma, xylo, haze, exit* - 11 ways.
- 16. r as in *roar, sorry, rhyme, colonel, corps, myrrh, write, mortgage* - 8 ways.
- 17. l as in *plural, mill, male, muscle, intaglio, kiln, island, castle, knowledge* - 9 ways.

18. sh as in *ship, machine, sugar, pension, assure, passion, conscious, nation, officiate, ocean, ancient, schedule* - 12 ways.
19. ch as in *church, watch, nature, courteous, question, cello, Czecho-Slovakia, righteous* - 8 ways.
20. as in *measure, azure, vision, glazier, rouge* - 5 ways.
21. j as in *joy, wedge, gaol, pigeon, religion, suggest, judgment, soldier, grandeur, Greenwich* - 10 ways.
22. y as in *yet, union, hideous, hallelujah, vignette, cañon* - 6 ways.
23. wh as in *when*, is spelled in only one way.
24. w as in *went, queen, distinguish, memoir, patois, one, bivouac* - 7 ways.
25. h as in *home, who, Mojave* - 3 ways.

### Vowels

26. long-e as in *feel, beat, field, seize, we, people, key, suite, Beauchamp, chagrin, antique, Caesar, mosquito, quay*, 14 ways.
27. short-i as in *ship, hymn, England, women, busy, build, sieve, give, breeches, village, plenty, minute, mountain, always, guinea, forfeit, money* - 17 ways.
28. long-a as in *mail, way, made, great, rein, reign, eight, grey, gaol, gauge, straight, campaign, champagne, halfpenny, waste, eh, aye, ate* - 18 ways.
29. short-e as in *bed, head, many, said, says, heifer, leisure, friend, bury, leopard, Reynold* - 10 ways.
30. short-a as in *fact, ma'am, have, plaid, Gaelic, laugh, guarantee* - 7 ways.
31. Italian-a as in *part, bazaar, ma'am, hurrah, eclat, are, taunt, calm, seargeant, heart, memoir, patois, guard* - 13 ways.
32. long-i as in *pitie, kind, I, high, cry, guy, pie, height, isle, aisle, dye, type, indict* - 13 ways.
33. the diphthong in *caoutchouc, umlaut, hour, sound, how, house, plough, Macleod* - 8 ways.
34. short-o as in *hot, wash, yacht, sausage, hough, John, knowledge, gone* - 8 ways.
35. intermediate sound in *draw, sauce, all, talk, broad, because, aught, ought, hurrah, extraordinary, awe, for, gone* - 13 ways.
36. the diphthong in *boil, noise, boy, quoin, turquoise, buoy, buoyed* - 7 ways.
37. short-u as in *other, one, sum, blood, does, money, some, tongue, rubbed* - 9 ways.
38. long-o as in *chauffeur, mauve, beau, coarse, hope, oh, goat, crow, go, more, o'er, foe, folk, brooch, soul, sew, apropos, though, owe, yoeman, cologne, depot, hautboy, O, rogue* - 25 ways.
39. short-oo as in *look, put, wolf, could, worsted, sure, bouillon, pugh, brusque* - 9 ways.
40. long-oo as in *caoutchouc, leeward, rheum, do, moon, tomb, shoe, manoeuvre, blue, flute, loose, wooed, soup, fruit, chew, brewed, duly, through, move, coup, ragout, rendezvous, billet-doux, buoy* - 24 ways.
41. long-u as in *beauty, foed, feud, deuce, few, cue, ewe, lieu, human, use, queue, fugue, you, yule, suit* - 15 ways.
42. vocalic-r as in *verb, bird, word, heard, journal, nurse, amateur, myrtle, colonel* - 9 ways.
43. schwa as in *idea, cruel, profession, submit* - 4 ways.

The 12 diphthongs or triphthongs with r are omitted as being combinations or duplications of the ordinary vowel sounds with r or schwa.

This shows that there are at least 381 ways of writing the 43 sounds of English. The above list, which by the way is not a complete listing but rather one hastily drawn up out of the instances given in my little volume on English phonetics intended for the use of my young compatriots, and so containing nothing but the bare elements of the subject, I should not be surprised were you to find the following criticism not so shocking as, without a premonition, you well might:

"How spelling can be taught at all in elementary schools is a constant wonder to me. There is not, to my knowledge, any rule which a teacher can give which has not almost as many exceptions as examples. Thus, 'final e lengthens the preceding vowel, as in *make, bile, gibe, behave*; but then, what of *have, give, love, move, tongue*? 'G before e or i is sounded like j, as in *gentle, gin*;' but *gift, gig, get, gild*, abrogate that rule. 'Gh after au or ou is pronounced like f, as in *laugh, cough, rough*;' but what of *haughty, plough, bough*? And, worst of all, what can the teacher do with the rule 'When two vowels go awalking, the first one does the talking.' How to reconcile the ea in *each, bread, great*; ai in *hail, against, mountain*; au in *fault, gauge, laugh*; ou in *sound, wound, could, soul*; ow in *blow, towel, toward*; ew in *crew, sew, few*; ei in *heifer, receive, reign, forfeit*; ie in *field, tie, friend*? and so on ad infinitus.

"Thus, whether the pupil has to utter the written words or to write the spoken ones, in either case he has so many possibilities before him that it can only be by mere chance if he hits on the correct answer; and it is through such guess-work, which cannot be dignified with the name of discipline at all, that he makes his entrance into the world of letters and science, where everything *ought to be* ordered by system and intelligence. I am not speaking too strongly in saying that our lack of systematic orthography has reduced the advantage of alphabetic writing to a minimum, and made correct spelling almost impossible... How spelling can under the circumstances be made a subject of examination by inspectors of education, I am at a loss to understand. A child may surely without blame write *beef* as *befe, beaf, bief, beif, beaff*, etc., since all these combinations might be used to convey the sound. When our primary education is becoming one of the great questions of the day, this problem of orthography must assume a higher importance than it has ever had hitherto. When the mind is being introduced into a realm of exactitude, order, and principle, the spectacle of pure chaos in language cannot be edifying, but rather demoralising....

"If the present system had any historical value, as indicating the source, the original pronunciation, or any other important fact about a word, we might reconcile ourselves to it. But its *positive mistakes* are so many that we can never place any faith in it. We write *sovereign*, from the ridiculous idea that it had something to do with the verb *to reign*, *posthumus* with an *h*, from the error, long since exploded by Latin scholars, that it referred to those *post humum*, after death; *sylvan*, though scholars always now write *silva* in Latin; *island* from an imagined connection with *insula*, whereas it is Anglo-Saxon, and should be *iland* or *eyland*. Why should we write the participles *spread, dead*, but on the other hand, *led, fled*? That some historical information may be conveyed by the present orthography cannot be denied; but where one-half of such information is demonstrably false information, the other half is open to suspicion and is practically useless. And even if this half were absolutely reliable, it is an open question still whether the retention of old orthography, or the keeping of the orthography in accordance with the times yields worthy information to the historian - not available elsewhere. Hence, I contend that even the most plausible argument for the old spelling, the argument most likely to find favor with men of letters, who like the flavor of antiquity, works in the opposite direction." [1]

This seems to me medicinal enough to cure the most obstinate patient of his misplaced patriotism, for that is the only explanation I can make out of the blind tenacity with some people, otherwise clear-minded, would cling to the accustomed modes of spelling words, simply because they have been so settled from time nobody knows when.

"The wisdom of our ancestors is in the *arrangement*; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the Country's done for." (Dr. Samuel Johnson)

Moved by a higher love of their country, however, there were some scholars in the latter half of the 18th century, who, instead of taking to the usual task of orthographical amendments, thought it more beneficial to the general public to provide it with a pronouncing dictionary, so that any one

who cared might ascertain how a conglomeration of letters is to be deciphered into an intelligible group of sounds. Among these the name of Thomas Sheridan is to be specially remembered as the author of "*A Dissertation on the Causes of the Difficulties which occur in Learning the English Tongue, with a scheme for publishing an English Grammar and Dictionary upon a plan entirely new; the object of which shall be to facilitate the attainment of the English Tongue, and establish a perpetual standard of pronunciation.*" This important pamphlet was published in 1762, later by 7 years than Dr. Johnson's lexicographical masterpiece, which, though it works marvels in its way, left the pronunciation side almost untouched, the side Sheridan did his best to make clear in his own "*General Dictionary*" that appeared in 1780, not only by dividing words into syllables but, by his special device, marking each vowel-letter or letter-group by means of a superadded numerical figures. It is in this memorable essay that we first see the fundamental principles of a phonetic notation clearly stated: "Words written," he says, "may be considered in two ways: either as types of sounds which stand for ideas; or, immediate types of ideas without reference to sounds. Deaf men can consider them only in the latter light; those who have the organs of hearing, they may stand in both, or either.

"When written words are considered only as the types of sounds, in order to make them correspond to their archetypes, the four following rules should be strictly observed:

1. No character should be set down in any word, which is not pronounced. (No silent or superfluous letters in words.)
2. Every distinct simple sound should have a distinct character to mark it, for which it should uniformly stand. (One sound, its one letter.)
3. The same character should never be set down as the representative of two different sounds. (One letter for one sound.)
4. All compound sounds should be marked only by such characters as will naturally, and necessarily, produce those sounds, upon being properly pronounced in the order in which they are placed. (No improper digraphs.)"

And then, judging the unruly state of English writing these standards, he laments, "that the darkest hieroglyphics, or most difficult cyphers, which the art of man has hitherto found out, were not better calculated to conceal the sentiments of those who use them, from all who had not the key, than the state of our spelling is, to conceal the true pronunciation from all, except a few well-educated natives," and goes on thusly to lay open the source of the irregularity and confusion:

"The chief cause of the irregular state of our spelling, will at once appear, when we reflect that we have adopted the Roman alphabet to be the representative of our sounds. Now, since we have a greater number of simple *sounds* in our tongue than there are *letters* in that alphabet, it must necessarily follow that the surplus number of sounds can have no peculiar characters to represent them in writing; and consequently, that either they must be marked by single characters, which also stand for other sounds; or by combinations of characters, which, separately taken stand for other simple sounds."

Like the beautiful Penelope of old, an English letter, more especially one doing duty for a vowel-sound, has almost as many wooers as she may care to have. Very unlike the faithful Greek matron, however, instead of remaining true to one sound and one only, she goes on flirting with many others who approach her with a timely sigh. The relation is decidedly more frivolous than that of the flirt. "*Si on ne s'assurent pas du orthographe, il y en a toujours un autre.*" goes the French phrase. Very much worse, alas, with English vowels!

That Sheridan, with all his insight and knowledge, failed to meet the impending need, except in the field of pronouncing, with his dictionary, was, with some of the later reformers, a matter of deep

regret. "It is singular," writes George Withers, who in 1874 called out forcibly to the public in a little brochure entitled *The English Language Spelled as Pronounced*, p. 35, Tribuner & Co, London, "that one who could write so ably on the subject of written language, its shortcomings and requirements, as Mr. Sheridan in the foregoing passages, should have contented himself with merely publishing a *Dictionary*; not attempting even the smallest improvement in our 'defective alphabet,' nor altering in any respect the current faulty mode of spelling English. Indeed, he seems to have considered that any such amendment of the alphabet and spelling 'must prove to the last degree impracticable, and consequently must fail of its end.' With the key to the pronunciation of the English tongue furnished in his dictionary, 'learners may know how to pronounce most words in our language at sight, notwithstanding the irregularity of our spelling. And with respect to such anomalous words as cannot be reduced to any rule, as the learner, where he has no light to guide him, may always have recourse to the dictionary, it will be in the power of everyone to acquire a just pronunciation of all of our words, with case and certainty.' Rather a lame conclusion to arrive at, after stating so eloquently the requirements of the language." Here the dissatisfied critic quotes an interesting passage from Boswell, where, on the mention of Sheridan's work in connection with the desirability of having a pronouncing dictionary, Johnson is heard to say, "Sheridan's dictionary may be very well, but you cannot always carry it about with you; and when you want the word, you have not the dictionary." Another instance of the illogical reasoning of a supposedly wise man.

The real motive why Sheridan stopped short of taking a further step and going in for a new system of spelling English by sounds can by no means be ascertained. He may as likely as not have thought it unworthy of his time and labor to try to eke out the scanty English alphabet by adding a number of *Romic* characters in their modified use. May he not have preferred, if at all, a wholesale change, so that there might come about a thorough Herculean wash? But this is mere supposition.

(**Ed. note:** next were recounted a great number of milestones left by other famous inventors of alphabets (alfabeteers, as I call them) - so lengthy as to fill a booklet - which we must forego due to space limitations.)

In any proposed spelling change, the etymological and historical interest should of course not be overlooked. But to give it an unquestioned preponderance in a field of mental exertion where many other considerations of importance justly claim out immediate attention, might not be very "practical" as it would seem to some students of philology. Are we not to clear the green, where our dear children daily go and have their sports, of venomous reptiles, merely because they happen to be specimens of some zoological interest? Being, as I am, quite ready to follow in this matter of spelling reform the steady lead of Dr. Henry Bradley and repeat after him that, "I am opposed to any radical change based on purely phonetic principles; and on the other hand, I have expressed my conviction that our existing system urgently needs improvement," and also that, "the right policy for reformers is at first to confine the attack to those points of the present system for which there is no defence but custom." [2] I cannot sometimes help thinking with regret of these American reformers of earlier date that they were almost too mindful of the English ways in the matter of conventional spelling.

They ought, in my opinion, to have followed the example of the Boston Tea-party, and thrown, along with the tea-chests, at least the more burdensome members of the traditional spelling down into the harbor water, thus declaring their orthographical independence in the sacred name of all the American boys and girls, born and yet to be born! Custom, it is not to be denied, often proves to be "the great guide of human life," but it is as often found to be an obstinate donkey to travel with. And yet, the natural man in us, like the poor old Franconian in the story, often finds relief in getting heartily sentimental over a dead ass!

No matter what we may think or say of it, however, one thing is certain: the fickle master, Public, is satisfied to go by custom. And where *vox populi* counts a great deal, an innovator will do well to keep a sharp eye to that point. Just listen to what Mr. Lloyd James tells us in *The Listener*. [3] "Spelling reform is always a thorny subject, for the existing spelling is so sanctified by long usage, as to be regarded as sacred. We are all built that way, and that is the end of the matter. We hate new spellings, and hate any disturbance of the printed page. 'Correct' spelling has been synonymous with education, and reformed spelling will consequently look uneducated. *If we could only bear it for a few years, we should get used to it; it would look as good or better than the other*, and our youngsters would have one fewer burden to bear in their early years!" How real of the common attitude the description, and how true to the point the advice! But few indeed will be the number of those who are ready to go through personal inconvenience for a while, so that their successors in life may benefit by the sacrifice. "An author," says Dr. Bradley, [4] "whether he is one who has something he wishes to tell the world, or one who lives by his writings, will not willingly limit the circle of his readers by indulging in orthographical eccentricities." [5] Besides, we must remember that there is a certain class of words where an alteration of the customary spelling usually means the destruction of their identity. That is why the business of a simplified spelling society has to stop short of proper names. "To speak only of surnames, Spenser and Spencer, Gray and Grey, Phipps and Fipps, Cholmondeley and Chumley, Wild, Wilde, Wyld, and Wylde are distinct names, denoting different sets of persons. Although it is in proper names that the practical inconvenience of unphonetic spelling is at its worst, the reformer cannot meddle with them without doing more mischief than good." [4] Yes, this extraterritoriality must be strictly observed by an advocate of any system of spelling reform, and the only set of persons that are privileged to step, generally either for scientific or educational purposes, into the tabooed land are those whose business it is to transcribe an oral piece of text as faithfully as their phonetic symbols will allow. (For that purpose there is the International Phonetic Alphabet.) For them it is absolutely necessary that the signs used should retain their individual phonetic values and not dwindle to a mere section of a graphic whole that stands for a word, because then the value of each phonetic symbol ceases to count individually, and the meaning of using one is practically lost. Hence the following important warning on the part of Dr. Bradley: "A serious mistake of method has been committed by many phoneticians, through failure to distinguish two things that differ greatly - a reformed spelling for general use, and a phonetic notation intended to teach correct pronunciation and the analysis of speech sounds. Those whose aim it is to bring into use a reformed spelling (even one that is intended to be phonetically accurate) are acting wisely when they employ it in the printing of connected texts that will be intrinsically interesting to the reader, and when they encourage their pupils to use the reformed spelling in their own compositions. The object is to render the pupil so familiar with the new orthography that he may be able to use it freely for the ultimate purposes of reading and writing - the apprehension and expression of *meaning*. When this familiarity is attained, the reader will have come to identify the words before him by their general appearance, without troubling much whether he pronounces the successive letters correctly or not; and the writer will use the prescribed spelling, even though it does not agree with his own pronunciation. There will be no harm in this; an orthography intended for general purposes *must* be more or less conventional. But a phonetic notation of which the representation of sound is the *ultimate* object must be treated quite differently. If it is allowed to be used for 'the apprehension and expression of meaning,' its value will be greatly impaired. The learner should never be suffered to write a word in the phonetic script unless he has first learned to pronounce it correctly." [6]

So much for the purely phonetic script and the proper domain of its application. It is in a reformed spelling for general use - not a system of phonetic transcription, pure and simple - that is the subject of this treatise. In this practical field of graphic images, it goes without saying that any serious divergence from conventional makes a break in their continuity that is disturbing to an ordinary reader, and so a would-be reformer should make it a rule to indulge in no extensive re-spelling, except when the unprincipled use of letters is more harmful to our mind than the temporary

derangement of the visual images is to our sense of sight. But outside the extraterritorial jurisdiction of proper names, this is no excuse, for a true innovator of conventional spelling, to leave untouched patches of orthographical anomalies of glaring dye. Otherwise, the uniformity in the use of letters and other signs as so many phonetic symbols, cannot be kept up. So it is now our matter in hand to see how the latest development of the English spelling reform movement will look when considered in that light.

Owing to the rather abrupt secession from its activities, which the war obliged *The Simplified Spelling Soesiety* of London to discontinue, a considerable amount of mental labor and money that has gone into the work seems at first sight to be now almost as good as wholly lost. But a closer scrutiny reveals to us that, notwithstanding some of its unwise steps, the body of reformers, strongly pushed forward, more especially by the indefatigable devotion of Prof. Walter Ripman and the late William Archer, has done since its incorporation in 1908, much that has proved very helpful to later reformers. Indeed, it is my firm belief that Prof. R. E. Zachrisson, of the Royal University of Upsalla, Sweden, will himself be the first man to acknowledge his indebtedness to it in many ways for the working out of his "*Anglic, a New Agreed Simplified English Spelling*," [7] just as heartily as he actually does, among many others, to Dr. Godfrey Dewey, well known for his thorough statistical study of English spelling. In some sense, "Anglic" may be considered as a further development of the system advocated by the body of English reformers just referred to, - a fact which becomes more convincing when we take a peep at an example of *Easy Spelling*.

*A Reporter for the Daily Chronical*: "Well, as you have taken up this fad, you are naturally provided with a stock of ready arguments. But it will be long before you can argue people into the acceptance of such an uncouth method of spelling. Are you not conscious of its absurdity?"

*Mr. William Archer*: "Ov its absurdity, no; ov its uncuuthnes, yes. An absurd thing iz a thing that iz ridicyulus becauz it iz unreezonabl; and in that sens it iz the tradishonal speling that iz absurd. Uncuuth, on the uther hand, meenz simply unnoen, unfamiliar; and ov cors, whiel nienty-nien per cent ov the mater wun reeds iz in the oeld speling, a surtain air ov unfamiliarity must cling tu th nyu speling. But I ashur you that the mor I riet in this speling, the mor du I feel the real satisfacshon ov yuezing a good insted ov a bad instrooment. Az for uncuuthnes, wil yu pleez imajin for a moment that yu had alwaiz been acustomd tu riet '*tho, enuf, naibor, frend, siv, peepl, filosoler*,' and that sum wun caim along and toeld yu that in the fyuetur yu must riet '*though, enough, neighbor, friend, sieve, people, philosopher*,' - yu wood not thinc theez formz uncuuth - yu wood cwiet justly thinc them monstus and insain, tu ecstravagant tu be even laafabl."

With this kind of logs and charts to consult and steer by, a navigator beating his path in a sea, though he may often find it very choppy, need not trouble himself much about the safety of the voyage. More so when he is so fortunate as to have the help of many well-known Pilots. Dr. Godfrey Dewey, as one of these, seems to have made great contributions towards the growth of Anglic to its present status at the fostering hands of Prof. Zachrisson. The American reformer thought he saw many weak points in the whole plan of "Easy Spelling" (which eventually grew up to be Anglic of today), and, as Prof. Zachrisson himself tells us, "insisted upon certain modifications in the direction toward greater uniformity, if the system should be adopted as a basis for American and British spelling reform, and also urged the necessity of making the spelling suit the American as well as British pronunciation of English." [8]

Under these auspicious conditions, it is a happy sight indeed to see the new yacht, Anglic, newly launched and making its steady headway with colors bravely flying it the breeze, - so much so that one cannot help adding one's share of blessing towards the enterprise even in the form of a few insignificant blowings into the fair wind. My own little contribution will be in the shape of some

outspoken remarks which may not sound like an unconditioned homage to the result Prof. Zachrisson has achieved. Whether my proposals are changes for the better or the other way, it is for the impartial reader to decide. But first let us see what a sample of the Anglic system is like.

### Anglic Spelling Proper:

The sport was at its hiet, the slieding was at the quicest, the laafter was at the loudest, when a sharp krak was hurd. There was a quik rush tordz the bank, a wield skreem from the laediz, and a shout from Mr. Tupman. A larj mas of ies disapeerd; the wauter bubld up oever it; Mr. Pickwick's hat, gluvz, and hankerchif were floeting on the surfis, and this was aul of Mr. Pickwick that enibodi kood see. [9]

"The text," says Prof. Zachrisson, "contains 79 words. In Anglic Spelling Proper 54 of the words are left unchanged (68%) and 9 more only slightly changed (*slieding, quik, quikest, wield, mas, disapeerd, babid, oever, hankerchif*).

"From this we can safely conclude:

- (1) that no new letters are wanted for a phonetic spelling on the basis of the Roman alphabet;
- (2) that no strictly Romo (i.e. Roman alphabet) spelling has any chance of replacing the ordinary spelling for general practical purposes, whereas Anglic Spelling Proper is an orthography which is phonetic in principle but at the same time bears sufficient resemblance to the existing spelling for the two systems to be used side by side for the same purposes."

The validity of this conclusion, however must be settled by the answer that is given to the question, "Why is the percentage of unchanged words so markedly high in the case of Anglic Spelling Proper?" I am much mistaken if the reader will not receive, with a big nod and a significant smile not exactly good-natured, the information that Anglic *tolerates within its own dominion words of unruly spelling that go about in the full enjoyment of their extraterritorial freedom, thereby giving the whole system an aspect of respectability not deserved by their deceitful nature.*

**(Ed. note:** the brief spelling rules for Anglic are omitted because of this, and also because World English, an out growth of Anglic, is much more regular and reliable.)

So far, from the example given, Anglic seems very rational, though the scheme still leaves much room for further emendation. But why I feel sorry for the cause of the Anglic movement is the fatal (for so it seems to me) step Prof. Zachrisson took in a weak moment, and suffered more than 42 words of erratic conventional spelling, which defy coming under any of the rules given above, to smuggle themselves into the system to its fearful disadvantage. They are like so many Greek warriors in the wooden horse taken into the ill-fated city of Troy, and yet Prof. Zachrisson seems well pleased with these extra territorial dwellers in his land, whom he calls "word-signs" This is why he has come to accord them so much liberty:

"In order to secure as great a resemblance as possible to the conventional orthography, it has been considered advisable to keep the present spelling in the following common words and derivatives from these words as word-signs:

*as, be, by, do, (-ful), has, he, her, his, how, I, is, me, my, now, of, off, she, than, that, their, them, then, these, they, this, tho, those, to, was, we, were, what, who, whole, whom, whose, why, with, you, your.*" [10]

Why this overwhelming anxiety to please the old customers, the *initiated*, the inveterate users of the old spelling, as if the huge mass of young learners, at home and abroad, going through their mental torture, were a negligible quantity? Why not try to think out a more comprehensive system where

these fidgety members too will be able peacefully to enjoy their several lives just as they are at present, or else be subjected to slight changes, so that they may cease to be disturbing elements in the learning process. As an excuse for their participation in the system, Prof. Zachrisson explains that "Anglic is the only Anglo-Roman spelling in which the choice of such words is based on careful mathematical calculations as to their frequency," and gives two elaborate tables prepared by Dr. G. Dewey, which shows us in exact figures the rate of frequency (per 100,000 words), one for "Common Words Changed in Anglic," and the other for "Common Words Unchanged in Anglic." [11] The very highness of their frequency rate, however, might with more reason be argued, not *for*, but *against* the existence of words of anomalous spelling in the land of Anglic jurisdiction. A vegetarian dish may taste better for a secret spoonful of animal condiments, but the addition spoils the simplicity of the entire arrangement. Let us now see if it is at all possible for us to frame anew a system of simplified English spelling on the basis of the Roman alphabet, which will, without having recourse to any tricky method, yet in the main bear as close a resemblance to the present orthography as the uniformity in the use of letters and digraphs on phonetic principles will allow.

The realization of this teetotalian dream seems to me not altogether beyond my reach, for I have a deep-seated conviction about English spelling that,

"Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't."

### **The Y-O-K Alphabet.**

uses the consonant and consonant digraphs phonetically, except *k* before *e*, *i*, and *y*, and at the end of words. In all other places, *c* does the same duty, except before *w*, when *q* takes its place.

The digraphs *ng*, *ch*, *sh*, *th*, *wh*, are used phonetically. In addition, a line joining *t* to *h* makes for the voiced *th* sound. The *zh* sound, not demonstrable consistently in conventional spelling, is shown below along with examples of the long vowel sounds. X is used for both the *ks* and *gz* sounds.

gate - ga-t, father - fa:th'r, beef - be-f, pine - pi-n, growth - gro-th, beauty - bu-ty, verb - v;rb, put - pût, wooer - wu:' y, measure -mez'u-r, ink - in'k, finger - fin'g'r, four - fo:r, all - o:l.

Besides the usual 26 letters of the alphabet, the reader will notice that many typographical marks play their roles in my scheme of simplified spelling. Seeing that they have been so useful as signs of punctuation, I do not see why the same slaves of the lamp should not be called on to render their services in new capacities so long as the additional parts they are to play do not interfere with their native duties. Of the seven marks thus appropriated, the first in importance is of course the hyphen (-) or rather the macron placed, not over, but next following the vowel-letter, so that it may give the preceding letter its "name" value. Next comes the colon (:), also used as a length mark. It simply prolongs the sound of the vowel-letter to which it is added. In other words, it forms with the letters *a*, *o*, and *u*, the symbols for the three sounds heard in *father*, *daughter*, and *school*. The apostrophe (') has two parts to play. When it stands between an *n* and either a *c* or *k* or *g*, it shows that the *n* in question is in value equal to the digraph *ng*. The other use of this sign is as part of the slight vocal murmur as heard as *er* at the end of words. This sign group 'r is always syllabic. When a non-syllabic murmur with potential *r*-sound in it is to be written, a single *r* is used, as in *a-ry*, *ti-ring*, *tu:rist*. For the strong form of vocal murmur, the best sign would be the tilde, - with an *r* after it; but as it may cause no small amount of difficulty for the printer, and more especially to the users of an ordinary typewriter, a sign group made of ;r may advantageously be used in its place.

The use of these punctuation marks, when allowed to take its natural course, will bring about occasions where words are to end with one of these graphic signs, which, being at the same time usual marks of punctuation, will often prove misleading even to a careful reader. So it becomes necessary to find some suitable means of saving the situation, For this purpose, let us see what

letters and letter groups are actually in use in conventional orthography to express the last syllables of words ending in a long vowel or diphthong. Here are the commonest ones:

1. Long *a*: bay, grey.
2. Long *e*: see, pea, key, be.
3. Long *i*: my, buy, die, dye, high.
4. Long *o*: low, owe, go, doe, dough.
5. Long *u*: dew, cue, view.
6. Broad *a*: bah, papa.
7. Broad *o*: jaw, awe.
8. Broad *u*: drew, too, pooh, true, do, through, sou.
9. Diphthong *au*: cow, bough, thou.
10. Diphthong *oi*: boy.

All listed in the order of the more commoner first. Hence, a survey of the above list seems to be sufficient as a guide in our choice of letters to be added to the length marks so that they may hide their tail-ends. For 1. a-y; 2. e-e; 3. i-y; 4. o-w; 5. e-w; 6. a:h; 7. o:w; 8. u:w; 10. oy are, after all, the most natural closures according to usage. Only in the case of 7, the predominance of *aw* in the conventional spelling makes us think twice and see if it is not possible to bring *a* (and not *o*) into our sign. This could never be done, however, unless we strain the principles concerning the rational use of letters to such an extent that the whole system will be in danger. So we must use o:w. As to no. 9, we are to write *aw* when this diphthong turns up at the end of words. Here again, the sight of *aw* may be strange to those who are accustomed to the conventional spelling. But they will soon see the benefit of harmony in the use of the alphabet. Besides, we must not for one moment forget that our endeavors in spelling reform are an attempt principally in behalf of young learners, both at home and abroad. In fact, what I humbly propose to offer here to the thinking public is English in a simplified orthography for use in the earlier stages of instruction, in the hope that it may prove to be a substantial help to correct pronunciation as well as an unfailing means of facilitating the attainment of competence in ordinary reading and spelling.

Some examples for the reader's well-meaning scrutiny will show that in matters of punctuation marks and other usages concerning capital letters, abbreviated forms, etc. I remain faithful to the ordinary English usages. In forming the plural, the rule here followed is:

1. add *s* when the word ends in a voiceless consonant;
2. add *z* when it ends in a voiced sound, i.e. in all other cases, except,
3. when it ends in the sound of: *s*, *z*, *sh*, *ch*, *zh*, or *j*, then *iz* is to be added to the singular. This rule applies to the formation of the third person, singular, of verbs in the present tense.

Similarly for the formation of the past and the past participle of regular verbs, the rule being to;

1. add *t* to the infinitive when it ends in a voiceless consonant; otherwise,
2. add *d*, except,
3. when it ends in *t* or *d*, then add *ed* instead.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof." So let us try an example of my system to look at its merits, for its merit, and hope you will find it with merit.

### **An Enigma**

"Du-w Englishmen wish tu-w erect an impenetrabl bari'r for the p;rpos ov shutting aut foren'rz from enjoying the trezu-rz ov tha-r splendid literatu-r? Du-w tha-y wish tu-w ma-k the aqwizishon ov nolej az difficult az posibl tu-w tha-r o-n children? If such had ben tha-r object, the prezent enigmatical sistem ovo:rthogرافy iz fited in an eminent degre-e tu-w secu-r the-z objects. It iz a

remarkable instances of the tenacity of error and the tyranny of fashion, that a system condemned by almost every writer and speaker, native or foreign, has examined into it, should be maintained at so much inconvenience and expense when not a single argument can be adduced in its favour, except that it is found in use and has been handed down in a manner nobody knows how. It is impossible to convince Englishmen the impregnability of a system respecting the folly and absurdity of retaining this system. The writer is astonished beyond measure that a people so practical and fertile in invention should tolerate such confusion in their writing and printed language, which rests like an incubus on the intellect of the nation. For if this is so bewildering to an adult, how much more so is it to the uneducated mind of a child."

(Quoted from a Pamphlet entitled *'National Education and the English Language, by a Foreigner,'* published in 1868.)

The next example shows how it would look if further simplified by a rule that omitted the length mark and letter at the end of one syllable words with long vowel sounds:

### Mary had a Little Lamb, by Sarah Josepha Hale

Ma-ry had a litl lam,  
Its fle-s woz whi-t az sno;  
And everywha-r Ma-ry went,  
The lam woz shu:r tu go.

And so the te-ch'r t;rnd him aut,  
But stil he lin'g'rd ne-r,  
And wa-ted pa-shently about  
Til Ma-ry did ape-r.

He follo-d h;r tu sku:l wun da,  
Which woz agenst the ru:l;  
It ma-d the children laf and pla,  
Tu se a lam at sku:l.

"Whot ma-ks the lam luv Ma-ry so?"  
The e-g'r children cri;  
"Whi, Ma-ry luvz the lam, yu no,"  
The te-ch'r did repli-y.

The reader who has kindly followed me thus far may now be convinced of the advantages of my "whole-hogger" system of simplification over others that have hitherto been schemed with untaken efforts left here and there in their rear. Their use of nothing but common letters of the alphabet may at first sight give him a better impression, but a closer scrutiny will reveal to him unnecessary complications in their use of signs, letters, and other imperfections, from which my scheme is intended to be free. But even they are far in advance of the older device of distinguishing each letter or letter combination by means of numerical figures or diacritical marks of a very complicated nature. Not that it is without its own practical value if its application is restricted to a certain field such as smaller dictionaries, etc. For those whose interest moves that way, Prof. W. A. Craigie's little pamphlet, *The Pronunciation of English indicated by a system of marks applied to the ordinary spelling for the Use of Foreign Students*, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1914), will be suggestive in many ways.

Lastly, for those who, instead of troubling themselves with English, or any other living foreign language, with its orthographical imperfections, grammatical shortcomings, and other drawbacks, would rather care for an international auxiliary language, and to know what it is worth as a means of exchange of thought, I should suggest a perusal of the Society of Pure English Tract, No. XXXIV, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1930), where the question of artificial languages is very ably treated.

[1] Russel Martineau, in a Report to the Philological Society, quoted by George Withers. cf. *The English Language Spelled as Pronounced*, Trudner & Co, London, 1874, p. 10-12.

[2] H. Bradley, *Spoken and Written Language*, Oxford, 1919, p. 30.

[3] "Speech Today and Tomorrow" in *The Listener* (July 6, 1932), published by the British Broadcasting Corp.

- [4] *Op. cit.* pp. 31, 33.  
 [5] Yet certain American humorists (Mark Twain, Geo. Shelly Hughs, Jonahan Dymond, John Kendrick Bangs) did for reasons of clarity and humor.  
 [6] *Op. cit.* pp. 34-35.  
 [7] *Anglic Fund*, A-B, Uppsala, Sweden, 1931.  
 [8] "Four Hundred Years of English Spelling Reform" (pp. 26-7), printed from *Studia Neophilologia*, Vol. IV, Nos. 1-2.  
 [9] *Anglic*, Uppsala, 1931, pp. 32-3.  
 [10] *Op. cit.*, p. 46.  
 [11] *Op. cit.*, p. 46-47.

[Some of the Editor remarks, within the article, are in SPB but not in the Tune anthology.]

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Fall 1969 p10]

### Romance

When day is done and work is o'er  
 And homeward turn my feet once more,  
 Amid the city's ceaseless roar,  
     I come to you.  
 You never speak and yet I know  
 (Ah, yes, your eyes have told me so -)  
 You'd have me tarry ere I go.  
     Is that not true?

I linger for a moment, then  
 I join the rushing swarm of men,  
 And, yes, I know we'll meet again  
     Another night.  
 No words have ever passed between  
 Us two, yet I know what you mean,  
 And always wait till you turn green,  
     Oh, traffic light.

From the *Ports of Missing Authors*.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Fall 1969 pp11-12]

### Why Johnny Can't Spell By Mildred Vandeburgh

*A California teacher in a Christian school summarizes some ideas about possible changes in the English language*  
 from THE LUTHERAN WITNESS August 1969.

It was "Parents Night" in the Christian school in which I had recently accepted a position. Fathers and mothers of my second graders listened attentively as I enumerated details about the weekly schedule I had previously outlined on the chalkboard. We thumbed through the children's textbooks. A few minutes remained before the social and refreshment period, so I asked if there were questions.

"Yes!" A chesty young man with dark bushy eyebrows was first to speak up. His deep, resonant voice rang out as though he were speaking for the entire delegation. "Do you teach phonics?"

"I enrolled my daughter here because they don't teach phonics in the public schools," a prim little woman declared. "I was afraid she would never learn to read."

"My Jimmy had so much trouble with his spelling, we just had to make a change," another parent complained.

A murmur of agreement rose from all parts of the room.

These parents knew I had taught in public schools 25 years. Were they deliberately putting me on the spot? I'd come here because I wanted to be free to teach Bible and hold devotions in the classroom and escape teaching "sex without morals" to toddlers. I'd thought parents sent their children to Christian schools for the same reasons.

But these parents had another purpose.

Phonics I had always taught. So did the teachers with whom I had worked. But there is more to teaching reading and spelling than rules of phonics, which have so many exceptions we must qualify them all with terms like "may," "if," "but," "usually," or "except."

English phonetics remind me of the "No" of some parents - variable, unstable, bewildering to kids needing a decisive solution. Teaching phonics is not an Aladdin's lamp for assured success, as these parents seemed to believe.

### **Phonics Not Enough**

I closed my eyes and breathed a prayer for a courteous attitude and a judicious response. Without a word, I stepped to the chalkboard and wrote a list of common words which confront primary children learning to read:

*is, you, of, said, who, does, head, been, they, buy, come, heart, eye, one, could, have, live, shoe, once, was, write.*

Then I faced the parents. "Phonics is defined in the Teachers Guide of our spelling text as the association of letters and groups of letters with the sounds one hears when saying the words. Would you want me to teach your children to pronounce these familiar words according to that rule?" I asked.

Complete silence!

Then together we determined how these groups of letters would actually sound. A ripple of laughter cleared the atmosphere of all tension. Next I wrote on the board as they dictated their phonetic spelling: *iz, duz, cum, U, bed, hart, liv*, and so on.

"Now you can see why we can't rely solely upon rules of phonics in teaching reading and spelling to beginners," I summed up my point. "Such words as these must be recognized by sight. Our 5-vowel letters are abstract signs which represent some 20 sounds. They are combined to form blends like *au* and diphthongs like *oi*. All of them plus combinations are used to represent the schwa sound:

Christmas, happen, possible, come, circus.

Only 6 of our 21 consonants are limited to a single sound; and they are often silent or placed next to letters which shade them in varying degrees.

"Phonetic analysis is helpful in recognizing familiar elements in words; and more and more attention is focused upon sound of letters, blends, digraphs, and diphthongs as the child matures. But to the beginner, there aren't any familiar elements!

"Too much emphasis upon phonics confuses young children because so many words are not spelled like they sound. Besides, it's as boring as limiting piano instruction to scale practice. My greatest concern is to nurture curiosity and delight in discovering new worlds through the printed page, whether by sight, sound, context, or language experience."

### **Simplify Language**

"Then what can we do to help our children?" I was asked.

"Help them to identify words by sight, sound, and meaning, then ask them to tell you the stories they read in their own words, to check comprehension. When drilling on spelling, note length of word; initial, middle, and final letters; number of syllables; and finally, the correct formation of the letters when they write. And be patient!

"Most important, don't be apathetic to the root of their problem. A bill to simplify spelling has been introduced in every session of congress since 1957. Due, largely to apathy of teachers and parents of children who would derive the greatest benefit, none has ever reached the special education subcommittee for action.

"This year the Honorable Robert Mathias is introducing a bill to establish a National Spelling Commission with power to select a system of simplified spelling and to prepare a dictionary. If you see the need, write to the subcommittee and to your congressmen," I suggested.

"But that will make our previous literature obsolete!" declared the man with the bushy eyebrows.

"I doubt it," I replied. "New translations of the Bible appear continually. But have you scrapped your King James Version?"

He got the point.

Irregularities of English, spelling impede the learning process of all of our children. The time we spend teaching and drilling on exceptions to rules is needed to teach factual material, which has doubled within the last decade.

Primary teachers must spend half of their time on reading, spelling, language, and handwriting. In the upper grades, over a third of the school day is spent teaching the language arts. That leaves less than three hours to teach math, science, history, geography, government or civics, current events, nature study, health, safety, music, art, physical education, and Spanish or French - plus Bible in Christian schools. We must allow for interruptions, assemblies, mental set, shifting of materials and seating for different subjects, discipline problems, and emergencies.

### **Reading and Spelling**

Ideally, reading should be a see-comprehend process. Spelling should be simplified to a see-hear-say-write routine. This can be possible if enough citizens see the need and demand action.

Few people are cognizant of the situation, so they ignominiously censure the teachers. I wish they would realize that the dilemma hits us the hardest. We'd like to do justice to those other subjects. What are some of the difficulties which stymie the child learning to read and spell that could be corrected? He must recognize and remember which way to spell the *er* sound in individual words such as *person, sugar, stir, word, purse, learn, journey*; the *or* sound as in *door, four, roar, more*; the *ed* sound in *bed, said, head*; the *ar* sound as in *care, where, air, bear, their, prayer*. The classical illustration of this enigma is the 13 ways of spelling the *sh* sound listed by Mario Pei in

*The Story of English: shoe, sugar, issue, nation, mansion, suspicion, ocean, nauseous, conscious, schist, pshaw, chaperone, and fuchsia!* No wonder Johnny can't spell!

Conversely, there are different ways of pronouncing one spelling, such as the *ou* in *cough, though, country, should, journey, out, and soup*. Can we expect children to sound out such words?

"When two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking," is one of our unreliable rules. Check it in *wear, heart, great, and said!*

We teach primary children to recognize rhyming words like *all, ball, call, fall; bat, cat, hat, sat*. But what would be your comment when a second grader turned in this jingle?

*Get your socks out of the box.  
Put your toes into your shoes.*

Perplexing to the child is why *good* and *should* rhyme while *good* and *food* don't.

Such inconsistencies of sight-sound relationships in simple words like *how* and *low, gave* and *have, warm* and *harm, hear* and *wear, worm* and *worn* prohibit independent sounding out of new words by the child.

*Here, there, and where* are obviously related in both spelling and meaning. So why does the *e* sound like *e* in *here* and like *a* in *there* and *where*?

Confusing are the many words with two pronunciations, like *bow, row, read, tear, tales, gill, primer, refuse, invalid, and produce*.

### **Create Phonetic Language**

English has been dubbed by scholars as a hodgepodge. It is irregular and complex because our vocabulary came from Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Greek, French, and every tongue and dialect; and it has never been adapted to a logical order.

Norway has periodically renovated her language since the early 19th century. Turkey switched from Arabic to Roman letters in 1932, The Russian language was meliorated after the overthrow of the Czarist regime. Egypt is modernizing Arabic. Spelling has been simplified in Sweden and Finland. Are the English-speaking countries buried in tradition?

To economize on teaching time and to prevent dropping out by the discouraged and the bored, let's convert English into a phonetic language.

Shorthand and braille would benefit from such a change. International understanding would be promoted, for half the world's newspapers are published in English, and it is a required subject in many foreign schools. Some 300,000,000 people speak it. But foreigners bemoan its irregularities and inconsistencies. So do our Spanish-speaking Americans, accustomed to their phonetic idiom.

Attempts have been made to simplify English spelling by George Bernard Shaw, Benjamin Franklin, Noah Webster, and Theodore Roosevelt, just to name a few. Currently the general public is tolerating without demur the trend of industry to respell numerous words - *donut, snak, compoz, thruways, sno, nite, delite, freez*.

Surely official action would be preferable. Cooperation of other English-speaking nations should be sought.

### Some Suggested Changes

The following steps would go far toward simplification without radical changes: Strike out silent initial letters of all words so that they can be found in the dictionary by their initial sounds.

Examples: *gnat*, *aisle*, *wrong*, *know*, *pneumonia*.

Eliminate nonfunctioning silent letters from words, like the *i* in *friend* and *business*, *s* in *island*; and especially the silent *gh*. Spell *night*, *sight*, and *height* like *bite* and *kite*. (What a saving on typing, printing, paper, and reading time!)

Change all *ph*'s to *f*. Why should we cling to the old Greek *ph* when latins replaced it with *f* long ago? (*telefono*, *fotografia*, *filosofia*)

Use *z* for the *z* sound. Spell *rise* like *site*, *busy* like *dizzy*.

Substitute *i* for soft *g*, leaving only one sound for the letter *g*. Fish have *gills*. There are 4 *jills* in a pint.

Use *u* for the short *u* and schwa sound. When the Normans formulated our alphabet, the *u* caused some confusion, so they substituted *o* as in *come*, *dove*, *wonder*. What other ancient Norman custom have we preserved? Let's dispense with this one, too.

Use *t* instead of *d* or *ed* for the *t* sound in suffixes which form the past tense, as in *crept* and *slept*. Change *stepped* to *sept*.

Retain the letter *y* only as a consonant as in *yes*. Use *i* consistently for that vowel sound. (*bisikl*).

Designate long vowel sounds uniformly by adding a silent terminal *e*. (*mad*, *made*; *liv*, *live*; *lik*, *like*)

Clarify vowel sounds other than the short by inverting the letter, by diacritical marks, or by additional symbols.

Reserve final *er* exclusively for suffixes, as in *teacher* and *colder*. Adopt one of the other vowels to spell this final syllable for words like *sugar* and *future*.

Delete the letter *q* from the alphabet. It's a useless heritage from the Etruscans: 28 centuries ago and has the sound of *ks*. (*socks*, *sex*)

Delete the letter *x* and spell its various sounds phonetically; *zilefone*, *fiks*, *egzAMPL*, *complekshun*. Avoid confusion by spelling *accept* and *except* *aksept* and *eksept*.

Delete the letter *c*. It has no characteristic sound, but substitutes for *k* or *s*. Replace our third letter with *ch* (as in the Spanish alphabet) or a single symbol to represent this digraph.

Not only will we save school time but untold hours of secretaries, typists, writers, and printers by changing our archaic, cumbersome spoiling to functional foniks.

## **Shortcuts for the Improvement of Reading Instruction, by Ellen C. Henderson**

Probably there is no person educated to read English who has not wondered why there are so many inconsistencies in the spelling of English words. The reasons are not lost in antiquity but are the result of a blending of words borrowed from French, Latin, Greek, German, and many other foreign languages, usually without changing the spelling to suit the English system of phonetics. Needless to say, a reform of English spelling is long overdue and would be very helpful in educating our children. - The only question is how to bring it about. We can't wait for natural means of change to come about as we have been waiting for three centuries with only a few dozen simplified spellings to show for it. So the only way we can expect to have any real reform is by action in Congress.

A Spelling Reform Bill is before Congress calling for the appointment of a five member Commission which will make the decisions as to the changes in spelling. A dictionary will be prepared in the new spelling, and after it has been made available for one year, all government printing will use the new spelling. No one but government employees will be *required* to use the new spelling, and they only in their official duties in writing reports. It is hoped that the precedent established will be sufficient to start the ball rolling. Hopefully, the new spellings will be adopted gradually by the public. Lawyers have said they will be glad to do so. Business enterprizes already use some phonetic spellings, as witness newly coined words: Ampex, Antrol, Apl-butter, Bif, Buggeta, Duz, Jello, Karo, Kodak, Lux, Kix, Kwik-snax, Kid-e-skool, Mum, Saran, Skat, Sun-Kist, Spam, Surf, Swel, Vel, Thru-way, and dozens more. Surely schools will see the advantages and welcome the simpler forms. Boards of Education should welcome the reform for the sake of economy of time and labor to teach the new spelling. Then salaries formerly paid for remedial reading teachers can be channeled to other uses.

Congressmen will work for passage of the Bill if they have the support of parents and teachers. They know that the passage of the Bill would make Congressional documents easier to read and be read by more people. The subsequent publicity and excitement would make it a topic of conversation by everyone.

Reading teachers could then look forward to dealing with content at the appropriate grade level. With a simplified, nearly phonetic spelling, no remedial measures would be needed, for words would be spelled as pronounced and sounding would indicate the spelling. Spelling will then be the easy task of hearing the sounds and setting down the proper symbols designated to represent the sounds.

Simplified spelling would hasten general education. It would make learning to read so easily accomplished that we would have no reading failures, much fewer school drop-outs and consequently, no disadvantaged people of any age or circumstance.

We need early education. We need prospective parents who can provide the desirable environment for the next generations as well as the present. We must have early education while the tiny tots are best able to assimilate learning and are unspoiled by doubts, confusion and self-distrust - while each flowering bud is nurtured by the consistency, regularity and logical reasoning of a reliable phonetic spelling.

We need the quantity of parent participation that was stirred up a few years ago by a best seller (Flesch: *Why Johnny Can't Read*) which sent parents to school to find out whether the author was exaggerating the conditions in his book that children were guessing instead of reading.

Perhaps public discussion of spelling reform will send parents to evening meetings with teachers to offer cooperation.

Even tho your and my Congressman bring the spelling reform Bill from the Education Committee and make it into law, two years will be required before the dictionary will be ready for use.

Meanwhile we can make use of what we have. We can accomplish much with wise use of our present inconsistent spelling. We must grasp our opportunity to turn our potential failures toward success. We must make a new start on the foundation which we are calling a head start.

**The reading problem** has two facets: remedial and developmental, the latter of which we should think of as preventive.

The two types require two different approaches.

For remedial reading the teacher has to discover causes and degrees of retardation, then supply specific experiences whereby the learners will gain the reading skills and attitudes to be expected at the age-grade level.

This poses a terrific job, partly because the causes for inefficient reading may vary from individual to individual. The teacher who seeks can find at least one point to praise and from that pleasant start the building can begin.

Children who are poor readers usually have one or several of the following weaknesses: They miscall or skip over words or repeat needlessly or wait to be told. Having missed learning how to sound the consonants correctly they are helpless. Not having developed the automatic sound response to the letters which spell two-letter sounds (*ph, sh, th, wh, ng*, and the 3 sounds of *ch*) nor to the 3 letters (*h, w, y*) which do not carry their sound in the name, they cannot use the sounds of these letters in the regular "sounding" process for new words. They cannot point to and name all the letters of the alphabet, and thus have not developed the automatic sound response to one of the sounds of each of the letters. They have not learned to read silently before reading aloud and have therefore developed exaggerated inner speech with word-by-word slowed-down lip movements. They are discouraged, seem to be hopeless, emotionally upset - expectedly so after having been from year to year believing themselves to be failures.

The remedy (if we are to be consistent) is to supply experiences which will result in success.

The causal lack of desire to change as well as the weakness concerning words may be overcome by an experience through which the poor reader learns and uses a few facts about English words and their letters and sounds.

As a preliminary step, the members of the remedial reading group may be reminded that all of the words in all of the books make use of only 26 letters and that all of them except I and the one-letter indefinite article contain at least one vowel sound and one consonant sound. Thus there are two kinds of letters. The teacher, partly to dramatise the facts but also to review the alphabet from *a* to *z*, prints the alphabet in sequence according to a classification which shows the following columns:

<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>
<i>e</i>		<i>f</i>	<i>g</i>
<i>i</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>h</i>
	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	

<i>o</i>	<i>q</i>	<i>p (ph is f)</i>	
	<i>r</i>		<i>s</i>
<i>u</i>	<i>v</i>		<i>t</i>
	<i>w</i>		<i>x</i>
	<i>z</i>		<i>y</i>

Remark that all except the first column are consonants. Then ask to be told what kind of letters are in the first column. The answer will be "vowels."

Show how the lower lip is placed under the upper teeth to make the sound of *v*, how the lips have to open before they close to make the sound of *w*, then have to make room for the tongue to be placed behind the upper teeth to make the sound of *l*.

Have the students begin to make the sound of *v* and continue to be making it so long as the chalk remains under it; then pass the chalk quickly across the *o* to the *w*; then pass the chalk quickly across the *e* and hold it under the *l*.

Print the word with dashes instead of the vowel letters, as: v-w-l. Repeat the sounding process, passing rapidly across the vowel letters. Ask the students if they can hear themselves pronounce the word in their inner speech.

Say, "I must be sure you understand what is meant by inner speech. I'll give you two numbers to add together. Don't give me the answer until you see my hand coming down, but listen to hear yourself think the answer. What you heard is inner speech."

Print *look* and *l--k*. Make the *l* into *b*. The students unhesitatingly say *book*. Print, "I'd like a candy b-r." and "I love my m-m." Print r-m-mb-r. Nearly all of the students will say the word. Under r-m-mb-r, print n-mb-r to furnish a second successful experience.

Say, "Notice that the consonant letters in these words are all in the first consonant column. Do you know what these two words are?" Print z-- and qu-ck. Say, "Yes, qu-ck can be quick or quack. Zoo is right for this z--. The 9 letters in this first column are always to be depended upon whenever you see them in a word. Your inner speech will pronounce a word. If its meaning fits into the sentence, you can be sure that you are on the right track."

If the students are mature enough to understand, explain that the vowel sounds of words are breath from the lungs flowing over the vibrating vocal cords. This outgoing breath becomes the different vowel sounds as a result of the movements (adjustments) of the lips, the tongue, the jaws, and the soft palate while these speech parts are producing the consonant sounds.

Explain that when we are making the consonant sounds correctly and are letting our eyes pass rapidly along the word from left to right, we can hear our inner speech pronounce a word. If we do not know the word, we ask for help or look in a dictionary.

The learners should be started by reading sentences which use only the 9 consonants which never use sounds other than their name sounds, such as:

B-ll w-ll, r-ll a r-bb-r b-ll.  
M-ll-e w-ll l-ke a w-rm r--m.  
N-ble w-ll w-lk -v-r a w-ll.  
A br--ze w-ll, bl-w -v-r a r-v-r.  
W-ll B-ll -r W-ll qu-rr-l?

Later the students should practice reading sentences which use the 5 letters which are used for only two sounds, the *d*, *f*, *j*, *n*, and *p*. There is only one detail to remember of each. The *d* is its name sound whenever its sound is easily pronounced. In some words like *looked* and *laughed*, we give it the sound of *t*. However, when we do so it is when the *d* comes after an *e*. The *f* has the sound of *f* except in one word: *of*. The *j* may be another sound in a foreign word like San Juan or Navajo. The *n* is its name sound at the end and at the beginning of all words; but within a word it may spell or help to spell the two-letter sound *ng* (sing, ink, finger). The *p* with *h* always stands for the *f* sound (telephone).

A m-n p-mped p-re w-t-r fr-m a r-v-r.  
N-ne w-m-n j-mped d-wn -v-r a w-ll,  
F-ve m-n -f W-ldw--d -re l--k-ng -n --r r--m.

With 9 letters which are completely dependable and 5 others which are almost as reliable, only 7 of the 21 consonants require special attention. The 7 are: *h*, *c*, *g*, *s*, *t*, *x* and *y*. These 7 and the 5 vowel letters are the cause most confusion to poor readers who missed learning to read during their first year. The *h* is always its breathy self at the beginning of words. It follows *c*, *p*, *s*, *t*, and *w* to spell two-letter sounds (chin, school and chagrin; phone; she; this and three; and what). However, with *p*, *t*, and *w* the spellings always represent the designated sounds; with *s* the sound is usually the *sh* in wish; but the *ch* combination causes havoc, especially with children who are subjected to the old-line phonics in kindergarten.

Members of remedial reading groups who are making the consonant sounds correctly and go through the word rapidly from left to right soon realize that the consonant blends use their name sounds. The *c* uses both the sound of *k* and *s* (scald, fence) and is always silent in some words (science, scent), but with *l* and *r* (*cl* and *cr*) the *c* always has the *k* sound. In a like manner, the *g* with *l* or *r* (*gl* and *gr*) always has the real sound of *g*; the alphabet sound of *g* is the *j* sound; thus there is neither a hard nor a soft sound of *g* - where did such a classification originate?

Phonics rules which have exceptions offer less help than confusion. The rule covering the double vowel letters is undependable to the tune of nearly a dozen differences (can read, has read, did tear, shed a tear, learn, break, heart, react, realize, create, sargeant). What is the value in having a child recite "When two vowels come together, the first does the talking; the second goes awalkin'" when it has more exceptions than conformals?

We can profit from phonic facts. Youngsters who have been in the classroom one year without having been taught to read at their mental or physical capacity, should make a fresh start. Those who have been at school two years without having learned to read probably are "ready" to understand the work of the eye and the brain in the reading process. Certainly they can understand the facts of inner speech-in the clear way in which it may be explained to them. Surely every individual whose mental age is eight years can be taught to use the marvelous power that is within our grasp.

Inner speech is a fact. It is an original endowment, learned in the same way that talking and walking are learned. The truly disadvantaged are the people who cannot hear. What is the classification for people who will not hear?

Every efficient reader has passed through four stages. The first is readiness during which the learner experiences some of the values to be had from being able to know the ideas that are locked into the printed page. The second is memorized or "sight" learning during which the learner acquires a sight vocabulary and uses the letters of the alphabet as memory clues. The third is a transition stage

during which the learner uses the sounds of the letters in a rapid left-to-right movement of the eye focus across the unit of meaning (the eye-mind phrase), becomes able to hear and make use of his inner speech, and to seek help whenever the meaning is not clear. The fourth stage is independent word recognition.

First grade children pass through the four stages when each succeeding stage is built on a strong foundation, with no shoddy materials included.

Data show that of the children entering the first grade, approximately one third are beginning to read. This third are printing words (names), can point to and name some or all of the alphabet letters, can count and print some of the numbers, can repeat rhymes or tell stories, and have a wide vocabulary. All of them have had a home or kindergarten environment that has supplied experiences through which they developed "readiness."

If there is only one classroom for the first grade in the community, the teacher should keep these top children happily engaged in a library section of the room or have them be leaders in the activity which is needed for the development of the other children. These top children should not be permitted to rush ahead of the disadvantaged members of the classroom, making them feel inferior and unsure of themselves, victims of a weakened foundation. The top children will not be penalized by the waiting. They will read - and like to read - regardless of the classroom situation.

These top children have already learned two habits which are not practiced until the reading process has begun. Without having learned the two new habits, the children start out failing and may eventually become members of remedial classes.

These two new habits are: 1, thinking the meaning while the eyes focus on the print, and, 2, focusing the eyes on the words in a rapid movement from the left to the right.

A child can begin to focus his eyes on print while he is playing with blocks or plastic letters. His eyes are focusing while he is seeing a letter and points to it while saying its name. In saying the name, the child is thinking at his level of meaning. At school the teacher can be sure about the focusing by asking each child to select two of the same words from among several different words. There should be no pictures to be distracting.

In order to be sure of the left-to-right movement, the teacher can edit the usual experience chart sentences to read so that the new word is at the end. Sentences such as the following, printed on slips of tagboard, may be passed from one to another and will provide many repetitions along with much pleasure:

We went for a walk.  
We went to the store.  
We went to the post-office.  
We went to the library.

The teacher can use sentences which name articles that the children can pick up and show to others to prove that they understand the sentence:

This is my name. This is my crayon. This is my coat.  
This is my book. - This is my pencil. This is my cap.

To make sure the children focus the eyes from the first of the sentence to the end, a question form may be used and mixed in with the others:

Where is my pencil? Where is my book?

From the beginning, the children should read the sentences silently and then look toward a listener to read it aloud. If this way is consistently followed, they will never develop exaggerated inner pronunciation and will - from the beginning - read silently without the word-by-word type which results in slow response with the attendant lip movement.

One year of prevention is worth more than later courses in "speed reading."

While dealing with these memorized sentences, the teacher need not expect all of the children to remember the end words. The teacher should answer the children's questions by asking to be told the name of the letter at the beginning of the word, or to have the entire word spelled. Or the teacher can indicate the object which is named by having the word placed at or on the object.

The alphabet is of prime importance. During the readiness stage, the teacher needs to know that all of the 15 children can name and point to all of the letters, both capitals and small. In merely saying the alphabet by rote, the children make nearly all of the language sounds correctly. In using the names of the letters and in memorizing certain verses which use all of the language sounds, all traces of infant speech (baby talk) should be "corrected" in the easiest possible manner and in the shortest possible time.

In becoming able to point to and name the 26 letters, the children have developed the marvelous automatic sound response to one sound of 23 of the letters-the 5 vowels and 18 of the consonants. No useful sound response has been developed to three consonants (h, w, y) due to the fact that their sounds are not carried in their names.

The teacher can secure the development of the automatic sound response to the three letters. In an early experience chart sentence: What is your name?, in *what*, the sound of the *h* precedes the sound of the *w*, almost separating the two sounds. Tell the children about how they have to use their breath before they put their lips together to make the noise which comes from their mouths while their lips are placed together. The children can print **w h a t** in large letters on the chalkboard. The teacher can point to the letters as the children say the sounds so that the eyes will focus on the *h* before they focus on the *w*.

An alphabetical chart with 26 pockets labeled from *a* to *z* is an excellent device to give opportunity for successful performance to children who can say the alphabet by rote, and at the same time make one more repetition of pointing to and naming the letters.

Such a device is also useful for filing alphabetically. With the children's name cards filed alphabetically, the teacher can use a name beginning with *M* for the first phonics lesson. If no child's name begins with *M*, the teacher can use the *M* of *Miss* or *Mrs.* or *Mr.* to call attention to the "noise" which is being made at the closed lips while the first letter is being spoken.

Children can see and feel the closed lips. They can hear the noise and can begin to call its sound. From this experience they can understand the meaning of the word and will later know what "sounding" means, something many poor readers have entered remedial reading classes without having learned.

In addition to the ease with which the learners can see and feel the lips while they are producing the sound of the letter *M*, this letter is ideal for beginning the study of the sounding process - phonics - because it is much more easily made correctly with no vowel sound attached than incorrectly as if its sound begins with the sound of *e* with which *end* begins, as if it is spelled *em*. This is not true of

many of the consonants. Youngsters come to remedial reading sessions adding a vowel sound as if the sound can be spelled thus: *buh, kuh, duh, eff, guh, kuh, uhl*, and so on to *zuh*. With the consonant sounds made incorrectly, no learner can ".sound out" *buhuhlackuh* to be *black* but he can hear the inner speech pronunciation when he blends the sound of *b* with the sound of *l* and opens his jaws wide enough to permit his tongue to bunch back as it has to do to produce the sound of *k*. The needed vowel sound will come between the sound of the *l* and the sound of the *k*, provided of course that the learner's vocabulary includes *black*.

The safe way to speak of the consonant sounds is "the sound of k" or "the sound of r." No learner will recognize *tree* if he gives *er* as the sound of *r*. With an added *n*, he could get *tureen*, a covered vegetable dish.

The first phonics lesson belongs after readiness and early in the sight learning stage while the children are making use of the alphabet letters as memory clues. The children come to realize that words *are* made of letters and that the letters represent sounds. However, there is no need for children to use the term *phonics* nor to hear it altho they are making use of the sounds of the letters or they would not be entering the third stage - the transitionary period which precedes independent word recognition, and are therefor ready for promotion to the Second Grade.

Children who are already reading when they enter school may understand what is meant by sound and sounding. But not all entrants have had experience of the kind that has taught them. A kindergarten child came home from school so evidently unhappy that his mother asked him to tell her what had occurred. He said, "I didn't know my phonics." A visiting remedial teacher asked, "What phonics didn't you know?" The child answered, "I didn't know the sound of a."

The reading expert carefully refrained from asking about which of the 9 sounds of *a* the kindergarten teacher was referring. Later the child clapped his hands together and said, "Listen. I can hear a sound but it isn't *a*, is it?"

Kindergarten is no place for phonics charts. Why try to secure automatic response to the two-letter sound *ch*? The child cannot recognize *school* by inserting the *ch* sound instead of the *k*-sound.

Kindergarten is the place for developing readiness, for having experiences which contribute to the learning-to-read beginning year. No data are available to let school administrators know how many children have been hindered instead of being helped by unwise phonics attack by inexperienced teachers.

Hopefully Head Start will provide children with pre-learning experiences which the home environment has not given. It is known that adequate early learning experiences have been had by the children who learn to read easily and quickly. To, be effective, the Head Start program should result in fluent talk free from infant speech (baby talk) with a growing vocabulary and speaking in complete sentences. The children should willingly listen to others talking and relating what has happened. They should be using terms of politeness. They should be interested in printed matter - signs, addresses on envelopes, labels on cans and boxes at home and in the stores. They should be memorizing verses such as Mother Goose rhymes.

When they are beginning to copy print, they should be taught to begin at the right place and move in the left to right direction.

We teachers must do the best we can with what we have, but yet looking forward to a spelling reform which will give us words that will be spelled according to their sounds. Each can help and

do our part by writing to their Congressman urging him to expedite the spelling reform Bill on its way thru Congress.

The following verses use all of the sounds occurring in the English language.

### **The Moon**

There's a big round moon  
Like a great white eye  
Hanging up there  
Like a treasure in the sky.  
It never winks;  
It never blinks;  
It doesn't even frown;  
It just looks down.

### **Listen to the Bells**

Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong.  
Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong.  
Hush, hush, hush, hush. Listen to the bells.  
The big church bells, ding-dong, ding-dong.  
The tiny toy bells, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling.  
Let the big bells ring, dong-ding, dong-ding.  
Let the toy bells sing, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling.  
Hush, hush, hush, hush.  
Listen to the bells.  
Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong.  
Dong-ding, dong-ding, dong-ding, dong-ding.

*Verses copyright by Ellen C. Henderson*

### **A Happy Little Fairy**

A happy little fairy  
Went dancing on her way.  
"Good morning!" she said to everyone.  
"How do you do today?"

This happy little fairy  
Came singing from her play.  
"Good evening," she said to everyone,  
"It's been a glorious day."

### **My Mouth**

My mouth is like a room.  
My tongue is like a broom.  
I'll play this game with you:  
We'll open wide the door;  
We'll sweep the walls,  
We'll sweep the floor;  
We'll sweep the ceiling, too.

Then our tongues will be  
Like first-class brooms;  
Our mouths will be  
Like well-cleaned rooms.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Fall 1969 p16]

## **Cartoon**

**NUBBIN** Los Angeles Herald-Examiner By Jim Burnett and George Crenshaw



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## **Wealth Amplifiers, by Ivor Darreg**

Many of today's spectacular success stories are based, not on some new mechanical or electronic gadget, nor on a novel chemical material coming out of the laboratories, but on the creation of some system, skill, or technique, some method or program that carries with it a new mental attitude.

A wealth amplifier is any affair of this nature, which increases the value of something else. Indeed, many wealth amplifiers convert hitherto meaningless hardware and raw materials into immensely valuable properties, generating new jobs and "fanning out" into other fields, often with the most surprising and profitable consequences.

Hop into your time-machine and go back with me for a moment to the 19th century. The Morse Code was such a wealth amplifier. Without it, the wet batteries and electromagnets and lengths of wire were mere scientific toys; with it, telegraph messages spanned the globe and soon went undersea through transoceanic cables.

But note! this was not the end of the story - indeed, its ramifications extend right up to our own time. The railroad telegrapher was quite as essential as anybody helping run the trains. Telegraphy made the railroads grow faster and bigger. The newspaper industry also was deeply indebted to Morse-Code telegraphy for its growth and prosperity. Even tho only a comparatively few people actually knew how to send and receive Morse-Code messages, the jobs and success of thousands of other people depended upon this code-indeed, owed their very existence to it - would have been impossible without it.

The American Morse Code was modified into the Continental Morse Code, now used for radio communication. Extra characters were added for letters bearing diacritical marks, as French é or Spanish ñ, and it was even adapted to the Greek, Russian, and other non-Roman alphabets. It inspired the development of the Bandar 5-unit Code, which is built into teletypewriters, and this code and its modern descendants recorded on paper punched tape and later on magnetic tape, make it possible to get information into and out of computers. Without these wealth amplifiers, descendants of the Morse Code, computers would be impotent and completely useless. Probably they wouldn't even have been invented, because the making of computers depended upon many other previous inventions. The availability of one invention opens the door to new ideas, new uses and new inventions.

Now consider the ordinary office typewriter. What's a typewriter worth to you? Three times as much, if you know the touch system, as compared to its value to a "hunt and peck" typist. It's the same typewriter, the mechanism and keyboard; but if you know this wealth amplifier, you can make any standard typewriter worth more! - without changing or improving the mechanism.

For an example closer to home, suppose you want to sell your piano or organ. The price someone would be willing to pay you would be substantially higher if you had it tuned. Thus the piano - or organ-tuning skill is a wealth amplifier, for you as well as for the tuner - the increase in value will be several times what you have to pay to get the instrument tuned.

Wealth amplifiers are not restricted to being used singly they can be combined; they can help each other; they can be "of higher orders."

Best known on the contemporary scene of these higher-order wealth amplifiers are the "computer programming languages." These systems (Fortran and Cobol are typical examples) are not directly

sent into the computer, but are first converted into machine code. In turn, codes of third and higher orders may be built upon them. The possibilities are endless, and this exciting and fruitful development has given rise to the term "software" (a sort of opposite to *hardware* as applied to the physical materials out of which the computer and associated equipment is built).

When you consider that the computer industry and data processing in general, has come from nothing in the 1940's to almost the greatest industry today, that it affects virtually everybody in many ways at once, that it has brought about the Second Industrial Revolution and has made science-fiction look hopelessly backward, and it has reached into many fields that were never considered as mathematical, doesn't it make sense to speak of wealth amplifiers? There aren't enough superlatives to convey the impact of this fantastic success story.

The present writer has originated two wealth amplifiers, one audible and one visual, twins as it were. They are known as *Numaudo*, an internationally pronounceable syllable-system for mathematics and symbolic logic, and *Numalittera*, a typewriter-compatible code derived from Numaudo. Both of these systems may be used by themselves, with each other, or with other wealth amplifiers such as we have described above. Not only that: new devices and inventions and systems become feasible now, which were inconceivable without them.

Numaudo (the name means "*numbers made audible*") will increase the value and usefulness of the existing mathematical and symbolic logic books, since it provides a practically one-to-one speakable representation of the existing international written mathematical notation. Numaudo is for people as well as for machines, interfacing mathematics and symbolic logic with the human mouth and ear. It is a second-order code since it depends upon and springs from the existing mathematico-logical symbols and letters. It is a wealth amplifier in other ways, too: voice-recognizing and -uttering machines will be simplified and reduced in cost, while telephone users will get more "mileage" out of their present telephone bills when they can talk 1N mathematics rather than merely ABOUT it.

Numalittera, the alphabetical code derived from Numaudo, will convert any typewriter or teletypewriter into a mathematical and logical machine without the expense of extra special type-characters, without having to learn new keyboards, without the time-wasting procedure of writing characters into the typescript, or having to spell them out with (necessarily awkward and inaccurate) words. The saving of time, and the immediate increase in value of all typewriters and teletypewriters without any additions to or changes in such machines, surely qualifies Numalittera as a potent wealth amplifier. (*Littera* being the Latin word for letter, the derivation of the name from *Numaudo* should be obvious.)

In time to come, others will create new wealth amplifiers built upon Numaudo, Numalittera, and their manifold applications. Wealth amplifiers are like that: they produce offspring!

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### **A Retired Business Man**

He always said he would retire  
When he had made a million clear,  
And so he toiled into the dusk  
From day to day, from year to year.  
At last, he put his ledgers up,  
And laid his stock reports aside;  
But when he started out to live,  
He found out that he had already died.  
*Anderson M. Scruggs*

## Learning to Read-an Analysis, by Beatrix Tudor-Hart

Dr. John Downing, in his article entitled, 'Look-Say and phonics are both Obsolete,' confuses two separate activities of the central nervous system, namely: the process of learning to speak, and that of acquiring reading and writing skills. While the two latter obviously presuppose the former, they are quite different activities. The most significant difference is that speech is acquired unconsciously and is therefore not taught in the same manner by the adults concerned with the child.

Speech is learned by imitation of sounds heard. It is precisely because children, at this early age, think concretely that the only words which they understand, as single units, are concrete nouns and active verbs. It is because they *can* connect names with objects and actions with verbs that they are able to learn to speak. But, for all preliterate persons, intelligent grammatical structure, however well it is used in practice, is not consciously understood at all. Speech is just sound, short or long, simple or complicated; only concrete nouns and active verbs are recognized as words. All the abstract, grammatical words are learnt as complications of known words in long sounds which children perfect through their growing auditory perception. It is their brains which are computers, which unconsciously sort out all the millions of combinations of sounds to give children the 'correct' sounds in a given situation. Most mentally defective children cannot achieve this although they may be able to use a few concrete nouns and active verb words and may have parrot speech.

It is through learning to read that children first come to know the existence of abstract words used for grammatical structure to describe relationships, categories, causation, etc. In order to be able to carry out this very complicated activity, a child must already have reached the stage of being able to analyse and synthesise those parts of speech, of which he is already aware, namely concrete nouns and active verbs. If he cannot do this, i.e. recognize and separate an initial sound in a name, e.g. *a* in *apple*, and cannot understand how to blend three letter sounds to make a monosyllabic name, *c-a-t*, *cat*, then he *is not* ready to learn to read - even if he can learn stories by heart and recognize some single words or sentences.

*Of course*, children must "learn the true purpose of reading by practice and sharing in real life situations." *Of course*, the more they speak and are spoken to, the more they look at books and have stories read to them, the quicker they will reach the stage of being able and eager to learn how to acquire the necessary skill. But this is *not* learning to read; it is getting ready to learn.

As John Downing correctly points out, "actually, the task (the thinking task for reading), consists in relating the structure of spoken language to the structure of written language." In order to relate one structure to another, you must know the nature of at least one of the structures and the link which will relate it to the other. Now this is precisely what the young child does *not* know before he learns to read. So how can he relate something he does not know to something else he does not know? This is the teacher's task for, in the process of teaching the child to read, she teaches him to understand the structure of spoken language by beginning with the analysis and synthesis of that part of speech of whose meaning he is aware, the monosyllabic concrete noun. Just because children are still in the concrete stage of thinking when they begin reading, it is far easier for them to discover letter sounds through sound games, always using familiar names, and to learn to build meaningful words, than to try to understand what such a word as 'that' or 'which' or 'through' or 'after' is. Chopping up sentences into their separate words by white spaces in *no* way makes it easier for children to read and understand the *abstract* words. Since the analysis and synthesis of the units of sound is the way to the beginning of understanding the structure of spoken language, then the teacher must begin with that which the child knows: concrete nouns, singly; these must be

monosyllabic so long as the child is building with single letters. It is here, of course, that the i.t.a. is so good. The key to word building is consistent, so the child meets no contradiction.

Because the preliterate child is unaware of abstract words in spoken language, and because his thinking is still concrete, it is essential for written language to be presented in very carefully graded form, in the same way as spoken language is in practice achieved. If a child meets first a concrete noun, which is familiar, then a very short sentence of concrete noun and active verb, which is also familiar and which includes the two abstract words, the definite and the indefinite articles, and finally longer single sentences, each having not more than one or two abstract words; and if each of these carries a picture illustrating it, the *structure* of language will appear more easily, and therefore, be learnt more easily. The i.t.a. is regular and consistent so that children can learn to decipher very quickly and so be freer to concentrate on grammatical structure. Everything John Downing says about it in his article is correct.

The only thing is that its whole significance is lost if the children do not know their 44 letter sounds to begin with! "The concrete experiences of these regular relationships between the structure of written English and the structure of the spoken form" simply do not exist for children until they have learnt to analyse and synthesise the sounds of speech and then relate these to the i.t.a. John Downing has carefully avoided any mention of how learning to read occurs. If, as he states, "the truth is that teachers long ago discovered the futility and emptiness of this kind of jargon (phonics)," how does he explain the results of my reading experiment with i.t.a.? In this experiment, 400 five-year-olds began learning to read by Look-say and 400 began with letter sounds, both groups using i.t.a. By the time the children were 7-8 years old, 5.5% of the Look-say children were unable to read at all; while none of the 'letter sounds' beginners were in this category. Of those who read sufficiently to be able to take the comprehension test at the end of the experiment, 12.6% of the Look-say beginners were poor readers as compared with 7.4% of the 'phonic' beginners. At the other end of the scale, 35.5% of the 'phonic' children as compared with 20.4% of the Look-say children were reading fluently. Until they were taught their letter sounds, none of the Look-say children knew that there was a connection between a letter and a sound, and they couldn't figure it out on their own. When asked to read a monosyllabic noun such as 'pig,' which they had not learnt in their Look-say vocabulary, they simply said, "I can't read it because my teacher has not told me what it is." These children were quite unaware of any connection between the structure of spoken and written language!

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Fall 1969 p17]

### **Pure Disdeign**

A king who began on his reign  
Exclaimed with a feeling of peign,  
'Tho I'm legally heir,  
No one here seems to ceir  
That I haven't been born with a breign.'

*From Rimes Without Reason, by SRA*

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Fall 1969 p19]

[The diacritics are more like single and double quotes than acute accents and umlauts.]

## World Language: Sistemïzd Ęnglish

Essex Station, Boston, Ma.

Aligrams, a book everybody should have and will enjoy

Examples

By ALI FIUMEDORO

(in Sistemïzd Ęnglish)

Have a good reason  
for all that you do.

Háv ä gud rëson  
for of thát iü dü.

You may win or lose  
by the words you use.

Iü mä win or lüz  
bī thú wrdz iü iüz.

Either dress right,  
or stay out of sight.

Ęthr dres rīt,  
or stā úwt ov sīt.

The louder the mouth,  
the smaller the brain.

Thú lawdr thú múwth,  
thú smolr thú brän.

[Spelling Progress Bulletin Fall 1969 p20]

## WANTED = = CRUSADERS

No dout READING FAILURES are due, PRIMARILY, tu the idiotic inconsistency of t-o (Traditional Orthografy). English iz alredy the de facto international language, but its inconsistent spelling impedes its acquisition az such. So, lets streamlIne our orthografy in KEEPING with the missile Aje in which WE liv, - just az uther peples hav solved this same problem. Thus the READER iz invited to join A world-wide CRUSADE for simplified English, - domestic az well az international.

RELIABL tests hav shown that USING stable orthografy, in PRIMARY grades, enables the normal student tu finish hiz education well ahead ov thozе struggling with t-o from the begIning. Altho cuming jenerations must lurn tu READ existing literature, there iz NO REASON thay should spell idiotically, in the literature thay bequeath posterity. Logically, REFORM should BE introduced at the prImary level. But when it should BE extended tu uther grades NEED not BE an issue at this tIme. Cuming educators can "cross that bridge" at their convenience, perhaps on a "next edition" basis. Inazmuch az yungsters wood BE READING t-o within A YEAR or so, and oldsters wood hav no dificulty lurning tu READ the simplified, we wood hav an indefinit, but orderly, transition period ov "optional" spellings. Thus, traditional inconsistencies wood gradually BECUM obsolete with the passing ov traditional spellers, - and REFORM wood BECUM A REALITY without the CHAOS that REACTIONARIES predict.

No dout more peple ar studying English, az A foren tung, than ar studying eny uther foren language, - perhaps more than ALL uthers. Thus, English IZ the wurlds secondary language. But inter-language teachers should note that the wurlds secondary language iz to BE USED MOSTLY BETWEEN NON-Anglos; for that REASON it NEED not, and SHOULD not RETAIN the confusing inconsistencies ov

traditional English. Perhaps 99% of the world's linguists exploit their linguistic skills in fields where literacy is not a factor, - as tourist guides, bell-hops, taxi-drivers, clerks, policemen, domestics, etc. Thus international English should be considered an independent language, - which is only inadvertently based on English. For these reasons, only stable English should be taught in inter-language studies.

Although most people are in favor of BASIC reform, they are averse to RADICAL change. Thus, the revised orthography must be a compromise between the currently idiotic and the futuristic ideal. Using small caps A, E, I, O, U, as long vowels, and lower-case a, e, i, o, u, as the short, this writer offers a "t-v" (Ten-Vowel) alphabet, which seems to effect the closest approach to the idealistic one-to-one sound-symbol notation practical within the English alphabet. Although some critics have noted that it falls short of perfection, none has offered any practical suggestions for perfecting it. As yet no neutral observer has inferred that he ever saw anything any better. Conversely, many have declared it the most practical they have seen.

The writer's t-v texts, "k-a-t spells cat", "McGuffey Readers", the "Davis Speller", and "Stabul English" are widely distributed throughout the world, - not only to the 50 state superintendents, but also to foreign Universities and international libraries, as well as to individual educators. His latest text, "Stabul English" has been delivered to ministers of education in more than 75 nations. Using a form letter, the author has circularized more than 1,900 colleges and universities throughout the U.S. and Canada, and over 8,000 members of the Amer. Educational Research Assn., as well as public schools and libraries in most major cities of U.S. and Canada. No doubt any mention of the t-v alphabet would have a "familiar ring" to many educators in many parts of the world. Thus the crusade "boat" has already been launched; all it needs is a dedicated crew of progressive educators to man the oars. Are you a progressive educator? Why not be a crusader as well?

As a crusader, perhaps the first step would be to "permit" orthographic reform through "tolerance", - by not criticizing anyone for using such "fool-proof" modifications as the writer has projected, spontaneously, throughout this letter. The point is; - IF educators would just quit interfering, the public would soon stabilize our orthography through "common usage", which is the only authority for language of any sort. Realistically, a teacher, who would correct(?) a pupil for using such modifications, deserves to be prosecuted for contributing to juvenile delinquency, - via "drop-outs". However it would be the crusaders' moral duty to see that the revised spellings indicate acceptable pronunciations, - and do not violate dominant traditional usage. The truly progressive crusader would not only "practice what he preaches", in his personal notations, - but would also take the initiative in promoting comparative studies of the various proposals for simplified spelling and conducting subsequent surveys to determine WHICH would be most acceptable to the most people, - public acceptance being more important than academic perfection. Then he should move for implementation of that notation, in primary grades. From there on, he could relax and "let nature take her course", in keeping with developments.

Although the writer's spelling guide "Stabul English" may not be the best that could be devised, it seems to be the most practical currently available. . . So, - unless you know of a better one, be a crusader and send for your copy of

"Stabul English" NOW! (\$2.50 CARLTON PRESS, New York, N.Y.)  
LEO G. DAVIS, author, Palm Springs, Calif.