Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1975

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

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1975 pp1,20 in the printed version]

1. Late News

The Sydney Morning Herald, Thurs. Jan. 9, 1975

The Australian Teachers' Federation will ask all State educational authorities to begin a small-scale program of spelling reform in Australian schools.

The Federation's annual conference voted yesterday to recommend to State educational authorities and the Commonwealth Schools Commission that Spelling Reform Step One (S.R.1) be taught in all schools.

The resolution was moved by the president of the Tasmanian Teachers' Federation, Mr. C. R. Barnfield, to introduce a program of gradual spelling reform into Australian schools. Other programs would be too complex for the normal educational process, he said.

How can we justify the frustration suffered by so many young children as we prop up and maintain an archaic and stupidly complex system of writing words?" he asked.

"We should clearly indicate our abhorrence at the wasted hours we extract from children in teaching them these illogical spellings."

Such a program is much more urgent and far less costly than decimalisation or metrification, Mr. Barnfield said.

Australia is ideally suited to be the leader in spelling reform because it is a young, progressive country.

Supporting the motion, an executive member of the Queensland Teachers' Union, W. J. Christiansen, said children's spelling was far too often used to judge their skills in communication.

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The Australian, Friday, January 10, 1975

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Spelling reform has Premier's support.
The word *lingerie* is typical of some of the outrageous problems in the spelling of the English language, the Victorian Premier, Mr. Hamer, said yesterday. He said lingerie was neither French or English (He was referring to the Anglicised pronunciation of the word.)

"Much of our spelling is antiquated and unnecessarily complex," he said.

Mr. Hamer was adding his support to the Australian Teachers' Federation, which passed a resolution at its annual conference in Sydney on Wednesday calling for the introduction of a system of phonetic spelling in all Australian schools.

"As English is the international language, it would be easier for everyone to have it spelt a little more like it sounds," Mr. Hamer said.

The acting Victorian Minister for Education, Mr. Dixon, said yesterday teachers had the State Government's permission to teach phonetic spelling in their classrooms.

"It is certainly the policy of the Education Department to attempt to introduce these reforms," he said.

The Victorian Teachers Union President, Mr. D. Bull, is also supporting spelling reform.

The Federal Minister for Health, Dr. Douglas Everingham (who has a note from the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, addressed to him as "Dug") supports spelling reform because of the difficulties faced by many slow learners.

The phonetic spelling system suggested by the ATF conference is SR 1 (Spelling Reform Step One), which was devised by a retired Canberra patents examiner, Dr. Harry Lindgren, who said his interest in the subject began in the 60's causing him to publish a book called: Spelling Reform – A New Approach.

He said he welcomed the ATF's move as the first step toward the introduction of reforms in the schools.

A teacher before he turned to examining patents, Dr. Lindgren said his interest was prompted

because of the hundreds of hours wasted in teaching children to spell.

"It's purely a matter of regarding the present chaotic spelling conditions as an insult to reason, and something that should be improved," he said.

The resolution on SR 1 at yesterday's conference was moved by the president of the Tasmanian Teachers' Federation, Mr. Ray Barnfield, who said, "There is no logical argument justifying the present method of spelling some words. Shouldn't spelling be made as simple as possible so that many more people can express themselves more clearly?"

From: *Spelling Action,* Feb. 1975.
On hearing the news about the resolution, Dr. Lindgren sed. I have been congratulated on 'developing a tidal wave of comment on SR 1.' I can't altogether disclaim the congratulations, but I insist most emphatically that the lion's share should go to certain delegates at the Australian Teachers Federation Conference. As I am so fond of saying, they had the rare gift of being able to recognize a good idea, *and* the will to do something about it.

It is nearly 30 years since I gave up teaching; by now I hold no brief either for or agenst teachers as a body. If for example, eny action by a teachers union arouses my displesure I'll censure it; equally, if teachers are unfairly attacked I'll resent it.

So far, I have seen five editorials hostile to spelling reform (out of 66 cuttings) in leading newspapers, and in three of them teachers are blamed for today's low standards of spelling. They are also made the scapegoats – that role so familiar to them – in meny of the reader's letters. This is unfair.

In the early days of compulsory education, when little more than the three R's was taught and the principal teaching aid was the strap, the standard of spelling was higher than today. (How rapidly it tumbled when a pupil left school is another matter.) But nowadays much more than the three R's must be taught (rightly so) and motivation must not be so forcefully persuasive (also rightly so). These differences make reaching the older higher standards an impossible task.

It is unfair to blame teachers for not achieving the impossible. Our chaotic spelling is simply too hard for most children to master without disproportionate effort. Expecting today's teachers to get them to do so is as absurd as expecting an opponent of spelling reform to understand the elementary maxims of logical reasoning.

Nearly all of the hostility of reform opponents is directed toward proposals that would also arouse our own, namely to give up teaching the present spelling and teach insted a completely or progressively reformed spelling, and to let Australian reform run ahed of those in other countries. This is *not* SR 1! What these critics are yelling blue murder about is a nightmare of their own imagining. The present spelling will continue to be taught in schools, but the teacher can explain that there is a move afoot to simplify it. The reforms are preferably kept in step with those in other countries, even though we lead the way.

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2. Some Principles Governing any Intended Improvement of the Visible Language
of English, by Sir James Pitman, K.B.E.*

* London, England.

Visible Language:- While being of course visible, does it need to be regarded as a "writing system" as the linguists would have it, or ought it not rather to be regarded as a *reading* system?

Chinese writing is clearly visible and clearly a reading system, *not* a writing system. It is read in a number of different Chinese sub-languages, not in only one.

Thus visible language does not need to be phonetic to be read. It has no need for, and is actually the worst for, attempting in the words of the great Max Muller:

> "To express in writing those endless shades of pronunciation which may be of the greatest interest to the student of acoustics, or phonetics, as applied to the study of living dialects, but which for practical purposes, must be entirely ignored. The writing was never intended to photograph spoken languages: it was meant to indicate, not to paint, sounds. . . Language deals in broad colours, and writing ought to follow the example of language, which, though it allows an endless variety of pronunciation, restricts itself for its own purpose, for the purpose of expressing thought in all its modification, to a very limited number of typical vowels and consonants. Out of the large number of vowel sounds, for instance, which have been catalogued from the various English dialects, those only can be recognised as constituent elements of the language which in, and by, their difference from each other convey a difference of meaning."

After all it is only in pronouncing dictionaries that the expression "a writing system" which "paints sounds" is at all appropriate and then it needs to confine itself to only one particular dialect – and even then to the version of that dialect which the compiler subjectively determines.

From Alexander Melville Bell's *Visible Speech* in 1867 to modern Spelling reformers, the false trail of seeking a writing system – one for proceeding from phonemes to graphemes based on phonetics – has misled apparently all to the delusion that it is the writer (and the speaker) instead of the reader (and the listener) who is dominant in effective communication. It is rather the reader and the listener who must dominate if the writer and the speaker are to be effective. It is thus the writer's obligation to write words which will be intelligible to the reader, and to write legibly if he is writing by hand. The insignificant importance of particular phonemes in any listening (or reading) system was well pointed out by Bernard Shaw in Clause 36 of his will. He died in 1950.

> "I desire my Trustees to bear in mind that the Proposed British Alphabet does not pretend to be exhaustive as it contains only 16 vowels whereas by infinitessimal movement of the tongue countless different vowels can be produced, all of them in use among speakers of English who utter the same vowels no oftener than they make the same finger prints. Nevertheless they can understand one another's speech and writing sufficiently to converse and correspond: for

instance, a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, has no difficulty in understanding a graduate of Oxford University when one says that "the sun rohze" and the other "the san rahooze" nor are either of them puzzled when a peasand calls his childhood his "chawldid." For a university graduate calls my country "Awlind"."

It is thus the diaphonic rather than the phonetic principle which needs to be accepted by all who seek to improve the design of any form of our visible language, seeing that variety, not standardisation in the visible language is the rule, and that to force standardisation is not only impossible but also apparently unnecessary.

Too often we forget to what extent, over centuries of evolution, changes within the traditional orthography (T.O.) by new designs (not all improvements) have already come to be accepted and adopted in general use. Possibly a clear exposition of the point may best be made by the following accepted variations:

BAG, Bag, Bag, bag, bag,&ag, bag, bag, Bag, Bag

of which the capitals are 2000 years, the lowercase 1100 and the cursive 200 years old.

We also forget that during that long period augmentations have been designed. (*Notes on the Development of Latin Script*, by Stanley Morrison, Cambridge University Press. Privately circulated, 1949.) For instance, the *i* has been elongated and twisted to the left in its descender to furnish the needed character *j*, and the digraph v v has been joined together to form the monograph w. The words *Revving* and *Brewing* have thus become more easy to discriminate in reading.

Experience in the spread of the initial teaching alphabet (i.t.a.) is as an initial learning medium (I.L.M.), (not be it emphasised as a replacement of T.O. once reading skill has been obtained) has shown that the tendency to reject change has occurred not so much in the introduction of new monographic forms for the diagraphs, but rather in new spellings. For instance the use of joined ʃh in biʃhop and the retention of sh in mishap arises no animosity and is recognised as a positive and acceptable augmentation. It is rather in the respelling of such words as wuns, aut, hω, etc that the hackles arise. They seem to arise no less quickly and prickly even against those who suggest aut and hoo or huu. *Wuns* in particular seems to cause total and immediate rejection by many – even when that spelling is suggested as no more than for a temporary use as an I.L.M.

The designer needs to accept that the existing reading habituation is of the reader must be borne in mind and that while the designer has no wider latitude to introduce changes than has until recently been allowed, there are still severely limiting restraints on the degree of departure from what is familiar. It will be to court rejection to depart from T.O. in too many respects notwithstanding that what is proposed is functionally effective and ought to be but is not acceptable to those with already established reading habits. After all these are the customers, and supposedly "customers are always right."

Thus the diaphonic principle and consideration for the habituated preferences of existing readers are the two gateposts through which all would-be designers of the improvement must pass. An attempt along any other route is doomed to failure.

The diaphonic principle and acceptance of the fact that the purpose desired is to improve reading and not writing deserves deeper study. Experience with i.t.a. has shown how wide is the latitude

which the designer enjoys and how great is the adaptability of the human brain in receiving a wide variety of forms, not only the visible and the audible but also even the tactile. (An i.t.a. Braille has proved to be immediately and fluently readable by a skilled Braille reader.) It would seem that augmentations, increasing the number of characters which may be used as monographs in place of their corresponding digraphs, will excite no antipathy and may indeed be welcomed. There seems no justification however for the supposition that a reform of *spelling* (in addition to a reformed alphabet) would make reading any easier for those illiterate adults. Moreover the likelihood is that a move to reform the spellings of T.O. the visible lingua franca of the English-speaking world, would not only make reading more difficult but also greatly reduced the facility of communication.

Homophones are bad communication. Visible language is therefore all the better whenever homophones happen to have been heterographically spelled. Indeed there is a stronger case for changing the spelling of the barking of a dog to *barrk* and for leaving alone *bark* for the covering of the tree and *barque* for the ship than for making three homographs and no heterograph. At least anyone "barrking up the wrong tree" would then know what meaning had been intended. In the visible language, the beginning of a sentence with either *there*, *their* or *they're* makes clear the expectable line of meaning in each case; to change all three to a common homograph would merely introduce dubeity without, so experience of the transition from i.t.a. to T.O. has shown, advantage in reading – so immediately does the learner recognise at the transition the meaning of what has been symbolised.

The transitioning learner in the medium of i.t.a. has no difficulty either in accepting *has* for `haz` or even *was* for `woz` when reading in context or *enough* for `enuf`. What the reader looks to have are forms which will sufficiently trigger off meaning in his brain. After all, centuries of practice have proved that *has, was* and *enough* etc. do very well what is required of them. It is the question of familiarity which seems very easily acquired remembering that the purpose of the visible language is not, as Max Muller so rightly pointed out, "to photograph spoken languages."

On first hearing (and on hearing proper names where context cannot help), the variations from one dialect to another present a degree of difficulty, but only temporarily, until familiarity has been developed, to those who normally listen to, and hear only that dialect; the variations of that dialect constitute the essence of easiest communication: indeed the more 'whiskers' the dialect has [1] the better. The variation of *ough* in lieu of *uf* becomes a familiar variant and possibly contributes to ease of reading by reason of the highly discriminating 'whiskers' of the letters *g* and *h*. At any rate there is no published evidence that the variety in T.O. makes the difficulty in reading among those who are skilled readers and I am prepared to give any researcher the nine pronunciations of *ough* in

> 'the rough[1]-coated, dough[2]-faced ploughman[3] strolled thoughtfully[4] through[5] the streets of Peterborough[6] with a cough[7] and a hiccough[8] on the way to the lough[9]',

so that he may prove if he can, that those words would be more easily read were they to have 'photographed' the nine different sounds.

The delusion that the alphabet is (or could even be) the writing system instead of a reading system based on sound is the more unfortunate in that a writing system cannot, as will be shown, applied to a general English-speaking world-wide convention for writing, if practical considerations are taken into account.

It is true that many people mis-spell and would like to spell correctly without going through the grind of learning the orthographic spelling. However, because pronunciations vary in so very many common words – even *has, are, was,* etc. (and very many less common:- compare the *ent*'s in contin*ent*al and contin*ent*) have their strong and weak forms) – that a spelling cannot be standard if it is to be based on pronunciation because there is no stable as well as no standard pronunciation. Indeed there is a very great variety instead. There is thus the dilemma that either the writer will need to learn the "standard" variant pronunciation which some authority (God bless him!) will have determined to be the one correct pronunciation for all speakers in the many English speaking centres, and so the one correct spelling, or else the visible language will find being built in its midst a very large Tower of Babel with variants of the visible language diverging greatly from the visual *lingua franca* which T.O. has hitherto so successfully been.

The costs of communication have already been greatly increased by the necessity which Andrew Carnegie and Theodore Roosevelt injudiciously introduced when they brought it about that books needed for the future to be printed by two spelling markets, instead of one, so that the new forms *center* and *honor* and the old forms *centre* and *honour* might not offend – and whoever thought it was sensible, even if making any change, to leave unchanged the stressed and most significant syllables *sent* and *on* at the beginning of those two words and to change instead the spelling of the unstressed and insignificant syllables at the end?

If we were to spell as we pronounce, special printings will be expected by the readers of the many variant "English-speaking" communities; certainly for all speakers of those dialects of English in which the variations in pronunciation cross the line of diaphonic tolerance and habituations. Such special printing may well need to become so general as virtually to price visible language out of circulation. At least our T.O. is virtually *lingua scripta franca* except for those books which sell in such quantity that local spellings are commercially marketable.

The words, the visible language, even more than the spoken word, has been the very framework of man's accumulation of knowledge and so of his progress. *Scripta manent but Verba volant.* Any approach to reform the visible language therefore needs to be very circumspect, and those concerned must realise that they will be operating in a field which is little understood and in which they are as yet very few guidelines, of which not a few lead in the wrong direction. It is to be hoped that what has here been provided may suggest directions of thought which could be helpful.

Improvement in the visible language in its handwritten form – being different from the printed or typewritten visual language is another matter altogether.

In theory, the principle of the totally new and more economical alphabet based not at all on the Roman Upper Case is alphabet is clearly sound. Seeing that we have assimilated for handwriting purposes the cursive alphabet (of which the sixth version of *BAG* is an illustration) and have thus accepted a major change from and debasement of both the original upper case alphabet and its derivative the lower case, we ought to clearly to have gone the whole hog with a functional aim in view and to have departed even more in order to have achieved a faster and at the same time possibly even more legible handwriting. (Remember that Shaw regarded himself and all writers as manual laborours and wanted our pens to wait on our brains and no longer our brains to wait on our pens. By using Pitman's Shorthand he claimed to have written more plays, books, articles and several thousands more letters by reason of having escaped the limitations of the cumbersome

characters which had been carved in stone in Rome 2000 years ago.)

His contest alphabet (see The Shaw Alphabet Edition of Androcles and the Lion. Penguin books, London, Eng., Baltimore, USA and Mitchum, Victoria, Australia) is however illegible without special study, though slowly decypherable after only four hours' study. Progress in a design for a functional handwriting alphabet along these lines will necessarily be slow and will probably occur only if there can be set aside Shaw's ascetic requirements and his rejection therefore of any alphabet which he would have said to be a "shorthand," and were a fresh start to be made and the designer given *carte blanche*. This in effect has been suggested in the terms of the will of the late Eugene Kelly which provided a Kelly Fund for the fostering of "Alphabet X" as soon as i.t.a. had become generally accepted as the I.L.M for learning English literacy and oracy. This in turn may take time but when it has occurred some designer will no doubt make available a hand-written alphabet which will be both more rapid and more effective than our cursive alphabet and will commend itself to general adoption – much as the new symbols, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, etc. came to augment, but not wholly to replace, the slower and less convenient i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi. Let us hope by the year MMDXXIV literate man may no longer communicate cumbrously in the present hand-written version of the visual English language.

[1] **Footnote:** Those British who make in speech no discrimination between *law* and *lore* and those Americans who made none between *cot* and *caught* or *bomb* and *balm* find reading easier by reason that a shared visible language makes the discrimination, which incidentally is more acceptable in the other spelling to the other reader.

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Dear Sir James:

While I like your article in general, I'm afraid I cannot agree with all you say. Your paragraphs about homophones are not, in my opinion, valid. Surely you remember what Ben Franklin had to say on that subject? If you have a file of back issues of SPB, you will find a quote from Ben Franklin in our Spring, 1971 issue, page 7. And also in the separate monograph, "Homophones, Homographs, and Heterographs – the Deceitful Words of English.

You say it is desirable to have three spellings of "bark," and then why not six spellings of 'bay' – and a large number of different spellings of the 1000 or more words in English with multiple meanings, some with almost 100 different, as per the enclosed list. Surely this alone would show you that there is no real need of such multiple spellings for multiple meanings. The real reason why there are three spellings for: *there, their, they're*, is that they have both different meanings and different origins (besides being different parts of speech). If, when the language was first being set down into writing, there had been no differences in origin, and the writers were forced to use those spoken words carefully to avoid misleading the listener, then the three variations of spelling probably would not have developed and all would be spelt the same as we now spell: *bay, blow, cast, fall, spring, ring, light, make, round, square,* etc. Writers use these heterographs because they are available. While they are useful, they are not really *necessary* or the spoken words would have been *spoken* differently so as to indicate the needed differences.

Also I think you are mixed up on your audience. It's like changing horses in mid-stream. The title indicates the article is for the spelling reformer – and who is he supposed to please?: the adult with

the years of reading skills in our sign language – English, or the learner? Surely you don't expect to please the literate adult with any changes, no matter how small or few. It's only the semi-literate or literate – the foreigner or coming generations, who are expected to profit from a spelling reform. All we can do is to try to placate the literate adult with both a modest reform and a barrage of propaganda to make him think that the proposed reformed spelling will benefit him indirectly even tho it might take him a few minutes weeks to become accustomed to the new spelling forms – most of which will be so little altered that he will have no trouble guessing at the meaning even if he fails to slow down enuf to verbalise the spellings he sees. It is only when he feels the *need to write* in the new spelling that he will need some instruction or help – consultation with a W.E. Dictionary. My experience in typing Bonnema's father's diary indicates that this can be learned in three or four days if the desire is there. Motivation is what we need to supply.

On your page 3 you say, "on first hearing. . . the variations of one dialect from another present a degree of difficulty, but only temporarily until familiarization has been developed." This is equally true of phonetic spelling (W.E.). Hence, altho a reform with a simplified spelling might temporarily be a slight handicap to literate adults, it is probably much less of the handicap than most people realise, as my experience above seems to indicate.

The motivation to learn the new spelling will come if and when our governments will declare the new spelling to be the official spelling of English – to displace gradually our T.O. over a period of one or more years. Stenographers would be the first to feel the need to take a short one- or two-week course in the new spelling, as their jobs would depend upon knowing it. Soon after seeing articles in the newspapers in W.E. all readers would soon become accustomed to seeing it and to accepting it because by then they would know that it soon would be the official spelling. Like a snowball rolling downhill, it would pick up speed in size till everyone would realise that his livlihood would depend upon a facile knowledge of the new spelling.

Now we can only hope to make our legislative leaders realise how important this reform really is and how to put it into use.

Yours sincerely, Newell W. Tune

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Cartoon

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3. The Historic Portuguese Spelling Reform, by Robert Mayhew*
SR-1 used

*Mayhew English Academy, Calexico, Ca.

Most English-speaking people are only dimly aware of the growing importance of the Portuguese language, mother tongue to nearly 100 million people, and the official language of Portugal, Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Portuguese Guinea, and several smaller geographic entities; these latter being the remnants of the once far-flung Portuguese empire. Owing to the Brazilian population explosion and other factors, Portuguese is surely destined to grow in importance, outstripping such languages as French and German in number of native speakers.

Inasmuch as Portuguese, like English, is a language spoken in more than one country, its ongoing spelling reform should be of interest to those who see the need for similar reform in the English language. In particular, the Portuguese experience should prove to skeptics that spelling reform is both possible and desirable.

The Portuguese language is divided into two main dialects: Brazilian Portuguese and Continental Portuguese. The orthographic differences between the two dialects are negligible. The simplified spelling now prevailing thruout the Portuguese-speaking world is the happy result of a series of agreements and disagreements reaching as far back as 1911.

Before the reform began, Portuguese spelling was burdened with incredible difficulties and incongruities. Tho not as irregular as English spelling, it was worse in one respect, namely that meny words were not orthographically standardized. There was much disagreement over how words should be spelled, with the result that virtually everyone spelled poorly. The most common spelling was based on etymology, but etymology was often disregarded, and numerous analogical errors had crept into the spelling, including an almost chaotic doubling of consonants without rhyme or reason.

The following are the principal reforms that have been implemented thus far in Brazilian Portuguese:

I. Single letters:
    H between two vowels disappears, e.g. *comprehender* becomes *compreender*.
    K becomes QU, e.g. *kioske* becomes *quiosque*.
    Y becomes I, e.g. *rhythmo* becomes *ritmo*.
    Z becomes S at the end of some words, e.g. *atraz* becomes *atrás*.
II. Digraphs with H:
    CH (= K) becomes QU, e.g. *monarchia* becomes *monarquia*.
    PH becomes F, e.g. *philosophia* becomes *filosofia*.
    RH is now R, e.g. *rhythmo* is now *ritmo,* as sed above.
    TH is now T, e.g. *theatro* is now *teatro*.
III. Consonants groups:
    CC is now C, e.g. *direcção* is now *direcão*.
    CT is now T, e.g. *actual* is now *atual*.
    GM is now M, e.g. *augmentar* is now *aumentar*.
    MPT is now NT, *assumpto* is now *assunto*.
    PT is now T, e.g. *adoptar* is now *adotar*.

MN is now N, e.g. *somno* is now *sono*.
NCT is now NT, e.g. *instincto* is now *instinto*.
SC is now C, e.g. *sciencia* is now *ciência*.
S after a prefix ending in a vowel becomes SS, e.g. *proseguir* becomes *prosseguir*.

IV. Double consonants:

BB becomes B, e.g. *abbade* becomes *abade*.

Likewise CC, DD, FF, GG, LL, MM, NN, PP, and TT are all reduced to single letters. Hence *bocca, addido, effeito, aggravo, cavallo, commun, anno, apprender, attentar* and all other such words are now spelled with single consonants.

Because of generally more conservative pronunciation in Continental Portuguese, it retains a few of the consonant clusters that have been simplified in Brazil. Thus we have Brazilian *inseto, fato, colecionar, objeção, exeto*, but Continental *insecto, facto, coleccionar, objecçao, excepçao, excepto.* Otherwise Continental Portuguese has to all intents and purposes the same spelling as Brazilian Portuguese.

In 1973 another important step forward was taken when a much-needed simplification of the written accents was put thru by governmental decree.

One result of this orthographic progress is that written Portuguese now bears a striking resemblance to Spanish, even tho the phonetic systems of the two languages are quite different, that of Portuguese being much more complex.

The man who initiated this great reform was the Portuguese philologist Gonçalves Viana, whose work began with his *Bases da Ortografia Portugueza* in 1885, and was crowned by the adoption of the *nova orthografia* in Portugal in 1911. Four months after the overthrow of the monarchy in 1911, a ministerial decree set up a commission whose purpose was to simplify the regular Portuguese orthography. The findings of that commission formed the basis of the reformed spelling, which with only minor alterations has been in official use in Portugal since 1911. Tho the question of a simplified spelling had for decades occupied the attention of publicists and philologists, it was not until the advent of the republic, with its clean sweep of monarchial anachronisms, that the reform became possible in official circles.

In 1931, 20 years later, the next great milestone of the reform was reached when the Brazilian Academy of Letters and the Portuguese Academy of Sciences jointly issued their *Bases para um Acôrdo Ortografico Luso-Brazileiro.* However these Bases, owing to their ambiguity and the failure of the two governments to fully endorse them, did not in themselves bring about complete uniformity in orthographic precept or practice, tho they did result in remarkable progress towards that end in the ensuing decade.

The Portuguese government had amended the *nova ortografia* in 1920, and instead of formally approving the *Bases*, simply issued (in 1931) another slight amendment to the *nova ortografia.* In this second amendment, certain of the clauses of the *Bases* were approved with altered wording. The Brazilian government approved the *Bases* in a general way in June, 1931. This decree was implemented by an interpretation set forth in a *Formulário Ortografico* published in July, 1931, and most of the terms were in turn approved by decree in 1938.

The reforms of the *Bases* were made compulsory in all Brazilian schools in 1933 by order of President Vargas, and in effect became the official government-endorsed spelling. However the reformed spelling met with considerable opposition in Brazil during the 1930s. Meny people refused to go along out of sheer inertia: they were agenst eny change simply because they were more accustomed to the old spelling. The few Hispanophobes complained that the new spelling

made Portuguese look too much like Spanish. Some Brazilians based their opposition on misguided patriotism, going so far as to maintain that Brazilians did not speak Portuguese, but a separate and distinct Romance language. Thus the *Cámara Municipal do Distrito Federal* stipulated in 1935 that textbooks used in the *Distrito Federal* for the teaching of the national language should refer to the language as Brazilian and not as Portuguese. In 1934 the Brazilian Constituent Assembly managed to get a clause inserted in the Constitution of that year to the effect that Brazilian spelling must be that of the 1891 Constitution, which would have ment a return to the anarchy of the old spelling. Orthographic reform had become something of a political football, but President Vargas stedfastly favored reform, and one year after his 1937 coup d'etat, he once more determined that Brazilian orthography should be that of the 1931 Accord, albeit with a few changes, particularly in regard to the written accents.

General international accord was finally reached in 1943 with the promulgation of the historic Orthographic Agreement (*Convençâo Ortográfica*). It was signed by the representatives of Portugal and Brazil in December, 1943 and reads in English translation as follows:

> His Excellency, the President of the Portuguese Republic and His Excellency, the President of the United States of Brazil, being desirous of ensuring the defense, expansion and prestige of the Portuguese language thruout the world and of regulating the system of orthography by mutual agreement in a stable manner, have decided through the intermediary of their plenipotentiaries, to sign the present Agreement.
>
> Article 1. The High Contracting Parties pledge close collaboration with each other in everything which may have to do with the maintenance, defense and expansion of the Portuguese language, which is common to both countries.
>
> Article 2. The High Contracting Parties undertake to establish as the orthographic system of the Portuguese language the principles laid down in the system agreed on by the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon and by the Brazilian Academy of Letters for the organisation of the vocabulary accepted by the two Academies.
>
> Article 3. In harmony with the spirit of that agreement no legislative measures or regulations governing orthographic subjects may in future be put in force by either of the two governments without the previous agreement of the other, after the two Academies have been consulted.
>
> Article 4. The Academy of Sciences of Lisbon and the Brazilian Academy of Letters are hereby declared to be the advisory organs of their governments in orthographic matters, and they are expressly charged with studying the questions that may arise in the execution of the present Agreement and with everything that they may deem useful in maintaining of the orthographic unity of the Portuguese language.
>
> The present Agreement shall come into force, independently of its ratification, on January 1, 1944.

Thus after more than a decade of trial and error, in the course of which the opponents of the new spelling were either won over or simply decided to give in to the inevitable, the above Agreement was signed and implemented.

The current Portuguese spelling is a vast improvement over what prevailed before, but it falls short of being thoroly regular or phonetic. As matters now stand, the spelling is really a compromise between phonetic considerations and respect for etymology and tradition. Much remains to be done

before the spelling can be sed to approach the phonetic ideal. There are still hundreds of words with the silent H, as in Spanish. The X is pronounced four different ways. The ZH sound is shown two ways; the Z sound is often shown by S (the reform produced *realizar*, *batizar*, etc. but *analisar* is so spelled for etymological reasons); and the unvoiced S is shown variously by S, Ç, X, and SS. There are still some curious exceptions to the rules which have been left intact.

It is safe to predict, however, that there will be further changes. That the matter is by no means a closed chapter is proved by the afore-sed simplification of the system of diacritics, decreed in 1973. There are those who advocate further beneficial changes, such as the wholesale use of J for the ZH sound, still shown by G in meny words.

Meanwhile, none of the horrible things feared by the opponents of spelling reform has come to pass. The reform has not caused orthographic chaos; it has ushered in a more orderly spelling. The reform has not isolated eny Portuguese-speaking country from eny other. There has been no great problem or expense involved in the reprinting of books, no severing of cultural ties with the past. The present consensus is that the reform has been greatly beneficial from all points of view. Modern-day Portuguese speakers find it hard to understand why there should have been opposition to such an obvious boom.

Present-day dictionaries give the old spellings short shrift: the message is clear that the old forms are superseded and obsolete.

The reform has undoubtedly been made easier by the fact that such simplifications as PH to F, TH to T, and Y to I had alredy taken place in Spanish, the great sister language of Portuguese, and were standard in Italian as well. So hundreds of simplified forms like *filosofia, ritmo*, and *teatro* did not look terribly unfamiliar to literate Portuguese and Brazilians.

It should be noted that the reform started in one country with no prior international agreement. The international agreement came *after* the *nova ortografia* was alredy well-established in the country where it was first adopted. This fact is probably relevant to the problem of how best to approach the question of spelling reform in English. Certainly it shows there is no point in waiting for international agreement before starting the reform. Such prior agreement may be impossible to achieve!

The reader has perhaps been struck by the important, perhaps decisive role played by the two prestigious *Academias* and by the governments involved. Needless to say, the English-speaking world has no comparable bodies of similar prestige or such authoritarian governments whose word is virtually law even in matters orthographic, so our approach to spelling reform will most likely have to be somewhat different.

However the Portuguese-Brazilian experience proves that spelling reform is not a trivial issue as claimed by its detractors. On the contrary, the Portuguese reform occupied the attention of the highest echelons of government, even the heds of state, and has been taken with the utmost seriousness by linguists, writers and other intellectuals in whose hands lies the responsibility of cultural continuity and advancement.

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4. Reading: Bidialectalism, by Emmett Albert Betts, Ph.D.

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Relevant to the development of an initial learning alphabet is the serious consideration of bidialectalism, the use of two dialects for communication in a given community. But dialectalism has two facets: phonology and grammar. Both of these facets are interrelated with orthography.

A dialect has been defined by Mario A. Pei and Frank Gaynor (A Dictionary of Linguistics, Philosophical Library, New York, 1954):

> A specific form of a given language, spoken in a certain locality or geographic area, showing sufficient differences from the standard or literary form of that language, as to pronunciation, grammatical construction and idiomatic use of words, to be considered a distinct entity, yet not sufficiently distinct from other dialects of the language to be regarded as a different language.

Not long ago a school psychologist from New Hampshire administered an informal spelling inventory in an Ohio school where General American speech was spoken. He did have each class listen until he (1) pronounced the word, (2) used it in a sentence, (3) and again pronounced the word again. When the tests were scored, all classrooms where he had given the test made very low scores. A conference was called and no adequate explanation was obtained. Finally, the principal visited each classroom to ask the pupils what had happened. The reply was immediate and decisive: "We could not understand him." The administration of an alternate form by another examiner who spoke General American confirmed the situation.

In the dialects of eastern New England, areas of New York City, and the South, the /r/ is dropped from *car, far, farm* and replaced with an allophone of /ə/. In parts of New England and the South, a linking /r/ may be added to *law*, *idea, Cuba,* and other words.

In Pennsylvania, for example, there are pockets of Pennsylvania Dutch who speak a very colorful English dialect. A college student, for example, was sent for some sugar, but she returned with the laconic statement: "The sugar is all." (omitting the understood "gone") Then thrifty "Dutchmen" may talk about "wisual" education, often mixing their /v/ with /w/. But in spite of this, Pennsylvania Dutch dialect appears to be no roadblock in learning to read "standard" English.

For many reasons – educational (including media), socioeconomic, technological, political, mobility of today's population – differences in speech forms and habits are diminishing , especially between urban and rural areas. Dialects are shrinking as these factors operate over a period of time. For example, the use of *you-uns* and *we-uns is* seldom heard today in Iowa or Kentucky.

Speech Regions

In the recent past, the major speech regions of the United States were designated: General American, Southern, and Eastern. The names are somewhat unrealistic and their geographical bases are illogical.

More recently Charles K. Thomas (An Introduction to the Phonetics of American English, p. 232) identified ten regional dialect areas: Eastern New England, New York City, Middle Atlantic, Southern, Western Pennsylvania, Southern Mountain, Central Midland, Northwest, Southwest, North Central.

No great feat of erudition is required to detect most dialects: Tennessee, Texas, Brooklynese, Pennsylvania Dutch, "cracker" in Georgia or northern Florida.

Ghetto Dialects

There are many ghetto dialects. Some speak so-called General American; others a dialect peculiar to a neighborhood or larger geographical area. For sociological and psychological reasons some Blacks speak bidialectally. Here are some samples from one area:

Got som'n close to say.	I didn't say da'.
You come on dere wit your clothes.	When dey got on' sī.
I taught you say you don' wear no shir's.	Wha's de name of de school.
A's why you so dum in schoo.	We how do dey get it.
Dis lil' stor, I forgot the name of i'.	Dey was takin close tracks up.
An' ne ghos say.	Up de stree'.

Ghetto English phonology as well as white, brown and "red" English phonology is plural – dialects varying from one area to another as well as from one culture to another.

a. A so-called standard language is a dialect; e.g., General American.
b. In some restricted areas of the United States the people speak another language rather than a dialect of American English, being incomprehensible to speakers of General American: (Differences between languages and dialects may be a gray area; e.g., Scandinavians tend to speak dialects of a sovereign language.)
c. In South America (e.g., Uruguay) different Spanish dialects are spoken.
d. In isolated rural areas of the United States, the white populations speak different English dialects -some of which are quite "far out."
e. In poverty belts and ghettos, different black dialects are spoken.

Bidialectalism: Facts and Opinions

Here are statements which appear to have some validity:

1. More investigations are needed on dialectology of geographical regions and social groups in the United States. In this country dialects are indeed, plural. Hence, the assumption that listening is the processing of language, and reading is the processing of writing, requires systematic investigation and description of dialects.

2. There is an urgent and inevitable need for interdisciplinary research because of the complexity of assumptions and hypotheses. Although linguists, psycholinguists, sociologists, sociolinguists, cultural anthropologists, educational psychologists, and many others concerned with language and writing may begin with highly divergent views, these disciplines provide the foundations of effective reading instruction.

3. Past attitudes of teachers and researchers have caused most children with non-standard dialects (note the plural) to be sterotyped, thereby vitiating their conclusions and forfeiting the child's right to read.

4. To be effective in dealing with pupils whose dialects are significantly different from so-called General American dialects, teachers need some basic understandings of dialectology. Otherwise, their diagnosis of reading needs may be distorted fantastically; that is, their linguistic prejudices may "hang out."

5. Potent components in the motivation of the learner to achieve a "standard," or socially approved, dialect are economic ambitions and social desires.

6. "Non-standard" linguistic patterns and pronunciations are *standard* for the speaker of a given dialect; therefore they can be considered as neither deficiencies nor abnormalities.

7. The economically disadvantaged and culturally different child tends to differ in linguistic skills from the "middle class" child.

8. In the past, as James Sledd has so aptly stated, ". . . instruction in the mother tongue includes formal instruction into the linguistic prejudices of the middle class." Practices which reflect this attitude default on the realities of heterogenity and perpetuate false values of homogenity – of treating all learners alike – are causes of frustration in learning for all "disabled" pupils regardless of race, religion, or whatever.

9. Linguistic abilities and cognitive styles of the pupils are linked to their environments, especially home language -modeling.

10. Learners deprived of opportunities to acquire a repertoire of concepts and essential verbal associations to deal with them are handicapped in typical academic situations.

11. Environmental causes of "linguistic disadvantaged" learners cuts across ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

12. A given individual may not produce "non-standard" speech in all situations. Furthermore, not all non-standard speakers use the same phonological and syntactic forms.

13. Production of vowel sounds varies considerably, depending on dialects and foreign accents. (See Amelia Drumwright, et al; Templin).

14. While there appears to be a relationship between language and though; using nonstandard speech does not reflect a deficiency in thinking or in mental development.

Reading Retardation: Multiple Causes
There are many causes of retardation in reading or of an inability to read, including:

1. The orthographic medium (e.g., the *spelling* of one /ˈwən/ and don't /dont/ and the *structure* of "formal" writing) which interferes with perceptual-cognitive decoding.

2. Lack of motivation (interests, values, aspirations, attitudes, knowledge, and other components) which may be a product of an unfortunate home environment or mismanagement of learning in the classroom.

3. Inadequate *preparation* for reading, including deficits in visual-motor skills, background of information and basic concepts, language development, and other factors.

4. Ineffective or undeveloped word-perception skills, limited by discarded but sacrosanct concepts and practices in "teaching" vowel principles which have little, if any, value in terms of application-exception ratios. Or, an overemphasis on decoding writing into speech resulting in an inability to decode the message.

5. Litanized and generalized guidance in the development of cognitive skills – in decoding the message as the *sine qua non* of reading.

6. Emotional aberrations which limit attention/concentration, attitudes of approach, and related psychological correlates of reading behavior.

7. Organicity – physiological or otherwise – which interferes with the integrity of the nervous system essential for encoding and decoding language (speech) and writing.

8. Need for increased competence in bilingualism; e.g., the native speaker of Spanish who has not learned the phonology and grammar of English.

9. Need for versatility in bi-dialectalism, including vocabulary, idiom, grammar, and pronunciation--depending upon the sociological situation. That is, to shift from his idiolect (or individual mode of speech) used in his home to perhaps a General American or some other dialect common to the region where he is communicating.

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Cartoon

5. The mistake by Lloyd Joly

I spelled a word wrong one day.
At the time, it seemed the only way.
People laughed and called me a fool.
They even asked where I'd gone to school,

Why is it hard for some to spell,
While others seem to do it well?
Once, someone told me to try by sound,
But it doesn't always work, I've found!

I used a rule that I've known so long,
But this time it proved awfully wrong.
Exceptions to rules I guess there'll be,
And this one I'll remember easily.

People spell words wrong every day,
But very seldom in this sort of way.
On hard words, I could easily take the blame,
But it's embarassing to find I've misspelled
my own name!

Sun Valley, Ca.

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6. Phoneme and Supralect, by Joseph A. Perry, Jr.*

Ever since the appearance of the monograph *On Defining the Phoneme* (Twaddell, 1935), it has become customary to classify the views of the phoneme into the four categories: mentalistic, physical, functional, and abstract. The reader is also referred to Jones (1957, and 1967: 212 ff.) and Fudge (1970) for discussions on that basis. However, we can achieve additional insight into the problem of defining the phoneme if we classify the views of the phoneme, this time, on a populational basis. By this, we mean whether the phoneme is defined as a unit of (1) an idiolect, (2) a dialect, (3) a multi-dialect, or (4) a supralect.

Regarding the first classification, we find that Jones (1967: 9) and Pike (1947: 66) are adherents of the view that the phoneme is a specific type of phonetic unit in an idiolect. Although the usual definitions of the phoneme are almost universally phrased in terms of 'a given language,' there seems to be, in this case, the added condition, expressed or implied, that what is actually meant by 'a given language' is 'the speech of one individual pronouncing in a definite and consistent style' (Jones, 1967: 9). The idiolectal notion of the phoneme was expounded by Jones as early as 1932, at the [First] International Congress of Phonetic Sciences at Amsterdam (Heffner, 1936: 108).

Most generally, it has been held that the phoneme is a certain phonetic unit in a dialect (e.g. Bloomfield, 1935, and Cohen, 1965). This conception, to a certain degree, is very widespread in practically every school of phonology, but it is especially so in the neo-Bloomfieldian school. In one of the most explicit statements of this type of phonemics, Bloch (1948: 5) defined the phoneme as follows:

> A phoneme is a class of sounds in the utterances *of a given dialect*, such that (a) all members of the class contain a feature absent from all other sounds, (b) the differences among them are in complementary distribution or free variation, and (c) the class belongs to a set of classes that are mutually contrasting and conjointly exhaustive [Emphasis added, J.P.].

In addition to the idiolectal and dialectal views of the phoneme, there is the multidialectal view. The characteristic feature of the multi-dialectal analysis, or analyses, is the setting up of 'a composite maximum pattern' of phonemes where 'it is unlikely that any one dialect will be found to illustrate the full range of types' (Swadesh, 1947: 142). In effect, such a pattern turns out to be no more than a mere conglomeration of quite separate dialectal analyses, each of which draws from and uses a common symbolic system. The best example of a multidialectal scheme is that of Trager and Smith (1957: 9) who presented their now-well-known 'analyses' as 'the total pattern of all the dialects,' claiming them 'to be statements of the structure of the English language as a whole.'

Now we may concern ourselves with the major objections to the three views of the phoneme outlined thus far. First of all, the so-called 'phonemic' transcriptions based on these points of view are not appreciatively different from ordinary impressionistic phonetic transcriptions. Adherents of all these types of phonemes seem to be forever confusing phonemes with phones, and find it very difficult to draw a precise dividing line between phonemics and phonetics. For example, recall the curious observation: 'In such languages as English and French, phonemes do not as a rule differ greatly from speech sounds' (Jones, 1957: 10).

Another objection, especially with the Trager-Smith analysis of English, is that one has to be a well-informed dialectologist in order to transcribe any utterance, once one has made up one's mind which dialect to use in recording the given utterance.

An objection of an even more fundamental nature is, in the words of Baudouin de Courtenay (1972: 273), that 'the confusion of the individual language with the common language is one of the greatest obstacles to the proper understanding of linguistic relationships and in particular the problem of "phonetic laws".' Indeed, language is a sociological mechanism and, as Saussure (1959: 14) once remarked, 'language is not complete in any speaker; it exists perfectly only within a collectivity.' Moreover, from a point of view that considers the communicative aspect of language, we note that 'the presupposition of linguistics research [is] that speaker and listener can communicate [only] when what they say and what they hear. . . . are subordinated to a common code, which is handed down and is valid for the whole speech community' (Zwirner and Zwirner, 1970: 127).

Still another objection to the idiolectal, dialectal, and multidialectal views of the phoneme is the inevitability of having to postulate still another phonetic unit (but very much like a phoneme) of a more abstract nature. For example, we notice that just as Smith (1967: 306) found it necessary to postulate MORPHOPHONES, as classes of sound 'composed of dialectally different phonemic variants, which are non-contrasting in the same lexical items,' so did Jones (1967: 193ff.) find it necessary to postulate the DIAPHONE, as the 'name for a family of sounds consisting of the sound used by one speaker in a particular set of words (said in isolation) together with the corresponding though different sounds used in them by other speakers of the same language.'

The most convincing argument for rejecting the idiolectal, dialectal, and multidialectal views of the phoneme is that Chomsky (1964) actually showed that TAXONOMIC PHONEMICS, as he called it, was logically impossible and absolutely useless in a transformational grammar of a language. Chomsky did not pinpoint the major underlying deficiency of taxonomic phonemics, i.e. that the taxonomic phoneme is not based on a supralect (see below), but he did point out that the conditions of linearity, invariance, biuniqueness, and local determinacy often had to be violated in any reduction of taxonomic phonemic theory to practice.

We have at last reached the point where it is now possible to appreciate what is meant by the term supralect. This term is actually an expedient for overcoming the predicament of having so many interpretations of the term language. Before we give a formal definition to this new term, first, it would be appropriate to pose a question originally asked by Baudouin de Courtenay (1972: 134) in 1889: 'What aspects of the total language, the full and ideal model, does grammar consider? (For I am now thinking specifically about grammar.)' His answer was that the central core of the ideal model consists of the average and fortuitous cross section of the languages of individuals of a given speech community.' This is practically equivalent to my statement that 'a language must be defined, for the purposes of linguistic science, as the summation of all mutually intelligible dialects and idiolects in the global community' (Perry, 1972: 760-1). It turns out that the reference to'dialects' in this definition is actually redundant and we can restate the definition as follows: (if we first define an idiolect as the language of one individual): A SUPRALECT is the averaged summation of all the mutually-intelligible idiolects in the global community.

In a statistical sense, this definition places a series of frequency distributions, such as the Gaussian (or normal) distribution, along a spectrum of dialects ordered according to the criterion of mutual intelligibility and, moreover, each such frequency distribution thereon is a supralect. Hence, each supralect will have a norm around which will cluster those dialects with the greatest number of speakers. Now when we write a grammar for a given supralect, we write it in terms of the ideal model represented by the norm. The supralect, then, constitutes a standard by which the subsumed dialects and idiolects may conveniently be compared.

Now it should be clear what place a SUPRALECTAL PHONEMICS would have in a transformational grammar. Assuming the generative grammar to be composed of a semantic, a syntactic, and a phonological component, the output of the syntactic component would be a string of segments at the supralectal phonemic level, and this same string would serve in turn as the input to the phonological component. The purpose of the phonological component would be to transform the supralectal phonemic level, first, to a dialectal level, comparable to narrow phonetic transcription, then, to an idiolectal level, sufficiently detailed to reveal the identity of the speaker, which the idiolect represents. Although the supralectal-to-dialectal conversion process may be specified to a large extent using only segments, it appears that the dialectal -to-idiolectal conversion process would 'need to be treated in terms of a series of infinitely variable parameters,' similar to the 'acoustic rules' suggested by Fudge (1967: par. 4.4). In summary, the phonological component would consist of two sub-components: a dialectal subcomponent and an idiolectal subcomponent.

From all the above considerations, we think that it would be safe to draw the conclusion that the phoneme actually can have no real meaning when it is considered as a unit of an idiolect or dialect, and that the only corpus for which the phoneme can be defined without leading to unsurmountable complications is a supralectal one.

The rest of the paper offers additional corroboration for a supralectal phonemics, in the form of a series of quotations from an 1876 article that appears to be the earliest definitive statement of the phonemic principle. F. Max Müller (1876: 575-8), of course, does not employ the term phoneme in his article, as the term did not appear in print (with a meaning distinct from speech-sound) until at least three years later in the works of Kruszewski (1879, 1881). Müller wrote:

There are, in fact, two branches, or at all events, two quite distinct practical applications of the science of Phonetics, which, for want of better names, I designate as *philological* and *dialectical.* There is what may be called a philological study of Phonetics, which is an essential part of the Science of Language, and has for its object to give a clear idea of the alphabet, not as written, but as spoken. It treats of the materials out of which, the instruments with which, and the processes by which, vowels and consonants are formed; and after explaining how certain letters agree, and differ, in their material, in the instruments with which, and the process by which they are produced, it enables us to understand the causes and results of what is called Phonetic Change. In many respects the most instructive treatment of the general theory of Phonetics is to be found in the Pratisakhyas; particularly in the oldest (400 B.C.), that attached to the Rig Veda. Though the number of possible sounds may seem infinite, the number of real sounds used in Sanskrit or any other given language for the purpose of expressing different shades of meaning, is very limited. It is with these broad categories of sound alone that the Pratisakhyas deal; and it is for a proper understanding of these that the Science of Language has to include within its sphere a careful study of Phonetics.

The dialectal study of Phonetics has larger objects. It wishes to exhaust all possible sounds which can be produced by the vocal organs, little concerned as to whether these sounds occur in any real language or not. It is particularly useful for the purpose of painting, with the utmost accuracy, the actual pronunciation of individuals, and of fixing the faintest shades of dialectic variety. . . .

These two branches of phonetic science, however, should be kept carefully distinct. As the foundation of a practical alphabet, likewise as the only safe foundation for the Science of Language, we want philological or theoretic Phonetics. We want an understanding of those general Principles and those broad, categories of sound which are treated in the Pratisakhyas; we do not want any of the minute dialectic distinctions which have no grammatical purpose, and are therefore outside the pale of grammatical science.

But when we want to exhaust all possible shades of sound, when we want to photograph the Peculiarities of certain dialects, or measure the deviations in the pronunciation of individuals by the most minute degrees, we must then avail ourselves of that exquisite artistic machinery constructed by Mr. Bell [i.e. his 'Visible Speech,' J.P.]. . .

It is by mixing un two separate lines of research, each highly important in itself, that so much confusion has of late been occasioned. The value of purely phonetic observations should on no account be underrated; but it is necessary, for that very reason, that dialectical as well as philological phonetics should each be confined to their proper sphere. The philologist has much to learn from the phonetician, but he should never forget that here, as elsewhere, what is broad and typical is as important and as scientifically accurate as what is minute and special.

What is broad and typical is often more accurate even than what is minute and special. . . .

Still further on, Müller pointed out the futility, in the philological study of phonetics, of

attempting to fix any distinctions which are not absolutely necessary. If, for instance, we take the gutteral tenuis, we find that English recognises one *k* only, although its pronunciation

varies considerably. It is sometimes pronounced so as to produce almost a sharp crack; sometimes it has a deep, hollow sound; and sometimes a soft, lazy, mouillé character. It varies considerably according to the vowels which follow it, as anybody may hear, nay feel, if he pronounces, in succession, *cot*, *cool, car, cat, kit.* But as English does not use different *k*'s for the purpose of distinguishing words or grammatical forms, one broad category only of voiceless gutteral checks has to be admitted in writing English. In the Semitic languages the case is different; not only are *kaf* and *ko f* different in sound, but this difference is used to distinguish different meanings. . . .

Good speakers in England pronounce the *a* in *last* like the pure Italian *a;* with others it becomes broad, with others thin. But though it may oscillate considerably, it must not encroach on the province of *e,* which would change its meaning to *lest*; nor on the province of *o*, which would change it to *lost;* nor on the province of *u*; which would change it to *lust.*

Thus we find in these last two paragraphs a very lucid account of what we would call conditional variation and the commutation test. As we have already noted, there is no mention of the term *phoneme,* but we have a very good idea of what Willer meant by the 'alphabet, not as written, but as spoken-real sounds-broad categories of sound – what is broad and typical – one k only.'

These passages were buried in an article, `On Spelling,' two-thirds of which was about spelling reform. We have not been able to locate any amplification of these ideas in Müller's other writings on the science of language. In any event, it is very likely that Müller's ideas concerning the phonemic principle, either orally or through this article, strongly influenced both Henry Sweet (1877) and Jan Baudouin de Courtenay (1895), when we consider the former's Narrow Romic and Broad Romic notations, and the latter's 'anthropophonic' and 'psychophonetic' parts of phonetics.

Thus from its inception the phonemic principle was based on language, i.e. supralect, and it was only later, apparently through some misunderstanding, that the idiolectal and dialectal bases of the phoneme came into general use, virtually eclipsing the originally-intended supralectal basis.

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7. Are Phonemes Real? (experiments with assembled speech)
by Gil W. Stevenson*

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Abstract
As a test of the phonemic principle, phonemes of five short corpuses were uttered at 1- to 2-second intervals by a native speaker and recorded on tape, then assembled into words and sentences on a second tape by eliminating the spacing between them.

Three linguistically unsophisticated subjects recognized a statistically significant percentage of the words thus produced, a result which tends to confirm the validity of the phonemic principle as a basis for spelling reform.

Introduction
Let's Check it Out
Ideas for a better way to write English almost never take the form of an ideographic system like that used in writing Chinese, or a syllabary such as those used in writing Japanese, Cherokee, or Amharic; what spelling reformers almost invariably propose, at least in this journal, is a phonemic alphabet of some kind. This being the case, it would seem salutary to examine the nature of the entities such an alphabet hopefully would represent or, indeed, to see whether there really are such linguistic elements as phonemes at all.

By "phonemes" linguists mean the functionally distinct individual sounds of a language, that is, the smallest segments of speech that can affect meaning though they do not in themselves have meaning; but are they really a feature of language or just an invention of the linguist for talking about it?

Phonemes of What?
Suppose that the English-speaking world were to mourn the passing of some great leader with an hour of silence. During that hour not a single word of English would be spoken by anybody anywhere in the world. Would English exist as a living language during that hour? I would say, Yes, because there is an English language so long as there are English-speaking people, whether they are talking or not. The existence of the English language resides, not in the performance of individual speakers, but in their competence as members of a linguistic community, that is, in the fact that they will still know how to speak English and will speak it again when the hour is up.

The English language, then, is now what any one person actually says, but the system according to which he constructs what he says. Hjelmslev (1961) coined the term "glossematics" for the study of language as such a system. Saussure (1959) distinguished between *langue,* or language, the

linguistic system of a speech community, and *parole*, or speech, the actual utterances of its members.

Looked upon, not as the actual operations of speakers but as the system according to which the operations that constitute speech are performed, the concept of a language is seen to be an abstraction. I once pointed out (Stevenson 1963) that phonemic spelling presents a linguistic dilemma because, since phonemes are phonemes of a language – elements of *langue* rather than of parole – the concept of the phoneme is likewise an abstraction. The actual pronunciation of the phonemes of English, especially that of the vowels, varies considerably throughout the English-speaking community; so, if we want our alphabet to represent the language as it is actually spoken, we must resolve the question, "as spoken where and by whom?"

Some Linguistic Views
There is considerable support for the view that speech is actually a sort of modulated continuum rather than a series of discrete acoustic events. Miller (1963) says: "The vocal machinery does not produce phonemes the way a typewriter prints letters. The shapes of the resonating cavities change in a continuous sort of movement, with articulatory thrusts modified by the positions assumed for preceding and following sounds."

Darreg (1970) says: "The stream of speech-as-heard is not divided into words by spaces, and contains no capital letters--indeed, is not easily analyzable into single phonemes in the way a written word obviously decomposes into letters. Instead, it is analyzable into syllables and breath-groups and here and there one may detect infinitesimal pauses called junctures."

Linguists of the London school (Langendoen 1968; Davis 1973) describe the phonology of a language in terms of contextually determined features of syllables and breath-groups, without recourse to phonemics at all.

Gleason (1961) said that phonemes are not a physical reality discernable by instrumental techniques but are rather a feature of language structure. He thus did not deny the reality of the phoneme but qualified it as what I have called a perceptual reality rather than a physical one (Stevenson 1969).

Assembled Speech
If a native speaker were to utter the phonemes of a sentence one at a time, a second or so apart, and record them on tape, when the tape was played back they would be heard as discrete acoustic events, too far apart to form words (Stevenson 1969). If, however, the blank tape between these separately uttered phonemes could be removed and the segments containing the phonemes spliced together, would the resulting tape play back as words?

Original Tape of Separately Uttered
Phonemes

Tape Cut and Spliced to Form Words
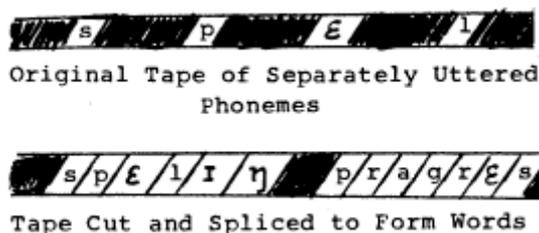
A sentence thus assembled from separately produced phonemes would, of course, have a highly artificial quality since it would lack the pitch and stress patterns that characterize normal speech.

Still, if the phonemic principle is valid, it should be possible to produce *intelligible* speech in this way. Since at least a crude version of such an experiment could be performed at home by an amateur linguist using ordinary equipment, I decided to try it.

I call my product "assembled speech" rather than synthetic or artificial speech because my purpose was to test the phonemic principle rather than to simulate speech by mechanical means. The phonemic principle maintains that morphemes and words are formed by stringing phonemes together. The test method was simple: I voiced some phonemes, recorded them, then strung them together and got people to listen to the result and tell what they heard.

Test Procedures

Assembly method

A short passage in English was written out in phonemic notation, then the phonemes were produced one at a time by myself and recorded on tape at intervals ranging from 1 to 2 seconds. The cut-and-splice method of juxtaposing the phonemes, referred to in the Introduction, actually did not work very well, besides being extremely tedious. Instead, a two-recorder method was used, the recorded separate phonemes being played onto a second tape where they were juxtaposed closely enough to play back as words. Here's how it was done.

The speed at which the separately uttered phonemes of the corpus were recorded on tape was 7½ inches per sec. This tape was then played at 1-1/8 IPS (1/4 the original speed) and fed into a second recorder also running at 1-7/8 IPS as well as to a monitor speaker. At this very slow speed it was possible for the experimenter to listen for each phoneme on the monitor, start the second recorder when the phoneme began, and stop it when the phoneme ended. A juncture roughly equal to the length of two long vowels was allowed between words.

On the second tape I now had the phonemes of the corpus recorded in the same order that they were on the original tape, but without the 1- to 2-second spacing between them. Played back at the original speed of 7½ IPS, the second tape presumably would be heard as sentences in English, assuming that the phonemic principle worked.

Equipment

Two Aiwa portable open reel tape recorders were used. One was a model TP-719S, which is a good quality machine about the size of an attache case and can be operated at 7½, 3-3/4, or 1-7/8 IPS. The other was a model TP-701, a small machine using the 3-inch reels popular for tape correspondence before the advent of cassettes, with speeds of 3-3/4 and 1-7/8 IPS. Monitoring was done by a Webcor monaural hi-fi amplifier and speaker.

Subjects

Three people listened to the assembled speech and recorded what they had heard: Felicia, a junior college graduate who has studied Italian; Carol, the head cataloguer at our university library; and Sandy, a college senior fluent in Navaho, English, and Spanish. None of the three has studied linguistics.

What they listened to

Five short corpuses of assembled speech were recorded on a single tape in the order listed:

CORPUS #1: This passage contains every phoneme of American English:

Yes, we think the girls should like very much to stay now. Perhaps the boys will join us tomorrow. It's not far, because they measured it.

CORPUS #2: Affricates and stop consonants were difficult to catch by the two-recorder method because they are of such short duration, even at 1/4 speed. Corpus #2 was designed to contain all of the continuant phonemes but no affricates or stops:

You know the way for measuring everything so easily. I am sure there are many ways of fooling Roy now.

CORPUS #3 was similar to #2, but two of the continuants, /u / and /ž /, are lacking:

Then Mary will show us all how they are moving my things as a way of foiling you.

CORPUS #4: I thought, after experimenting with the three corpuses above, that the *high* phonemic type/token ratio in these specially constructed short passages might cause them to lack the redundancy of normal speech and that they might be hard for the listener to grasp for this reason. Corpus #4 is therefore a sample of ordinary, everyday American speech, taken from an interview with a New York City streetwalker for a documentary on prostitution (Hall 1974):

I've been on this corner longer than any other girl. I'm jealous when a new girl comes to work. Last night I see two little girls I've never seen before whispering on my corner.

(Corpus #5 was an unsuccessful last try at cut-and-splice assembly, and was discarded.)

CORPUS #6: To make this, I took from the tape of the other four passages those words and phrases which had been heard and recorded correctly by Felicia and Carol. I rearranged them into four sentences:

You know everything so easily. I am sure it's any other I've never seen before. Show us how very much we are moving. Join us now.

How They Listened
Each subject was briefed on the purpose of the experiment and assured that the corpuses consisted of one or more sentences in English. Then she was allowed to listen once to the whole tape before being asked to record what she heard. Next, she listened to each corpus three times and wrote down as much of it as she could make out.

Results
Each subject made out a few words in each corpus and such short phrases as "show us how" and "I am sure."

In the five corpuses there are 96 monosyllabic words, 24 two-syllable words, and 5 three-syllable words, for a total of 125 words. Of all 125, the three subjects averaged together made out 26%. They got 30% of the monosyllables right, 18% of the disyllables, and 13% of the trisyllables.

The three-subject average for Corpus #1 was 17% of the words heard correctly, and 11% for Corpus #4, showing that the *higher* redundancy of everyday speech in the latter did not give it any advantage, at least in this form.

The three-subject average for the two corpuses (1 and 4) containing all or most of the phonemes was 14%. For the two all-continuant corpuses (2 and 3), it was 31%, confirming that continuants were easier to capture than stops and affricates. For corpus #6 (a composite of those portions of the other four that were clearest to Felicia and Carol), the three-subject average of words heard correctly was 41%.

Discussion and Recommendation

The over-all phoneme utterance rate for these corpuses was around 2/second, as compared with about 10/second for everyday American speech (Stevenson 1969). This, and the noise caused by switching the recorder on and off for each phoneme in the assembly process, contributed to the difficulty the subjects had in understanding what they heard.

Better results would be obtained if assembly could be done at 1/8 of the speed at which the separately uttered phonemes were recorded, instead of 1/4 speed as was done here. [1] This would entail the use of a professional quality recorder that could operate at 15 IPS. Then, too, the machine used to assemble the phonemes into words should be able to start and stop for each sound without putting extraneous switching noises onto the tape.

Conclusions

Despite the limitations of the procedure and the equipment, three linguistically unsophisticated subjects were able to hear as words and phrases a statistically significant percentage of the speech assembled from separately uttered phonemes in the manner described. It is the opinion of the author that these results at least tend to confirm the phonemic principle as a valid tool of phonological description and a valid basis for spelling reform.

[1] I did assemble three of the corpuses at 1/8 speed, using a two-stage method in which intermediate tapes were made with the machines running at different speeds. Because of all the rerecording, the results were distorted and noisy, but the overall phoneme utterance rate was 3/second.

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8. Which Way in Spelling Reform? by Gertrude H. Hildreth, Ph.D.*

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The English spelling reform movement appears to be settling down to a choice between some form of augmented alphabet for school beginners, and a system of regularized spelling that requires no addition of new symbols to the standard 26. Both proposals need to be critically appraised before tentative dates are set for adoption of either scheme.

Initial or Transition Spelling Systems

Let's consider first: initial or transition systems to be phased out after a year or two in the primary grades. The obvious advantages of introducing beginners to literacy with a consistently spelled system having sufficient letters for approximate matching of one symbol to a sound have been demonstrated, but several limitations of the temporary or transition alphabets should be considered.

Preschool Experience with Standard ABC's and Printed Words
By the time the typical six-year-old enters the first year of compulsory education he has had considerable experience with print from playing with ABC blocks, toys, observing signs and labels, using ABC books, watching TV shows, play-copying of letters and words including his name. By school age about two-thirds of the 26 letters are recognized by typical beginners. In the meanwhile an augmented Roman alphabet has been no part of the child's culture. Now, upon entering a first grade class, where a beginner alphabet is taught as an introduction to reading and writing, the tots can make little use of their previous experience with print.

Shifting Over to Standard Print in the Primary Years
As a general principle, learning skills in any area involving a change-over in technique or system tends to be uneconomical of teaching time and learner effort. In the case of temporary training alphabets for learning to read and spell, the beginner must first shift from informal preschool impressions of language in print to the new scheme, then back again to standard print as he or she is acquainted with reading skills, usually during the second or third grade. Although children of normal learning capacity and language competency make the transition smoothly enough through the use of gradated materials, the change involves establishing new perceptual habits at a critical stage in the learning process. The advantages of initial learning with simplified spelling are off-set by the complexities of the standard system, for example, inconsistencies in long vowel "i" spelling in *high, try, tie.* Slow learners and the language-limited are handicapped by ambiguous English spelling. Pupils who are scarcely ready for generalizing about word structure, for example, the past tense of *talk, walk,* and those who lack oral familiarity with the language of their books remain backward readers despite their initial experience with a simplified spelling system.

Tackling the Intermediate and Advanced Reading Vocabulary
Gains in reading speed and fluency above the primary level are dependent upon instant grasp of a substantial vocabulary met in sentence context, -- all the frequently used key words for sentence building, plus a wide array of nouns, adjectives, verb forms, and adverbs.

The vocabulary of print from the upper third grade upward consists of a myriad of words ranging from the simplest and most common to polysyllabic, infrequent items. Vocabulary difficulties arise from the difference in proportion between common and uncommon words, the inverse ratio

between frequency of use and the number of words employed in printed context. For example, the universe of words such as *with, so, but, catch, does, take,* is infinitesimal in comparison with the number of infrequently used words such as *antimacassar, procrastination, chronological.*

Even when a youngster has caught on to the mechanics of the reading process and knows 2000 words at sight, he is still a long way from fluent silent reading with full comprehension because of "vocabulary load" in school books and juvenile literature. The primary vocabulary is only the tip of the iceberg. Watch out for the treacherous vocabulary of the intermediate years and on into high school.

A pupil who has reached fourth grade and beyond is expected to be able to help him/herself with new words, using a stock of the commonest letter sounds, frequently recurring syllables, knowledge of some prefixes and suffixes, to have instant recognition and discrimination of several thousand common sentence-building words at sight, and the ability to make inferences from context associations. But even the advanced student is handicapped at times in dealing with the rich vocabulary of the English language that is spelled ambiguously 50%, or more of the time.

It's true that any standard graded reader series for the primary years and even beyond meets the vocabulary problem by controlling the introduction of new words according to standard frequency counts, and repeating new words systematically throughout the text; but beyond the reader selections for each grade are subject texts for every subject area, each with its own specialized terms, plus all the good reading in a junior library collection and at home. *The American Heritage Word Frequency* Book, published in 1971, gives tabulation of all words in the most widely used school texts, Grades 3-9, a total of 86,741 different words.

Juvenile literature, despite some common sense control of vocabulary, contains an assortment of words not often heard or used by juveniles. For example, I found *invincible, campaign, circumstance, companion, laughter, yacht, prophesied, drudge, eloquence, appreciated,* in glancing at a few pages of a Newberry Prize winner. As for the range of words in general adult reading matter, you can test out the facts for yourself by making a random sampling of words from page to page in a comprehensive collegiate dictionary containing 150,000 entries.

A language with consistent spelling throughout the written vocabulary is a boon to the mature reader or writer, as anyone who has learned such a language is fully aware. What a tremendous advantage it would be for young people and adults as well, to have all the good books in English and favorite sections of the newspaper printed with a one symbol-one sound system.

Being able to pronounce a new word in print often recalls the meaning because of oral word associations already formed: *horizon, sympathetic, fragments.* The expert reader, child or adult, doesn't have to *pronounce through* every troublesome, unfamiliar word, but proceeds by the use of reduced or minimum cues: the fore-syllable, or initial letter combination may touch off the correct meaning in context. It's precisely with partial perception that a consistent spelling would be a boon to the older reader-in-a-hurry confronted with an unfamiliar word.

Ambiguous spelling causes confusion and slows down intake for the reader of only modest achievement, the semi-literate person who never completed school but gained the rudiments of literacy up to fourth grade level, as well as foreign-speaking adults eager to become literate in the new tongue. All of these people will have a struggle pronouncing tangled words in print they seldom hear spoken or used in conversation.

The efficiency of regularized English spelling systems taught in the primary years, then discarded for standard print in reading and writing cannot be fully evaluated without comparing the achievement of adolescents and adults who were taught a change-over beginner alphabet and those who were not.

How About Learning to Spell?
Now we come to the spelling bugbear that plagues most literate English-speaking people throughout a lifetime of writing. Correct spelling is desirable because it eases the reading of written material, not because schools put a premium on correct spelling as the sign of an educated person or for supposed value in training habits of neatness and precision.

The question to be considered is the possible effects of a transition alphabet on lifelong spelling habits. Uncertainty over the spelling of English words, especially numerous tricky "demons," will continue to plague most persons, whether or not they were initially exposed to a phonetic alphabet in learning to read and spell.

The vocabulary used in writing expands rapidly during the school years, especially from the fourth grade onward, in keeping with growth in oral language usage. In a word count based on the expressive writing of elementary school children, Dr. Henry D. Rinsland reported a total of 25,632 words used at least once through the eighth grade, and nearly 15,000 words used at least three times. (A *Basic Vocabulary of Elementary School Children,* Macmillan, 1945). No doubt the inclusion of high school writing would have added another 4,000 words. Of all these words, scarcely 50% are consistently spelled in terms of sound-symbol matching, and quite a few are known as "spelling demons."

Spelling ability is different from the word recognition process in reading because it requires recall from memory of the letter series to be recorded, whereas reading depends upon *recognition* of words by wholes or parts in context. In spelling the writer creates the sentences as he writes. Since there is insufficient time in the school program to drill on all the words children need for writing, selected word lists are taught, (not over 4,000 through the eighth grade) in addition to word study, word structure, and a few spelling rules. Three to 400 words is about the limit for spelling lessons through the primary grades.

A persistent question about i.t.a. experiments here and abroad is how well i.t.a.-taught children can spell words in standard T.O. form after the transition. Research studies on the question have been summarized by Dr. Betty Allen Iles in the *Spelling Progress Bulletin,* Winter, 1974.

Most studies have concentrated on children in Grades One and Two immediately after the change-over. There is no convincing evidence that i.t.a.-trained children in the intermediate grades and beyond spell T.O. words better than other pupils in written expression. As for the period immediately following the transition stage, some studies show that i.t.a. children are significantly ahead of matched T.O. groups by a few words, other studies report no differences, and in some cases the significance of differences is not reported.

The tests used in virtually all studies consist of brief word lists ranging in grade level from first to eighth grade, requiring in some cases nothing more than recognition of correct words in a multiple choice test. The information needed for a valid appraisal is how well children can spell when they write.

How can the fact that i.t.a. children in some classes spell T.O. words better than those in regular

T.O. classes be explained? The answer may lie in two uncontrolled variables: methods of instruction, and a common T.O. environment for all the children. In experimental i.t.a. classes the children have been introduced to written expression right along with reading from the beginning. Learning to write is easy for beginners with the simpler i.t.a. code; in fact, some children may have learned to write as many as 200 words correctly by the time they transfer to T.O. By contrast, in typical T.O. classes, little is done with spelling before Grade Two in order to concentrate on reading; then when spelling study begins it consists of word drills in graded spelling books.

i.t.a. children who have writing activities from the outset in Grade One have gained confidence in their ability to write needed words independently, whereas T.O. pupils confined to spelling drills the second year are fearful of penalties for making mistakes.

Throughout all the research on spelling, no one so far as I know has mentioned the possibility that i.t.a. pupils may be assimilating T.O. spelling right along through their interest in outside print. Outside of reading and language lessons, the children are continually in a T.O. environment, associating with persons who do not know or use the i.t.a. code. Does T.O. spelling begin in some cases before the reading change-over? If so, that fact goes unmentioned.

Most of the i.t.a. studies have involved average or above average learners. There are few reports of outcomes with slow learners, language limited children, or older semi-literates with limited schooling.[1]

To sum up, there is no conclusive evidence that early experience with the i.t.a. code itself advances *spelling* skills at the change-over point or beyond in the great sea of English words.

One more observation: how unfortunate it is that children who have been introduced to i.t.a. cannot continue with it throughout a life-time. Schools in countries with more rational spelling than English don't have a subject called spelling with graded spelling books and workbooks, or champion "spell-down" contests.

Regularized Spelling Systems with No New Symbols

Many proposals have been made for regularizing English spelling using the standard 26 letter Roman alphabet without added letters or diacritic marks. World English Spelling (WES) is such a system offering one spelling for each English sound, one pronunciation for each spelling, and having 100% compatibility with the standard Roman alphabet. Augmentation of symbols for the vowel and consonant sounds is achieved solely through using two-letter combinations (digraphs) for sounds not represented by a single letter. Terminal "e" as a long vowel marker disappears; instead, the letter "e" following a vowel letter gives it the long sound with the "e" remaining silent. The letter "k" is used for the hard sound of c, and "s" always represents the soft sound, as in *cent*.

Unnecessary double letters are omitted, as in *shall* or *dress*. A four or five letter word in standard English consistently spelled with WES still has the same number of letters. By actual count, the first two lines of *linkon'z getizberg adres* comes to 93 letters in standard spelling, 89 in WES.

The adoption of WES would not only save pupils from having to learn 14 to 18 new letters to augment the 26 letter alphabet, but would save our present typewriters and printing type fonts from extinction. WES has been recommended for preliminary training in reading and writing the English language as well as for lifetime use, but as a transition alphabet it has many of the shortcomings of any temporary alphabet.

World English Spelling looks plausible enough as a replacement for inconsistent standard English, but let's examine it more closely to see whether the saving in new letter forms and salvaging old typewriters is worth the price. The curse of standard English orthography is multiple spellings for a sound, especially the long vowels; and varied sounds for individual letters, for example, *a, f, e, g.* WES departs from the ideal of one-symbol one-sound matching, advocated by G. B. Shaw and other spelling and alphabet reformers. WES employs 22 digraphs and two 3-letter combinations, three of them new to English, representing individual sounds in words. Although these letter combinations are used regularly for the most part, unlike the hodgepodge of standard English orthography, they pose learning problems for young children because each letter of a combination also serves for other sounds throughout the vocabulary. Identifying pronunciation cues in printed words requires swift and accurate perception of boundaries of the phonemes. The problem of phoneme and syllable boundaries still exists in WES though to a lesser degree than in standard print. A persistent problem for beginners in word attack is recognizing these boundaries of phonemes and syllables, since all words have equally spaced letters, and letter combinations that compose sounds are not yet familiar to the learner. Young learners have a penchant for naming the separate letters of words and picking out letter combinations they recognize as small words, e.g. "father" as f-a-t-h-e-r, or *fat, at, the, her,* instead of scanning the words from left to right by sounds.

To meet the problem of words with letters occurring together that do not form a WES digraph, e.g. *sh* in *dishonor* or *ng* in *engage,* WES inserts a period between the two letters to indicate that the letters (and their sounds) are separate: *dis.honor, en.gage.* Although such words are relatively infrequent, the reader must be on the lookout for these minute signs and remember to insert the needed dots in writing or typing.

Which Way in Spelling Reform

Which alternative is most promising in the long run? -- a consistent beginner learning system for reading and writing English in standard form, a new system of regularized spelling using our 26-letter alphabet without the addition of new letter forms, or a new system for permanent adoption with sufficient augmentation of the Roman letters to achieve highly consistent matching of sounds and letters with one symbol to a given sound? In the latter case, there would be no double or treble letter combinations representing a sound, with a saving of printing and writing space estimated at one-fourth to one-fifth of standard English print. Still another possibility is an entirely new graphic alphabet for recording the English language comparable to the system of strokes and dashes originally devised for German, known as *Sprechspur.* Or the Shaw contest alphabet which is a compromise between a short- hand and a simplistic type style.

In making a decision, the welfare of future generations of readers and writers is the main consideration, not the convenience of today's literates who would be enabled to finish out their careers with standard English print. Is half a loaf better than none? Not in this case involving world-wide reform for years to come.

[1] Ed. Note: See Pitman & St. John, *Alphabets & Reading, pp.* 142, 192, 228-34.

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9. Book Reviews by Newell W. Tune

Can Language be Planned? Rubin, Joan & Björn J. Jernudd, Editors, (paperback). Jan. 1975. Honolulu: The East-West Center, Univ. of Hawaii Press, pp. 343. $5.95.

This book is a paperback issue of a very successful hard cover book costing twice as much that was published in 1971. If one did not get the hard cover book because of the cost, one can now get the same text at a more reasonable price.

This book considers what the nature of language planning might be, what problems it might be expected to solve, and how it might shed light on some of the problems considered in the social sciences of developing nations.

At a conference in Hawaii in 1969, ten linguists met to tell about their personal experiences with or study of language planning in the past and on the basis of a disciplinary focus that might shed light on language planning in the future. The participants had experience in several academic disciplines: anthropology, linguistics, political science, sociology, economics, and social psychology. They had knowledge and planning experience in several areas of the world: Indonesia, Philippines, Ireland, Kenya and Tanzania, Israel, Pakistan, and Turkey.

This book was intended to show the need for a multi- disciplinary approach to language planning, to awaken the interest of all the social sciences to the role of language in modernization, to interest social scientists to the theoretical gain to be had from the study of language planning, to the social and economic environment needed for deliberate language change, and to encourage language planners to scrutinize the processes by which they procede to make and carry out decisions on language changes. It is also intended to serve as a stimulus for research in language planning.

The book is divided into four general categories:
1. The motivation and rationalization for language policy,
2. case studies of language planning,
3. a general approach to language planning,
4. research strategies and a view towards the future of language planning.

The Introduction and 18 chapters have some interesting titles which give us clues to their content: (Introduc., Language planning as an element in modernization,
1. The impact of nationalization on language planning,
2. Language as an aid and barrier to involvement in the national system,
3. Religion, language, and political mobilization,
4. Successes and failures in the movement for the restoration of the Irish language,
5. Spelling reform – Israel, 1968,
6. Language-planning processes and the language-policy survey in the Philippines,
7. Some factors influencing language policies in Eastern Africa,
8. Language reform and social modernization in Turkey,
9. Some planning processes in the development of the Indonesian-Malay language,
10. The development of Bengali since the establishment of Pakistan,
11. Towards a theory of language planning,
12. Evaluation and language planning,
13. Cost-benefit analysis in language planning,
14. Notes on economic analysis for solving language problems,

15. A tentative classification of language-planning aims,
16. Instrumentalism in language planning,
17. Research outlined for comparative studies,
18. A view towards the future (with some references pertaining to language planning).

As you can see, chapters 4 thru 10 are involved in spelling reform in those 7 countries. Each of these tells of the difficulties encountered in trying both to develop a practical and equitable system of spelling that would represent adequately more than one dialect, and to develop a plan to put these findings and the selected system into use. Some of these countries are still in the process of improving the originally adopted systems, while a few have reached a state of satisfied (though incomplete) representation.

The English-speaking world could learn much from these examples of successful language planning.

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Dictionary of Foreign Terms. **Pei, Mario, and Salvatore Ramondino (collaborator: Laura Torbet): (a Laurel Original), paperback. New York: Dell Publishing, pp. 366. $ 1.95, Nov. 1974.**

How many times have you, as a reader, seen a foreign phrase and wished you could know for sure its true intended meaning rather than trying to guess it from context. And authors, how often have you wished you could use some foreign phrase which would more accurately and expressively demonstrate your ideas. Now you can, for this very comprehensive dictionary gives words, word groups, phrases in scores of languages from all European to such languages as are little expected of contributing expressive words or phrases such as: Malay, Tagalong, Afrikaans, Icelandic, Persian, and scores of others. This dictionary aims to assist the reader by telling him from what language these words or phrases come, often with some interesting information about their origin and history. It also tells how these terms are pronounced and what they mean.

The pronunciations provided in this dictionary are designed to achieve the greatest simplicity and ease of using with the minimum loss of accuracy. The definitions are as concise and accurate as research could make them. The etymologies furnish at least the primary source and often, within the limitations of space, provide further pertinent and interesting information. The cross-references are copious for a work of this size because the authors felt that the reader's curiosity should be satisfied when it is aroused, and that he would be grateful to have his attention called to other pertinent and useful information.

In selecting entries for inclusion in this dictionary, the authors considered and rejected far more than they included. Their aim at all times has been to include only useful, interesting and timely material. Obscure classical quotations, highly technical terms, names, titles or opening lines to songs, and terms that have been wholly naturalized in English have been omitted.

In their quest for the most useful, most common, and most timely material, the authors combed thru current books, magazines and newspapers published in English. All items of information were rigorously checked with competent authorities in each of the many languages involved. The result has been the best dictionary of foreign terms so far published.

A demonstration of a new and useful Color-Coded pronunciation symbol system.
Novak, Lorna B. (2nd edition), 1975, Amarillo, Tex.:
Privately Published, U. S. Patent # 3,715,812.

This system of color-coding is different from the several that have proceded it, such as: Nellie Dale (1900–02), *the Dale Readers* (6 vols.), Caleb Gattegno's *Words in Colour,* 1964, with its 47 different colors, and Sir James Pitman's (designed in 1937 in collaboration with Charles M. Smith) which he abandoned when he got the idea that *shapes* of the letters were more important than the *colors*, and that of J. K. Jones (1967), *Colour Story Reading,* Pub.: Thomas Nelson & Sons, London, after extensive testing, reported in 1966.

In all these systems, a certain sound is given a color and however that sound appears in print, it is always printed in that same color. In Gattegno's *Words in Colour,* it is obvious that in order to get 47 colors out of the rainbow, there must be many shades of similar colors and hence the child (or even the adult) is finally going to become bewildered by the all-too-many shades of color.

Lorna Novak wisely used a different principle of colorcoding (and hence was able to get a patent on the idea). She used certain colors for *categories* of sounds. Starting with the long vowels, consonants and silent letters, she has only three colors to present to the beginner as the first step; red long vowels, blue consonants, and black silent letters. This relatively simple presentation makes it easy for the learner and opens the way for presenting meaningful context very near the beginning, so that the pupil gets the enthusiasm of achievement without a lot of tedious memorizing. After these have been presented and learned, pages of other words with long vowels, consonants and silent letters are shown and the pupil finds he can read aloud all the words on the page. More than 1000 records are thus presented (and learned) in a relatively short time- far more than usually presented in first grade. Then a new idea, still on the subject of long vowels in red is presented: *y* that is sounded like *i*, and *w* which sounds like *u*. A sentence with 10 words (25 letters) includes all the red and blue letters in the system; and the child is now proud of his progress in learning to read. He has also learned the basic theory of reading: that of figuring out a new word by putting known sounds together, which is a lot easier than memorizing words of English spelling one by one.

Next the child is introduced to the short vowels in orange. With this new color, the door is opened to all outdoors with more words than the child can learn in several years. Then the indefinite vowel, schwa, is introduced by the color tan. And after these are thoroly learned and assimilated, the color green is introduced for letters that sound like other letters, such as: C (K), F(V), PH(F), GH(F), Q(K), and certain vowels sounded like other vowels. And then the sound of schwi (the very short-i sound).

Altogether there are only 13 colors with which she is able to express all the categories of English spelling-a feat remarkable when one stops to think of the numerous possibilities in English spelling. And that all these have been reduced to a system that is almost self-teaching once the learner is able to identify color with sound. The pupil is able to proceed at his own pace because the color-coding materials do not need constant or frequent requests for help as with Look-n-Say.

Color-coded books are in the process of being printed, but the teacher can prepare her own auxilliary reading materials or booklets by using the transparent color felt markers that come in more than a dozen colors, and using them to cover each letter with the proper color so that the learner (once he has progressed to that color) is able to teach himself and to read many such color-coded books in the children's library.

Of course, by now, it is a combination of color-coding and Look-n-Say, so that the child develops a good sized vocabulary of words he recognizes without the color-coding.

My only query: Just when and how does the teacher tell that the pupil is able to read without the crutch of colorcoding? And how does the pupil use his knowledge and experience to tackle the pronunciation of a new or strange word?

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See papers from SSS **first conference** and **all conferences**.
[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1975 p18 in the printed version]

10. First International Conference of the Simplified Spelling Society.

Aug. 26 to Sept. 1, 1975, at College of All Saints, London, N.17, England.
The Simplified Spelling Society was founded in 1908. In spite of its age, this is the Society's first ever conference and so we are taking the utmost care to ensure its success in every way.

The College of All Saints is situated in its own carefully tended grounds in a quiet corner of North London. The accomodations for Conference members is in new buildings built to harmonize with the older buildings.

The College is within three minutes walk of White Hart Lane railway station from where frequent trains carry passengers into the very heart of London in only 18 minutes. It is also close to London's underground and to numerous and frequent bus services connecting up to theatre land, museums, exciting shopping centres, etc.

Members of the Conference are accomodated in wellfurnished, comfortable study-bedrooms, all with hot and cold water. Towels and soap are provided. All meals, including morning coffee and afternoon tea, are provided for Conference members in the College refectory. Special diets and packed meals may be arranged with the caterer. Provision can be made for early morning tea.

We can also accomodate some 'social' members. These may be wives, children, friends, etc. of the Conference members who do not necessarily wish to attend all, or even any, of the proceedings of the Conference.

Parking is available for Conference members on the College grounds and nearby there are ample postal and telephone facilities. There are also facilities for leaving and passing-on messages and mail.

The Conference meetings will be held in the lecture halls of the College. These are equipped with modern audio-visual aids. Tape recorders, film projectors, slide projectors, epidiascopes and overhead projectors are available.

The Conference Chairman is Dr. John Downing. Prof. Downing was formerly Director of the Reading Research Unit of the Univ. of London and is currently Professor of Education at Victoria Univ., British Columbia, Canada. He is also President of the Simplified Spelling Society. Prof. Downing will be reading a paper dealing with the implications of recent research, including his own, into the teaching of reading.

A programme is planned into many aspects of reading, learning reading, and teaching reading. Use hope to include studies of our alphabet, its shapes, functions, origins; spelling and its implications for the beginner and later. There will be sections for modified and adapted alphabets and their

influence on the speed and ease of learning to read. There will be a few papers on reading in languages other than English and also in non-Romanic orthographies. We are planning a programme which will widen horizons and also be of practical use and benefit to teachers, college lecturers, educationists, phoneticians, orthographers, and intelligent lay-folk – perhaps even parents.

We hope that prospective Conference members, in any of the categories described above, will write us soon if they wish to present a paper. Details from the Conference Secretary. It is hoped to publish the proceedings of the Conference.

There will be an exhibition at which orthographers and others who are unable to attend may, for a small fee, exhibit new work on orthography. Details from the Secretary.

The period of the Conference will extend from Tuesday evening 26th August (dinner will be provided) until Sunday morning 1st September.

Conference Fees.

    With full meals and residence

For the full five night period:	£30.00	($75.00)
Per day for shorter periods:	£6.50	($16.00)

    Non-resident but including meals

For the full period	£10.00	($25.00)
Per day for shorter periods:	£2.50	($6.00)

    Non-resident, no meals

For the full period	£6.00	($15.00)
Per day for shorter periods:	£1.50	($4.00)

These charges also include free membership of the Simplified Spelling Society until January, 1976.

All fees should be paid and cheques cleared before June 30th to allow us to make complete arrangements with the College. Please make out cheques, etc. to Simplified Spelling Society and not to any individual.

Please address all letters to: S.S.S. Conference Secretary, London.

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11. The Shape of things to come.

Since the first rationalisation of English spelling proposed in the reign of the first Queen Elizabeth – yes, as far back as that – literally hundreds of reform schemes have been put out for consideration. They have included:

1. The use of the traditional letters of the alphabet in their majority pronunciation together with the omission of redundant letters (x,q) and the use of digraphs to fill the gaps.
2. Letters of the traditional alphabet as above with redundant letters to fill up gaps, e.g. reversion to the late Old English pronunciation of (c) as (tsh).
3. Use of the regular alphabet plus diacritical marks.
4. Use of regular alphabet plus some extra letters, e.g. Daniel Jones' version of IPA or Kingsley Read's*Spel.*
5. Use of an entirely new non-Romanic alphabet, e.g. Shaw's contest alphabet.
6. Ideographic orthographies, e.g. Bliss's semantography.

These fall into three main classes: (1) Phonetic, (2) Diaphonic, (3) Semantic. It is hard to see a phonetic alphabet prevailing since this would mean either (a) the choosing of one special dialect of English to be the written form over all others, or (b) the toleration of several sets of spellings according to the variant pronunciations in different dialects.

Neither solution would be very satisfactory, although both are possible and, indeed, obtain in other languages. Semantic orthographies are probably ruled out by the sheer bulk of signs which would have to be learned. The number has been reduced to about 3,000 in Chinese but this is still about 1,000 more even than the number of different ways of spelling English words. It is also difficult to see the early choice of a non-Romanic alphabet altho such may come in the future. For practical purposes it would seem that the choice would be a diaphonic alphabet in the range of numbers 1 to 4.

One day fairly soon, someone is going to have to make a decision about spelling reform for English and so it is good that all possible alternatives should be available to them for inspection and testing. One of the most useful functions the Society can perform is to have as comprehensive a collection as possible of these scripts ready and waiting for this day together with all possible records of their functioning – if in fact they have ever been used.

A rational choice can be made only from full knowledge. Who will be the makers of the choice? I should think probably an international commission made up of representatives of English-speaking states together with states which use English as their official language. Its need will probably be sparked off by some kind of official action in one (or more) of the English-speaking states. At present Australia seems to be progressing as if it might be the provoking influence.

What influence will the SSS have on the decisions of some such body? It seems to me that it will have very little influence at all. Such a commission will examine all the evidence available – alphabets, schemes – to see how they will fit in with the variant pronunciations of English. It will probably try to find a scheme which will cover (diaphonically) all of these pronunciations and which will at the same time help to keep the pronunciations of English sufficiently close to remain inter-understandable.

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12. Our Readers Write Us

About the Bullock Enquiry

Dear Mr. Editor: **George O'Halloran**

As the recently elected Honorary Secretary of the Simplified Spelling Society, I must comment on the letter by Will Reed in your Fall 1974 number – just in case it might mislead. First *no* 1973 edition of New Spelling was published. The last full edition was in 1948. An Amendment Sheet was published in 1956. Another is on the way. Second: it is hardly truthful to say ". . . it is doubtful if we made much impression on the Committee's prejudices – not to mention ignorance" in reference to the Bullock Enquiry into Reading which is still going on in England. The four representatives of the Enquiry's Committee who received our delegation included (1) a long time Member of the Simplified Spelling Society, (2) a head-teacher who has for many years been using a simplified spelling medium in her school and, (3) a research worker who has published several books on i.t.a. The fourth member was a college lecturer. It is clearly not fair to describe the first three as being either prejudiced or ignorant of spelling reform. It seems, in fact, as if the Enquiry went out of its way to pick from among its group qualified and knowledgeable members to talk with us.

Although there was a failure both in the preparation and in the presentation of the Society's evidence, I felt that representatives of the Enquiry's Committee were both interested and sympathetic. Certain significant questions were asked and requests made by the representatives of the Enquiry. We were, for example, asked if there were places in English spelling where a moderate amount of change could make a large amount of English reading more nearly phonic. We were also asked if the Society would wish to draw up a model protocol for a possible Government Enquiry into the Spelling of English. The Society's delegation was unable to agree on this. We were also asked our opinion on initial teaching media. Here we were able to agree that we do not believe in their long-term efficacy. We were asked if partial reform would be enough. We came down on the side of complete reform,

We were invited to hand in written evidence and those of us who had prepared any, did so.

Two of the four members of the representatives of the Enquiry's Committee have since written to me; one of them to enquire further about evidence (which she did not understand) given by one of the Society's delegation.

It seems to me that if there was any failure at the meeting it was on the side of the Society's delegation and not on the part of the Enquiry's representatives.

Yours sincerely, George O'Halloran, Hon. Sec, S.S.S. London. 7th Oct. 1974.

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About the SR 1 movement in Australia

Dear Newell: **Robert Mayhew**

I'm glad you perceive the significance of the influential support that SR-1 – and spelling reform in general – is winning in Australia. I have a feeling that some Americans have a condescending attitude toward Australia, considering it to be a rather remote and backward nation, underpopulated and generally unimportant. Actually the English-speaking nations form a linguistic unit, and what happens linguistically in eny one of the large ones will in time influence all the others. Hence eny hedway made Down Under in spelling reform will eventually spred to the other nations of the English-speaking world. I think Australia is destined to lead the world in English spelling reform, at least in the early stages: at present it seems to be the only English-speaking nation where the spelling is still in a state of flux so that writers, publishers and educators may still be amenable to persuasion as regards spelling reform. Australia is presently undergoing the shift from *realise, labour, gaol, programme* and their analogs to *realize, labor, jail, program,* etc.

I wrote to Dr. Hotson and gently chided him for his omitting the Australian progress in his pamphlet. He can't say he didn't know of the Spelling Action Society and SR-1, for I informed him of their progress about two years ago, but he apparently wrote off the SAS activity as an insignificant flash in the pan – or agen perhaps it was wilful blindness. At eny rate, I filled him in agen.

In regard to the Portuguese spelling reform, there have undoubtedly been meny articles alredy written on this subject. I have been a member of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese for the past ten years, and I see that back numbers of Hispania, the AATSP journal, are available on request, so I will write to the Secretary-Tresurer and ask him to send me back issues that have pertinent material on the subject. It's likely that the history and details of the spelling reform were covered thoroly in just one treatise written for Hispania. This historic reform took place about 40 years ago, I think. If such a treatise was written in Portuguese, we'll have to get permission for me to translate it into English for the SPB, which I will be happy to do if the idea is agreeable to you, or it might be more feasible to write a review of the pertinent articles if no overall history of the reform has been written. We can decide that when we see what Hispania sends me.

Examples of the changes made were *theatro* to *teatro, philosopbia* to *filosofia, facto* to *fato,* and so on. They got rid of a host of silent letters and useless diacritics. The etymology-happy pedants must have had a fit (for there were some diehards), but in general their protests fell on def ears, for the reform was apparently carried thru without undue disruption or confusion.

It certainly won't do eny harm to appeal to the ATE and NEA (National Education Association) to move on spelling reform and to acquaint them with how it is being done in Australia. I would appreciate it if you would send me the addresses of the AFT and the NEA. I will then keep them posted on eny further progress that is made Down Under in promoting spelling reform thru the schools. Maybe someday they will be inspired to do likewise. The NEA used *thru, tbo, tboro* and their derivatives in its journal for years, but these forms were dropped about 20 years ago, probably due to a change in officers.

Cordially, R. M. Sec.-Tresurer, Amer. Branch, S.A.S.

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What about *Common Cause*?

Dear Dr. Bonnema: **Harvie Barnard**

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a consultant – concerning a spelling improvement program in the direction of removing the barriers presently hampering the use of English as an acceptable international language.

It is my hope that this objective may become a major project of *Common Cause* on a national basis, and I intend to work actively to promote such a program.

Do you think the time has come when the Phonemic Spelling Council would be able and willing to display a unified approach to this subject? Some congressional leaders have contended that the spelling progress people, have lacked cohesion, unanimity and consistency, but it appears to me that there has been improvement along these lines in several respects.

In any case, I feel that the time has come to work constructively with all those professionally competent people who think along similar, if not exactly the same lines, as far as English spelling is concerned.

I plan to see Dr. John Gardner sometime during the coming year, and hope to have at least an outline of a practical proposal to present to him at that time. In the meanwhile, if you will give the subject some thought, it will be good to have your suggestions and thinking to help set up such a program for *Common Cause* to support

Sincerely yours,

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About SR 1

To the Editor; Dear Sir: **Mrs. Helen Tuffin**

It seems to me that the biggest hazard that eny movement for spelling reform has to face is the number of different ways in which reformed spelling could be rendered. It is perfectly natural for a person who has high qualifications to think that his way is best and it is also very hu man for an expert to wish for the satisfaction of having his way accepted. But in this field there are so meny experts.

Our children in Australia watch "Sesame Street" on T.V. and learn the advantages of co-operation. I would like to appeal for American co-operation with us in spelling reform.

Harry Lindgren's approach (S.R.1) may not be the ideal of each reader of this paper but at least it has *started and is moving* in the right direction, and in the few years it has been going has made good progress – particularly so as there have been no great funds of money for publicity. What ever system of spelling reform one favours surely no one could quibble at Spelling Reform Step One, "That the clear short vowel sound as in 'bet' be written 'e' and no other change shall be made until this, Step One, is accepted and widely used and Step Two chosen" This small change would surely fit in with eny scheme which used today's typing or printing machines, or adaptations of them.

One writer (Donald L. Humphries, SPB, Fall, 1974) thinks that S.R.1 is too trivial. Of course it would be if that were the whole reform, but it is only the first step.

There could be fifty steps. It is only the answer to "How reform is to be introduced," which he names as the second basic problem of spelling reform and the more support each step receives, the quicker the total reform will be. That it was a good choice of method of introduction has been borne out by the fact that at their annual meeting in January, 1075, the Australian Teachers' Federation voted to recommend to state educational authorities and the Commonwealth Schools Commission the teaching of spelling reform Step One (S.R.1) in schools. Also the advantages of this gradual change become obvious when you consider the need of such people as typists and compositors for speed in their work or when you consider the ease or frustration of ordinary people reading the daily papers, magazines, etc.

Erly in this letter the appeal was made to American readers, but of course, it is to all English-speaking people. "Nothing succeeds like success," and if we in Australia could say, "It's catching on in the U.S.A. or England, etc." it would give us a great boost, for though we have made a good start, there is still a long way to go and a lot of inertia to overcome.

If you would like more information about this movement, Mr. Robert Mayhew, Director, Mayhew English Academy, Calexico, Ca, USA; or Mr. Harry Lindgren, Narrabundah, ACT, Australia, would be happy to supply it.

Yours faithfully,
Thornlie, Western Australia.