Spelling Progress Bulletin

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

Table of Contents

"Spelling, Research and Reform"

1. Third International Conference
sponsored by the Simplified Spelling Society, Edinburgh, Scotland,
Jul. 31-Aug. 3, 1981
Provisional speaker's topics - in order of their delivery

Message from H. R. H. the Duke of Edinburgh, Patron.

Keynote address: *Cognitive Aspects of Spelling,* by Dr. Uta Frith, Developmental Psychology Unit, Medical Research Council, London.

Spelling difficulties of young children with phonological disorders. Dr. Barbara Dodd, School of Educ. Univ. of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Spelling errors made by 8, 9, 10, & 11 year old pupils. Ms. Barbara Smith, formerly Dundee College of Education.

Spelling difficulty in school leavers & adults. Dr. Dolerez Perin, Developmental Psychology Unit, Med. Research Co.

Spelling of consonant clusters: a developmental study. Dr. Maggie Snowling, Nat. Hospital's College of Speech Sci.

Psychological processes in spelling recognition. Dr. P. H. K. Seymour, Dept. of Psychology, Univ. of Dundee.

Word perception, and the Special Interest group of I.R A. Dr. Emmett A. Betts, Phonemic Spelling Council.

Teaching spelling. Dr. David Moseley, Dept. of Psychology, Univ. of Newcastle.

Principles of Esperanto spelling. Mr. Stuart Campbell, Edinb.

Aims of spelling in an international perspective. Dr. Jesus Mosterin, Dept. of Logic, Educ, Univ. of Barcelona, Sp.

An experimental investigation of attitudes to Eng. sp. ref. Dr. Robert Baker, Dep. Electronics, U. of Southampton.

Hist. of Spanish orthog. and implications for a theory of *spelling reforms.* Dr. Iraset Paez-Urdaneta, Venezuela.

A comparison of adults learning to read in two spelling sys. Dr. John Beech, Dept. Psychology, New Univ. of Ulster.

Computer transliteration of shorthand. Mr. Colin Brooks, Dept. Electronics, Univ. of Southampton.

Reconciling conflicting principles for reforming English spelling. Dr. Walter Gassner, Australia.

Semantic aspects of spelling reform. Dr. Neville Brown, Found. for Educ. of the Underachieving & Dyslexic.

Experiments in teaching English in Francophone Africa. Dr. Henry Niedzielski, Univ. of Hawaii/Univ. of Burundi.

Com'l and marketing perspectives in implementing spelling reform. C. J. H. Jolly, Marketing Manager.

How to do it. Dr. Abraham Citron, Director, Better Educ thru spelling Reform, Wayne St. Univ. Michigan.

The inevitability of change - the happy alternative. Harvie Barnard, Tacoma, Wa.

Spelling reform - let's be practical. Dr. John Downing, Pres. S.S.S. Faculty of Educ. Univ. of Victoria, B. C. Canada.

Reading and writing in English using system 1+ spelling. Prof. V. A. Vassilyev, Moscow St. Pedagogical Inst.

Research and progress in teaching spelling and spelling reform. Valerie Yule, Dept. of Psychology, U. of Aberdeen.

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2. Can We Assume our Remedial Reading Students Know How to Use the Dictionary, by Maryann Feola Castelucci*

*College of Staten Island, Staten Is, N. Y.

Many teachers feel that remedial reading students would have less difficulty reading if they would use the dictionary more often. Certainly this is true. But, can we safely assume that our students know how to use the dictionary correctly? In the past I noticed that students in remedial reading courses were often eager to work with the dictionary but were not sure how to approach it. This

semester I gave my class a dictionary exercise which included an exploration of ambiguous spellings that exist for the different sounds of English.

This dictionary exercise was conducted on a class of remedial reading college students aged 19-25. None were students of English as a second language.

Each student had been responsible for bringing a dictionary to class. At the beginning of the 2 hour period I dictated seven words, explaining they probably would not know how to spell most of them. They were instructed simply to write down what they heard. I asked the class to work carefully and ask me to repeat any word they did not hear clearly. The words I dictated were: *gnome, gnu, phlebitis, feign, wrest, xenophobia,* and *phenomena.* They were told that 'gnu' (the animal) was not spelled 'new' or 'knew,' 'feign' was not spelled 'fain' or 'fane', and the 'wrest' that they were looking for had nothing to do with relaxation. In addition to looking up each word, the students had to copy down the syllabication, definition(s), and part(s) of speech.

As I walked around the room and spoke to the students, it seemed clear that what they originally thought was a simple task (i.e. looking up something and copying it down) was turning out to be an arduous task. The problem was: how do you look up something if you do not know how to spell it? Some members of the class commented that this was not unusual for them and when this happened, they usually used another word - a word that was "easier" and "more familiar." This is probably true for many remedial reading students. It seems logical that someone who is having difficulties with language in general is not going to be adept at using the dictionary.

About 20 minutes later, I asked who found any of the words. About one half of the class did not find any. Surprisingly, they were not frustrated. Instead, they were energized with the kind of excitement one has when he is anxious to find something he knows is not within his immediate reach, yet is obtainable. What the other half of the group found gave the others added encouragement to go on. *Phenomena* was the word that some students were able to find. However, most of the students who found it claimed they found it syllabified *phenomenon.*

I told the class that we would get back to the na/non problem, but first we would discuss why some were able to find one of the words. I asked a student how she was able to find 'phenomena.' She recalled that she looked under the letter 'f' for about five minutes and then suddenly thought of the word 'phone.' Remembering that that word begins with the 'f' sound, she recalled that many words with that sound start with 'ph.'

I put the word 'reign' on the blackboard and told the class that if they would employ their classmate's procedure, it would help them find three of the words. At this point, I divided the class into groups of three so that they might share ideas and constructive dialog.

One of the groups that was working especially hard sounded out the word 'reign' very carefully. One student in the group was saying it sound-by-sound with her eyes closed. All of a sudden she said, "Oh my goodness, that word has a 'g' in it but no 'g' sound!" She hurried to the 'gn' section of the dictionary suspecting correctly 'gnome' started with ' gn.'

Now the class caught on to the reason why they were doing this exercise: the ambiguous spellings can make it difficult when you have to look up a word. But, if we think of words that are familiar to us, we can make our way from the known to the unknown. One student was working on her spelling of 'xenophobia.' She was beginning the word with a 'z,' and was trying to think of words that start with the 'z' sound. I suggested that she think of some common words which start with that sound and repeat the words quickly to herself. In a few minutes her eyes lit up. By thinking of 'xerox,' she was able to get to 'xenophobia.' In this fashion the class was able to look up the rest of the words.

The students also had trouble understanding the syllabification. For instance, many of them wanted to know if the letter 'i' was pronounced the same way each time it appeared in the word 'phlebitis.' They suspected that it was not because each one was represented in a different way (diacritical marks). They knew that there was a pronunciation guide at the beginning of the dictionary, but many of them said that some dictionaries do not give a readable or complete explanation of the sounds of English.

They complained too that sometimes a sound is exemplified in a word they do not know how to say. And, of course, for several reasons, many students do not always use this section of the dictionary. One student said, "Maybe I can use the pronunciation guide, but that won't help me any when I'm trying to sound out a new word and there's no dictionary around." We all agreed this could be a problem.

I referred back to the ability that they had to decode the first sound of the word 'phlebitis.' I asked them to recall first how they were able to do it. One student said that she saw an 'f' and instantly pictured the word 'Frank' (her boyfriend's name) and was able to make the necessary sound.

I asked if anything similar might be done to sound out the rest of the sounds even though they were not familiar. After some thought the suggestion was made that perhaps they could take the part of the word that was giving them trouble and see if they could remember a word that was made up of/or included that spelling (e.g. look up familiar word(s) to see if the symbols in the syllabification were the same as those for either of the 'i's in 'phlebitis.' They tried this out. Much to their pleasure, they found that in most cases it worked. The class felt comfortable and was no longer afraid to deal with the dictionary's symbols: once they knew that they represented sounds that had long been part of their speaking vocabulary and were not just part of a crazy code someone recently thought up. It became increasingly evident that my class felt comfortable using techniques they could rely on and, in fact had, to a limited degree, already been using.

When we talked about why so many of them got 'phenomenon' when they were looking up 'phenomena' a similar pattern evolved. I discovered that much of the class did not know the abbreviations for the words: plural, noun, verb, adverb, adjective, etc. No one knew why 'phenomena' did not have a listing of its own. I asked them to look up the word 'parties.' Soon everyone said they found it under the listing for 'party.' We talked about why that was so and several of the class members: said the word 'parties' belongs under the listing for 'party' because it is the plural. I insisted that that was not enough proof and instructed them to look under that listing for more concrete proof. After a while, one student said her dictionary had the 'ies' ending but dropped off the rest of the word. When I asked her to illustrate that on the blackboard, she stepped back, considered what she wrote, and then added 'pl.' in front of it. The student said, "This had the letters 'pl.' here, and that must mean 'plural.' It must be the abbreviation for that word." Instantly two things happened. First, the students started to discuss how they were certain that 'phenomena' had to be the plural of 'phenomenon', just as 'parties' had to be the plural of 'party.' They were so certain because they did not have to take my word for it; they had found it out for themselves.

Secondly, some of the students began to question what the other abbreviations were under the word 'party.' They wanted to know: Could they be the parts of speech? Some students said with confidence that they were, but they were not sure how they knew it. I felt that this was a good entry into the discussion, of the parts of speech. I asked what were the main differences between the different definitions of the word 'party' given under the abbreviation 'n.' They broke up into groups to work this one out., I asked them to come to a consensus about the differences in each meaning. Each group basically came up with the same thing: the definitions of 'party' after 'n' was a person or thing and 'party' under 'v' was something someone did. This they said confidently must be what

parts of speech are all about. They began to realize that words not only have different meanings, but also have different functions in a sentence.

Thanks to these responses, I feel more comfortable when I ask my class to use the dictionary. The exercises are only a few of many that can be done with a group of college remedial reading students who are just beginning to learn how a dictionary is put together and how they might use it. More importantly, I know they are aware that they have the power to understand many things by using ideas and procedures that have worked successfully for them in the past.

Group work can help to make this type of teaching more successful because the students have the opportunity to work out problems in their own language with others who are at the same or slightly higher level of competency. The students are able to think and speak freely without the fear (which so many of them have) of giving the teacher a wrong answer. If group work is used, however, the students must be shown how to work in a group i.e., one person does not do all the work, ideas are to be shared, everyone participates, and all tasks are rotated. Like everything else in the encouragement of self-observation in reading, the introduction of collaborative work should include emphasis on procedure rather than on product. And again, we should not assume that our students already know what this means. They all need training in procedures as well as in substance.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Fall 1981 p3]

3. Self-Observation in the Remedial Reading Classroom, by Maryann Feola Castelucci*

Last semester while working with a student who repeatedly scored low on reading tests, I noticed that she disregarded most of the punctuation. Aside from reading right past commas and not pausing long enough at the end of each sentence, the student failed to recognize the intrinsic value of capital letters. The passage on holistic medicine that we were working with read, "... they claim it is a very respectable past, nothing less than the origins of medicine, when Hippocrates wrote that the physician must..:" What the student read was, "... they claim it is a very respectable past nothing less that the origins of medicine, when Hypocrites wrote that the physician must.."

Unaware of the function of a capital letter, the student went on to guess at, rather than sound out, the rest of the word. If she had been able to take the capital letter as a sign that a proper name was present, she might not have felt comfortable with the word 'hypocrite.' In addition, she might have looked closer at the rest of the letters: in the word, realized it was a word she was unfamiliar with, and looked it up in the dictionary. Instead, the student proceeded to guess, and substituted the correct word with one that made "half sense."

After the student finished reading, I silently pointed back to the incorrect word, and she repeated it as `hypocrite.' It now seemed certain that this was not a careless error. We discussed the nature of the word 'hypocrite' and talked about words that might be used in its place, e.g., phony, liar, fake. When asked to write sentences using the various synonyms, she used the large case and small case letters correctly. I then asked her to rewrite the sentence from the story four times. The first three times she was to use a synonym of the word hypocrite, and in the fourth sentence, she was to use the word itself, being sure to copy the letters of the word accurately. While doing this the student realized that what she thought was the word hypocrite was spelled with a capital letter.

She now began to feel uneasy about the initial rendition, and reconsidered it, keeping in mind that it must be the name of a person or place. Realizing it was someone's name, and probably a name she was unfamiliar with, she proceeded to reread the sentence. During this reading, she was more aware of the special features of each letter and made her best effort at sounding out all the letters of every word.

In this case, it was only after the student recognized, largely through her own self-observations, that words cannot be tackled in the right way until the reader is totally atuned to all the signs and sounds of English. When we discussed what had gone on, the student said that she probably did things like this countless times, and therefore, suspected she probably did not understand many things she thought she had. This most likely went on during those times when she thought she "got" most of the story, but found some of it to be unclear. This student admitted she always thought her reading problems were caused by her inadequate vocabulary. By the end of that first hour, the student was convinced her immediate attention must be focused on her insensitivity to letters, punctuation, and signs in general.

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BEETHOVEN

As Milton oevercame his loss of sight
Yoo oevercame yoor defness. From the day
When melodis no longer gave delight
A loftier relm of muesic ownd yoor sway.
Yoor forcefuol personality pervades
Songs, symfonis, an opera, string quortets,
Sonaatas, preludes, marches, serenades,
Conchertos, vaeriaetions, minuets.
Yoor sketch-buoks show no effort to escape
The unremitting toil bie which yoo braught
Each composition to its fienal shape
With perfect consonance of form and thhaught.

Yet hou spontaeneous dus yoor muesic seem
In every homely or transcendent thheme!

By Frank du Feu in his system: Eurospelling.

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4. Preface by Newell W. Tune.

Thruout the history of the English language there hav bin a few wise and far-sighted persons who hav recognized that English spelling has meny deficiencies. Its irregularities and inconsistencies hav bin shown to be a serious handicap to the teaching of reading, writing, and spelling.

The recognition of these problems was first appreciated by a monk called Ormin, who in the 13th century used a new alfabet and simplified spelling when writing a lengthy religious poem called "The Ormulun." Meny others followed with various ideas of an improved alfabet, some attempting to introduce a whole new set of symbols. Others wanted to introduce diacritical marks to express and differentiate the different sounds of the language. Still others tried to devise spelling systems that made no changes in the Roman alfabet, but used digrafs to indicate those sounds for which no single letter was available.

But almost none of these persons, (I'd call them alfabeteers), had plans for implementing their proposed systems. This book deals with the meny aspects and problems of reforming our spelling for the broad purpose of improving written communication in the English language. It examines critically the relation of spelling simplification, not only to reading and writing, but also to the basics of comprehension and education in terms of reformed English spelling. Its significant effects upon commerce, printing, the schools, holding jobs, and delinquency are considered.

The question of how simplified spelling could best be introduced is discussed, and several programs for the implementation are proposed for serious consideration.

We are indebted to the Valerie Yule for suggesting the idea of the book and for the category listings.

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5. Introduction by Harvie Barnard.

The meny articles in this volume are intended to reveal the basic relationships between the fundamentals of language: Speech, Spelling, Writing, Reading & Spelling Reform.

In eny reasonably well organized society, we coordinate our lives thru a regularized form of communication called language. The essential elements of any language may be sed to comprise six essential components:
    1. sounds, regularized to become,
    2. speech, specialized to become
    3. words, represented groups of symbols, by means of written graphemes formalized into,
    4. spellings, to represent the sounds of speech, which when expressed graphically become,
    5. writing, which in order to become understood or visualized requires,
    6. decoding, or reading for comprehension or conceptualization.

To render this system of communication effective, a certain methodology is required, which we call "teaching." But because of serious inconsistencies and irregularities in the "system," the teacher is

faced with numerous perplexing problems, most of which relate to confusing sound-spelling relationships, characteristic of the English language.

The basic problem, which concerns a large proportion of words of the English language, is that the spellings do not correspond consistently to the sounds - standardized pronunciations - which have been established thru usage and well defined by virtually all dictionaries. Therefore the correct or preferred pronunciation of words cannot be dependably determined from the spellings, nor can the words alredy learned in speech be spelt according to the proper pronunciation.

The primary purpose of a spelling reform is that of bringing into closer relationship the inconsistencies of speech sounds and spellings. Which then, would be most readily changed? All speak, but few write. Those who write, or try to do so, must rely hevily upon dictionaries - if they would spell correctly - yet speakers, except those professionally trained, have little concern for spelling, and often not more for pronunciation. To attempt changing the spoken language would be a very slow if not impossible process, but modifying our written language could be a possibility, though not an easy procedure.

But those who would prefer simplified spellings should not forget their readers - those who would hopefully find reading entertaining, educational and necessary. Then there is a very extensive and traditionally taught proportion of the population whose direct concern for spelling far outweighs most others - the teachers. These important people must be satisfied that:
1. reformed spelling will be easier to teach;
2. easier to learn;
3. easier to read;
4. easier to write; and
5. no less redily understood by the student as well as by the illiterate public.

From the standpoint of practical teaching, it has alredy been established that, that which is more easily learned is also more easily taught. This would apply to both writing as well as reading. And if we have determined that a regularized mode of encoding, writing, results in a more certain dependable comprehension of such written material, by decoding, then is it not lojical to conclude that eny such regularized written material will be better understood thru recognition and visualization than other forms of less regularized and/or less rationally presented symbolization? To simplify, writing which is dependably rational and regular should be more easily red and comprehended than that which is rational and the regular. To further simplify, a definite signal, sign, or symbol, should always convey a definite dependable meaning.

It has been argued that if English spelling were reformed or simplified there would be a great loss of etymological values, but there is doubt this would be true in many instances according to Ben Franklin, John Downing and Valerie Yule. For the primary learner, whether a 5 year old or a stranger to our language, it could be successfully argued that the beginner is more interested in the utility of the language than he or she might be in its origin or history - the latter going back in meny instances thru uncounted changes both as to spelling and alphabetical development thruout the ages - very interesting no doubt, to a scholar whose concerns are essentially historical. "Etymology is at best a dubious aid, and at worst, misleading." (Ben Franklin).

This volume is not intended to promote or recommend eny particular system, but the various aspects of spelling reform are discussed by 60 authors in order to present the broadest viewpoints, the problems, and the possible solutions to the overall considerations of making our English language more useful in domestic as well as in worldwide communication.

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Prelude* by Harvie Barnard

Simplified Spelling, or Spelling Reform - Who's Interested?

* to the book, *Spelling Reform - a comprehensive survey*.

Why should you or I or enyone else, be interested in spelling reform? It has been sed by the world's best-known authors and most distinguished scholars, as well as by millions of English-speaking illiterates, that English is (outside of Chinese) the most difficult language to read, write, and to spell! As John Steinbeck has sed, "Some people there are who, being grown up, forget the horrible task of learning to read. It is perhaps the greatest single effort that the human undertakes, and he must do it as a child."

Hundreds if not thousands of others: writers, teachers, students and even expert linguists hav expresst the same idea, and very few, if eny, hav denied it. O.K.! So what? As an accomplished reader, writer, and a fairly good speller, I'm really not concerned. I've "got it made it," so why should I be interested in the problems of those "spelling nuts" who want to make English easier to read, write, spell or understand? Why should I care that education be made simpler, so that practically enyone, whether a child, a forener or enyone else might lern to read or become reasonably literate in a few months, or at most a year or two?

After all, I've spent most of my life trying to master the intricacies and peculiarities of English spelling, pronunciation and writing! So why should I or eny other educated person be willing to relinquish our hard-earned advantage? I've given meny years to acquire my degrees, and I feel fully entitled to my academic credits as the teacher and a scholar. So to hell with the illiterate, the kids and the foreners! Let them all suffer as I did - "root hog, or die"!

Isn't this a competitive world?, and since I've got it made, why in hell should I worry about my "brother" who couldn't make it? He had "problems" in school and has had worse problems ever since. After "flunking out" before he finished 8th grade, (he couldn't read), he got into trouble on account of no job. Then he was "busted" for stealing a car, broke outa reform school, started on drugs, and has been in or outa jails or the "pen" six times since he was 16 years old. So what can enybody do about that? Yeah what?

Well, since you asked, the answer is "plenty"! And if you knew what it's costing you, and every taxpayer, you would be screaming to high heven! You and everyone else who pay billions for property taxes to support the schools would start howling their heds off, cussing out the U.S. Dep't of Education, the state superintendent of schools, the school board, and everyone who is responsible for what is taught - or supposed to be taught - in the schools.

Since this is a dollar oriented society, let's check out the cost of the public schools alone, because whether the schools educate or not, the cost is a minimum of about $20.00 per day for every pupil. Based on the standard school year of 180 days, this calculates to be $36 billions (36 thousand millions) per year for the ten million young people in our public schools. Thus for every million who failed, or require an additional year to acquire, a passable proficiency in the basics, we are pouring 3.6 billion dollars down a rathole of educational waste!

Perhaps for some families $3600 per pupil per year isn't a lot to howl about, but when a taxpayer realizes that about 15% of these ten million pupils are not lerning their basics well enuf to hold a

job after 12 years or more of schooling, that figures to an astronomical loss. Let's calculate: 15% of ten million is 1.5 million; 1.5 million times $3600 for 12 years = 12x3600x1,500,000 dollars, which is $64 billion, 800 million, which makes the cost of educational inefficiency approximately as much as 10% of our total federal budget, and it is spent on 1.5 million pupils who finished their 12 years of schooling as "functional illiterates." So if we're really serious about reducing waste and inefficiency in government, why not begin with education!?

Altho this economic loss may not be a total waste, it does indicate in terms of dollars what might be considered an even greater loss in terms of social pain and unnecessary suffering. These unfortunates, for lack of an adequate education in the basics, are going to be unable to compete in our modern technically oriented society. Being unable to obtain or hold jobs, it is mainly these semi or functionally illiterates who will be in economic difficulties most of their lives, and therefore will tend towards crime to satisfy their needs. Once started in this direction, these people are likely candidates for unsocial activities for the rest of their unhappy existence, and will probably become public wards and continued claims on society, both economically and emotionally as long as they live.

Thus for social as well as economic reasons it should be obvious that eny steps we could take to facilitate the educational processes would not only be warranted, but eagerly sought out for the benefits to be realized, not only for those who pay the costs, but also for those whose existence is enhanced by the satisfaction of happier lives.

Virtually all students of the English language hav unanimously concluded that the primary roadblock to literacy is our illogical, irregular, confusing, and frustrating English spelling. To some extent this problem has been recognized and partially corrected by emphasizing the phonetic *regularities* which occur at less than 50% of the time. But 50% has never been considered the "passing" grade in English or any other subject, and this beginning use of fonetic spelling, when *emphasized* in the primary grades, does become a source of confusion and frustration whenever non-fonetic words are encountered because pupils search for fonics when there is none. Thus about half of the fonetic "rules" become a handicap rather than a help, which is why most of us are uncertain spellers and find it necessary to lose time "looking up words in the dictionary."

The obvious answer to this problem is to make English spelling as simple and fonetic as possible, and that is what spelling reform is, as we say, "all about." Altho there will always be some exceptions because English is a conglomerate language having 41 sounds and based on an inadequate alfabet of 26 letters, there is ample room for improvement. If we can achieve 95% efficiency, or perhaps even better, that would eliminate most of our confusion and require that only a small proportion of our spellings would be dependent upon pure memory. Thus our mental processes would be relieved of the irritating details of non-essential searching, thereby leaving our organic computers (minds) free to serve the purpose for which they were intended - to reason, to solve problems, to make wise choices, and as we casually say, "*To Think*." So let us think to do what we can to help our thinking.

Editor's note: although we won WWII on the battlefield, we lost in the postwar commercial field - why? Because they (Germany and Japan) were forced to modernize - and we did not or could not see the handwriting on the wall. The situation is still with us.

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6. Reading: Spellings (Phonics) and Word Perception,
by Katherine P. Betts, Ph.D.*
(Prepared from notes taken by Dr. Betty Roe, Acting Secretary)

*Winter Haven, Fla.

A report of the Special Interest Group 24, of the International Reading Association at New Orleans, Apr. 1981

During the 26th Annual Convention of the IRA in New Orleans, April 30, 1981, Special Interest Group 24 was organized to perpetuate the activities of previous Phonemic Council co-sponsored sessions. Millard Black served as general chairman of the two-hour-45-minute discussion, or "town hall" meeting - with 27 handpicked members of a panel of experts and a total attendance of approximately 125. Dr. Jack Haynes presented a brief overview of goals and presided over the introduction and concise presentation of previous research by Elsie Black. Following the brief business agenda chaired by Millard Black, Dr. Katherine P. Betts served as moderator of the main session for which 77 previously submitted questions, organized in five major categories, had been prepared as handouts for discussion.

Dr. Emmett Albert Betts; organizer of this group, opened the session with a statement of the relationships between IRA and Special Interest Group 24:

IRA has needs unmet in extant professional publications. An example is the identification of a substantial number of spellings that do not "fit" phonic rules (spelling patterns). A major research purpose of this IRA special interest group is to promote relevant research on and the development of strategies and tactics for dealing head-on with "unfit" spellings which to varying degrees do not signal pronunciations:

a. Commonly used words in beginning reading materials; e.g., you, *one, come, laugh, know.*
b. Function words, usually stressed, which have only syntactical meanings; e.g., *of, and, the, when.*
c. Morphophonemic spellings in which the vowel sounds alternate; e.g., *n(a)tion-n(a)tional, metal-metallic.*
d. Unstressed syllable in which the neutral vowel, or schwa, tends to predominate.
e. Other consonant, vowel, and diphthong situations which make hazardous the prediction of sounds from spellings for both beginners and sophisticated readers.

For eight years, the Phonemic Spelling Council co-sponsored with IRA sessions on this very real perceptual/ cognitive facet of reading instruction. Beginning with this session, IRA, through our special interest group on Reading: Spellings and Word Perception, is making a frontal attack on this concern. Basic to this effort is the belief that effectiveness of reading instruction will be significantly escalated by focusing on spellings which either *facilitate* or *interfere* with reading processes.

Following her presentation on application/exception ratios for consonant and vowel situations, Elsie Black distributed a handout summarizing both her and Ruth Oaks' research. She also raised four crucial questions meriting discussion in future sessions. For example, what kind of phonics instruction should be given to undergraduates who are prospective classroom teachers?

Questions selected for discussion by conferees revealed interests in methodology, pupil learning, and English orthography in terms of applications for instruction. At the request of Millard Black,

Dr. Miles Zintz and Dr. Thomas Horn discussed some of the problems Navaho and other bilingual children experience with auditory discrimination of English phonemes and, therefore, with phonics instruction. Dr. Paul Berg, Dr. George Mason, Dr. Betty Roe, and Dr. Donald McFeely responded to Helen Terril's question 18, regarding pupil's reversals of both letters and words, with instructional suggestions, causation, and prevalence of the problem.

Dr. John Martin (Stuart, Fla.), reporting on his program, incorporates visual motor skills (e.g., writing; tracing), typing, and phonogram-based early phonics instruction in teaching 5- and 6-year-olds to read. According to Martin, writing helps eliminate reversal problems.

Dr. Paul Berg's question 20, the relation of learning modes - auditory, visual, kinesthetic, haptic - on learning to spelling, was discussed by Dr. Thomas Horn, Dr. Walter Barbe, Dr. Katherine Betts, Dr. Emmett Betts. Dr. Miles Zintz, Dr. George Mason, Dr. Gene Blair. Comments included: Spelling is primarily visual but includes auditory cues. We can read words we can't pronounce (e.g., German, French). College students taught by sight-word methods tend to report problems with spelling. We learn to spell at the end of a pencil - by syllables.

Question 39, the usefulness of prefixes in relation to word meanings, elicited diverse opinions presented by Dr. Paul Berg (not useful), Dr. Lou Burmeister (study of prefixes, suffixes, and root-word meanings natural, important, and enjoyable) Dr. George Mason (little research support), Dr. Emmett, Betts (many different meanings of prefixes and suffixes which should be taught), conferees (need to be taught in context).

Dr. George Mason reported that teachers tend not to give children purposes for the first reading of a selection.

Winifred Ginyard's question 41, the relationship between children's reading ability and their spelling problems, drew responses from Dr. Miles Zintz (correlation of .60 between reading and spelling achievement); Dr. Martha Cheek (correlation of .80 between reading and spelling), Dr. Emmett Betts (recommended informal spelling inventory, use of reading vocabulary for spelling; responded to Elsie Black's question of some good readers who are poor spellers - related to instruction).

Dr. Betty, Roe's question 51, whether phonics should be taught in isolation from reading in context, received an emphatic: "No" from both Dr. Roe and Dr. Martha Cheek. The problems of homographs with varying pronunciations mot predictable from isolated word lists and meanings in specific contexts were discussed. Also important, but not discussed, is pupil-identified needs and, therefore, motivation to learn.

Question 6b (Dr. Emmett Betts), the ambiguity of phonic rules, specifically vowels controlled by *r* (centering diphthongs) was answered with the recommendation that centering diphthongs (e.g., *ar* in *park*) be taught as phonograms. Dr. George Mason commented that what we were trying to do in teaching phonics is to help children match the sounds in their language with the orthography.

At the conclusion of the session, forty-seven persons had signed up for membership in Special Interest Group 24. A steering committee of five with Dr. Jack Haynes as acting treasurer was approved to plan the program for a session at the 27th IRA Annual Convention, Chicago, to conduct the business of the group, and to nominate officers to be voted upon by the membership. Many conferees reported that they enjoyed the meeting, endorsed the dialog format of the session.

Dr. Betty, Roe, serving as acting secretary, submitted extensive notes from which this report was prepared by Dr. Emmett A. Betts and Dr. Katherine P. Betts.

A title change from Reading: Spellings and Word Perception to Reading: *Phonics* and Word Perception, has been made because both panel members and conferees tended to misinterpret the word *spellings,* contributing to an emphasis on spelling rather than reading instruction at this meeting. This title change should also interest a greater number of conferees in participating in future sessions.

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7. Etymological Arguments FOR Spelling Reform, II, by Valerie Yule*

The original English spelling of some of the most demonic aspects of English spelling was once closer to present speech than the way we have to learn them now.

Often the sequence has gone:
1. The Old English form of the word was spelt according to the pronunciation then, and sometimes not too far off of the pronunciation now.
2. Sometime between the 16th and 18th century arose the pedantic and often snobbish desire to spell according to classical derivation rather than the peasant tongue, which was thought vulgar. Hence arose meny of our present spelling woes, as the elite eliminated 'easy' ways.
3. If, in the process of learning to read, we are taught the derivations of the words as a means of helping us learn to spell - a circular form of learning is involved here we are almost certainly taught the foren origins, not the way the word first came into early English or Norman-French in England, before scholars and printers made arbitrary changes.

Previous articles in *Spelling Progress Bulletin* (Fall 1980) described some of the awkward results - how little English spelling justifies Chomsky's claims to its representation of deep lexical structure (Yule, 1978) and how often earlier spellings of the short vowel sound of *e* with plain *e* have been changed in all sorts of manners (Yule, 1980). Frank du Feu has collected further examples (1968) some of which are included in the following selections, adding to my own study of derivations given in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary,* 1934. That was the time when the 'etymological argument' agenst spelling reform was still in its hey-day, so the fact that modern scholarship may now dispute some of the derivations is only another argument for dismissing etymology as a reason for not changing ridiculous spellings. Diacritical markings are omitted for ease of printing; they are not essential to the points being made.)

1. *Confusing uses of c:*

> *scythe* and *school* from Old English *sithe* and *scol*
> *schooner,* called *scooner* by its 1713 designer
> *scent* from French *sentir* and early verb form *sent*
> *stomach* from Middle English *stomak*
> *scissors* - Middle English *sisours*
> *cedilla* - Spanish from Italian *zediglia*
> *celery* - French *celery* from Greek *selinon*
> *character* - from French *caractere*
> *choir* - from Middle English *quere,* Old French *cuer*
> *chord* - from *accord,* from Middle English *acorde*
> *Christ* - Old English *Crist*
> *chronical* - from Old French *cronique*

chrysolite - from Old French *crisolite*
cider- from Old French *sidre,* from Late Latin, from Greek *sikera*
cinder - from Old English *sinder*
Cingalese - from Sandskrit *sinhalas*

Some of these anomalies have been the work of scholars harking back to a Greek derivation transcribed as *kh* or *k,* although there are other English words with similar derivation that have escaped the Greek disguise, - e.g. *card* from *khartes.*

2. sy spellings as a throwback to Greek *si*:

sycamore - from Old French *sycamore*
syllable - from Old French *sillabe*
syllabub - a variant of *sillabub*
syllogism - from Old French *silogime*
symphony - from Old French *simphonie*
syringe - from Medieval Latin *siringa*
syrup - from Old French *sirop*

3. *ph* spellings as throwback to Greek *ph:*

phantasm - from French *fantasme*
phantasy - variant of *fantasy,* from Old French *fantasie*
phantom - from Medieval English *fantosme*
pharmacy - from Old French *farmacie*
pheasant - from Anglo-French *fe sant*
phial - from French *fiole*
philosopher - from old French *filosole*
phlegm - from Old French *fleume*
phoenix - from M. E. and Old English *fenix*
phrenetic - from Old French *frenetike*
physician - from Old French *fisician*

4. *wh* spellings are usually of Old English words originally spelt more plausibly with *hw,* e.g. *hwa, hwar, hwenne, hwi, hwoether, hwil, hwile, hwider.* However, as Frank du Feu points out, so few British people distinguish between *w* and *hw* nowadays that a respelling of the latter would be unpopular even with reformers.

5. *Confusion when a single vowel letter has been turned into a digraph,* with no consistent principles to guide, e.g.

brooch - from Middle English *brocbe*
blood - from Old English *blod*
flood - from Old English *flod*
brief - from Old English *bref*
guild - from *gild, guilt* - from *gylt*
guarantee - from obsolete spelling *garanty*
guard - from French *gander*
guess - from Middle English *gess*
guide - from *gyden, guise* from *gise*
plague - from *Middle* English *plage*
tongue - from Old English *tunge*
mould - from Middle English *molde*

beauty - from *Middle* English *beute*
height - from Middle English *highte*
laurel - from Middle English *lorel*
sieve - from Middle English *sine*
trough - from Middle & Old English *troh*
view - from French *vewe*
yoeman - from Middle English *yoman*
young - from Middle English *yung*

6. *Adding an unnecessary vowel 'systematically' to some words but not to others,* e.g.
From *Middle* English *derthe, ertbe, erl, peare, ernien, lernen, yernen, ernest,* and *herd,* we have been troubled with *dearth, earth, earl, pearl, earn, learn, yearn,* and *heard,* with *rehearse* from French *rehercer* and *search* from Chaucerian *serchen,* while we also have spellings such as *berth, pert, fern* and *her to* show we could be more sensible. *Engine, favo(u)rite, feminine* and *masculine* from French *engin, favorit, feminin* and *masculin.*

7. *Changing a vowel letter when the old spelling fits present pronunciation better,* e.g.
worse - from Middle English *wurs,* and *worth* from *wurth, busy* from *bisy, parliament* from *parlement, above* from *abulen, honey* from *huni, tongue* from *lunge, dove* from Anglo-Saxon *dule, love* from *lulu, shove* from *sculan, come* from *cuman, some* from *sum, monk* from *munuc, wonder* from *wonder, sponge* from obsolete spelling *sponge brother* and *mother from* Germanit *bruder* and *mutter. penguin* from Welsh *pen groin, persuade* from 15th century *perswade.*

8. *Adding unnecessary silent consonants, e.g. debt* from Middle English *dette, doubt* from *douten, could* from *coude, limb* from *lim, heir* from French *err, exhort* from *exorter, rhubarb* from Old French *rubarbe, whole* from Middle English *hole, island* from *iland, thyme* from *tyme, rhyme* from *rime, psalter* from Anglo-Saxon *sauter, ptarmigan* from Gaelic *tarmachan, foreign* from Old French *forain*

9. *Introducing the ie-ei problem,* e.g. *believe, lief, thief, priest,* from Middle English *beleven, leef, thief, priest; chief, grief, field, fiend,* from Chaucerain *cheef, greef, feeld, feend; yield* and *piece* from 15th century *yeeld* and *piece; ceiling* from *ceelen* (and French *ciel*)

10. *Adding confusion to words ending in* y-which are pronounced with with long i and which with short i?

Words such as *cry, deny, dry, reply, try, supply, by, my, why, satisfy* from Middle English and French, *crien, denien, drie, replien, trien, supplie, bi, mi, whi, satisfier;* compare with *almighty, city, ditty, flighty, gritty, kitty, mighty, pity, pretty, whity, witty.*

References
Frank du Fen, *Spelling Reform and Etymology* (privately printed c. *1968)*
Valerie Yule, "Is there evidence for Chomsky's interpretation of English spelling?" *Spelling Progress Bulletin,* 1978, v. 18, winter, pp. 10-12.
Valerie Yule; "The Etymological Argument *for* Spelling Reform," *Spelling Progress Bulletin,* Winter, *1980, v. 20,* no. 4, p. 4.

Our Def and Dum Alfabet
(and how English spelling has sometimes become worse - Old English *sum* and *becuman,* Middle English *wurs).*

a feather   Old English, *fether*
b limb   Old English, *lim*
c scissors   Middle English, *sisours*
d Wednesday   O.E., *Wodens daeg*
e favorite   Old French, *favorit*
f halfpenny
g foreign   Old French, *forain*
h school   Old English, *scol*
i believe   Middle English, *beleven*
j marijuana
k blackguard
l palm   Middle English, *paume*
m mnemonic   Greek
n autumn   Latin
o young   Middle English, *yung*
p receipt   Middle English, *receit*
q lacquer   obsolete French, *lucre*
r burr   etymology uncertain
s island   Middle English, *iland*
t hustle   Dutch, *husselen*
u though   Middle English, *thogh,* of Old Norse, *tho*
v fivepence
w whole   Middle Eng., *hole,* Old English, *hal*
x faux pas   French
y mayor   Middle English, from French, *maire*
z rendezvous   French

How much spelling reform (is) needed?

Not every bit (of) English spelling needs fixing up. About 80% need be no different from its present form. If sound-simbol corespondens (is) adopted, modified by twely consistent and simpl prinsipls, the significant efect wil be shortening without eny drastic chanje. We, the literat, wil hav no problems in adapting; while the hundreds (of) thousands, or perhaps milions, now semi-literat or iliterat wil be glad (to) hav the barbd wire taken away that,. added (to) existing sosial, mental and educational handicaps, now prevents them lerning properly, and so debars them from complete and responsibl sitizenship and employability.

* Note that if a limited number (of) the comonest short irregular words ar retaned with curent speling, the similarity (of) a reformd sistem with the present wil be closer stil, to conventional text.

Another argument agenst speling reform - & the evidence

(Please. note: Members of the reading public who do not like the form of the models in this paper will be at a grave disadvantage. One cannot express all relations in simple terms; and the content of rows of imaginary "black boxes' in the brain must be taken as read in most cases. In some respects this should lead us to face up to the pressing need for more work on the subject of how to spell.)

A common argument agenst spelling reform is that if words which sound alike were spelt alike, we could become very confused in reading and would no longer be able to enjoy puns in words; e.g. the Mouse's Tale in *Alice.*

However, if you collect for a short while all the appalling puns in hedlines and elsewhere that are put out daily by the sub-editors of our leading newspapers, you will find that spelling is irrelevant - as very few of the homophones (words sounding alike) are also homographs (words spelt alike).

And the context is always helpful in distinguishing which meaning is intended. Only in a short phrase, would confusion be even possible.

There are, indeed, experiments using tachistoscopes that register milliseconds of the time needed to read words, which show that under certain circumstances readers are delayed for a few of those milliseconds through decision time needed to decide which meaning a homograph should take. "Greenwich mean time" may involve no hesitation in context, but "A nail was damaged while he was hammering" is ambiguous.

In a railways context, "The engine had a tender behind" would not even be noticed as ambiguous. As a single sentence, it would be commented on as odd by some people - but not all.

In speech, an unintentional pun may raise a laugh, particularly as the English language is so rich in metaphors and idioms, but meaning is usually clear not only through context but also through the nuances and intonations of speech which are not communicable through the written word.

If there were a spelling reform based primarily on phonemic principles, there would be more homographs than there are now, but less confusion. Most of them would not cause eny confusion at all, since, in reading, context, directs our thoughts so that the decision about meaning is made automatically, without our conscious awareness. If you do not believe this, *re-read the first paragraph to this section of this article.* It contains 29 homonyms - words sounded and spelt the same; 9 homophones - words sounded but not in these examples spelt the same; 3 homographs words spelt the same but in these examples sounded differently. A phonemic-based spelling reform would cut out the three homographs as there would be distinctions between *read-read, lead-lead,* and *row-row.*

However, to the 29 existing homonyms would be added the 9 homophones: *not-knot, be-bee, here-hear, would-wood, to-two, all-awl, in-inn, one-won, but-butt, need-knead.*

In English spelling, some homophones are also homographs; most of the spelling distinctions are made when one of the words is also a very common word, often a function word such as *not, to, in.* The more common word usually has the shorter spelling.

Some of the partners in such word-pairs are uncommon, e.g. *awl, inn, butt, knead,* but others frequently occur in conjunction, e.g. "He had two shoes to wear too." "She was in the fore for four minutes."

There would be about 20 common words which should possibly be kept distinguished in print from their homophonic pair. It is not worth abandoning the whole ship of spelling reform rather than take on this ha 'porth of tar. Twenty spelling words to learn by rote is worth paying in order to lose thousands that at present must be learned by rote, rule or crook. It would be simple to design experiments to decide which words should retain distinctive spellings for the sake of everyday clarity in common use. For the rest, some words might even lapse in the language, replaced by synonyms, and for :others, "A rose by eny other spelling is not required - the question never arose."

(Post-script: The importance of 'set' (thinking) when reading words in context can be further shown by the fact that if you *now* re-read the first paragraph with its *Please Note,* most of the homographs may now "'hit you in the face."

It might be worth counting, however, to see if you still passed some without even noticing - or even to see if I have missed some too.)

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8. A Look at Interlang, the Modern Wurld Inglish, by Martin Karens, C.T.*

*Toronto, Ont. Canada.

Note: My good 'pen-pals', Dr. Helen Bonnema Bisgard and Mr. Newell W. Tune have asked me to write an article concerning simplified spelling and Interlang for *Spelling Progress Bulletin.* Unfortunately I have been unable to do this as I was very much involved - for five years - in the comparative linguistic research of over 35 languages for my simplified spelling project. Moreover, it was impossible for me to do this even last year, since I spent the entire year on the writing and proofreading of some manuscripts to introduce Interlang. One of them is called, *Interlang, the History and Basis of Modern Wurld Inglish.*

What exactly is Interlang, Modern Wurld Inglish? First of all, the word Interlang was derived from : interlanguage or *interlangwidge.* Secondly, 'Modern Wurld Inglish' may also be used as its name because we intend to make 'Inglish' the simplified spelling in our Anglophone schools, and the international, universal language of the 'wurld.' Thirdly, *Inglish* and *would* are authentic words, as they can also be found written as such in Middle (Medieval) English. Fourthly, the name Wurld Inglish or World English has been proposed by others. However their systems have been without much or any result until now.

As a multilinguist, professional and degreed translator, English teacher, and former owner and director of a language school, I gradually became more and more interested in finding a logical, easy, phonemic spelling for our language, which is a combination (as reported)of 111 languages. Thus one day, I decided to do something about it. As I had been very much involved in teaching English to imigrants -and saw its terrible contradictions, shortcomings, difficulties, and all that these entailed - I could no longer (passively) sit on the fence and tolerate that our children, adults and other people around the world were being firmly put in bondage by an out-dated, unreasonable; *never* officially legalized 'spelling', which is referred to as Modern English or Traditional Orthography by the educational establishment. Both are deceiving misnomers, as hundreds of words had a much *better* spelling (or a near *perfect* spelling) in Medieval English, the treasure-house of our language! What a paradox. . . to live in the electronic and space-age of the 20th century, and to know that our language of today *had* - for numerous words - a much better spelling about 500-800 years ago than it has *now!* Thus, the spelling of many current words has retrogressed instead of advanced!

All we have to do to find out if this statement is true, is to check an etymological English or Middle English dictionary. Doesn't that sound unbelievable? What are all our smart professors of English doing about it? Are they now working - as true linguistic scientists - to give our :language a modern, up-to-date, honest, logical spelling? Or are they *still* telling the students to learn their so-called 'Modern English' perfectly by studying the classics and especially Shakespeare? But many of *his* spellings and all his books were many times altered to conform to current T.O. Quite a few of the bard's spellings are now also part of Interlang.

Our children, adults, and immigrants are being brainwashed (meaning: their minds are being *bent)* in our schools in order to learn irregular words like *apple, house, horse, girdle, girl, town, city, mouse, louse, weight, eight, grass, night, borough,* etc., since we can all see in Middle English or Old English that these words had an easier or sometimes even perfect spelling. In M.E. they appear as: *appel* (see *label), hous, hors, gurdel, gurl, toun* (see: *out), citie* (see: *cities), mous, lous, wept, eht, gras, nyht, burg* (or: *burgh),* etc. Interlang's counterparts are exactly the same, except for: *nyt* and *buro.* T.O. is an insult to the eyes and mind of any reasonable, logical, thinking, modern

person! To any one who is *not* enslaved by foolish linguistic traditionalism! To any one who realizes that the English dictionary *is not* a sacrosanct, infallible spelling gospel - or idol - but merely an ordinary book of words, whose spellings were once devised by both *fancy* and *foolish* people as well as realists! In addition, countless words in the English dictionary have been taken over either *bodily* or *slightly changed* from Latin or French by misguided imitators. Since those words have never been nationalized (changed to *fit* our pronunciation in their spellings), they are actually still foreign, and not 'English' at all! Examples are: *table, caution, danger, police, machine, instruction, permission, bureau, station, plateau, dance, ballet, route, boulevard, tour, Bible, centre,* and countless others. How many people know this or have *ever* been taught this? Another nearly unknown *fact is* that *French* was the official language of England for over 350 years after the French-Normans (from Normandie, France) and their mercenary cohorts from other parts of Europe conquered the country in 1066 after the battle of Hastings.

The 'proud', common Anglo-Saxon language was despised and mocked by the ruthless, haughty, ravaging conquerers, who considered it merely a peasant tongue! Therefore, it was *no longer* taught in the schools, and was *also* ignored in the universities, churches, courts, etc. Only French and Latin were then taught and officially used. Many writers of M.E. later on tried to make numerous Anglo-Saxon words look as much as possible like French and Latin. Do teachers now teach that *Latin* nearly inundated our language during the Period of Humanism (or the Renaissance), because of the wholesale incorporation of Latin *'inkhorne'* terms and words? That our language is *still* shackled and servile to French, Latin, and illogical medieval spellings? And that consequently all Anglophones are still tied down to all this mess?

In order to get a modern spelling *in* our schools, we have to get a *modern* English spelling *first* accepted around the world as *The International Language.* This will be the *only* way to show our English-speaking people and the world at large that there really is now a superior spelling system! They will thus realize that it is *not* a figment of the imagination, since it is completely based on Comparative Linguistics, etymology, history, and logical conclusions. And that the growing illiteracy in our schools *can* be conquered and eliminated.

Interlang is completely based on the existing *good points* of our current spelling (about 20%), as well as on the spellings of the source languages (Indo-European root-words, Gothic, Old English, Middle English, etc.), on much of Old Greek, on Latin (to a very small degree), on the Germanic sister-languages (Dutch, Afrikaans, German Norwegian, Swedish, Danish), and on *all* the other main European languages. Also on some languages of the other continents. These are: Indonesian, Swahili, Turkish, and Japanese in the Romanji spelling.

Interlang is also based on the *good points* of the well-known simplified spelling societies and on those of some alphabeteers, which are at present - or were formerly - engaged in this very important work.

I have gleaned out quite a large number of words which these have in common, as those words also conformed to the interlang spelling! Thus, Interlang recognizes and honours *many* simplified spellers, since some of their *own* 'words' have become part of Interlang.

We all know that unless we come up with support and love for *one* system, we will *never* 'make' it. Over 500 international languages and over 1000 spelling systems of English have been devised so far! Yet, all to *no* avail! Simply because there was *no* real co-operation - and action - among the various simplified spellers and interlinguists. Besides, their unresearched simplified spelling systems could *never* muster the strong support of the multilinguists, etymologists, teachers, and the general public. In order for a simplified 'Inglish' to *ever* succeed as an accepted, recognized spelling (= language). . . it *must* have built-in believability and credibility (linguistic history and etymology)

and ease of reading. Not the simplistic and naive ease of 'one symbol for one sound', however. . . as that will *never* be acceptable to multilingual or other knowledgeable people, or even to the general public. The record of failure has definitely *proven* this now!

Interlang is also built on the Q.R.S. (Quick Recognition Spelling) system, the H.C.F. (Highest Common Factor) system, and the E.F.A. (Easy for Anglophones) system. This is scientific linguistics! It is therefore easy to read, write, pronounce, or learn for (just about) anybody. Either right-away (reading, pronouncing) or within a few months or years! Now compare this ease to T.O., which takes a person generally a life-time to learn correctly!

As Interlang is the *culmination* of all these features and also incorporates the most important basis of agreement of our simplified spellers. . . it is in my opinion the only system that can ever succeed. . . as it is unique! Because I studied Interlangua and delved into Esperanto, I could even visualize at all times how *international words* are spelled in those constructed languages. Therefore, some Interlang words have - coincidentally - much in common with theirs.

Latin absorbed *most* of its scientific and philosophical words from the *more* refined, prolific, and rich Greek language. The latter was already an international and literary language many centuries before Latin was even heard of! The New Testament was consequently written *first* in Greek. So was medical science, philosophy, and mathematics. The Latin alphabet came also from the Greeks, who had first obtained it from the Phoenicians. The Romans modified it, but did not care for the 'k' or 'kh'! Therefore *all* the Latin words of *Greek* derivation are still spelled with a 'c' or 'ch'. The 'c' (= k) is a great linguistic *divider;* the 'k' a great linguistic *unifier*. This is proven by the fact that *all* European languages and those of other continents - *except* the Latin derived Romanic languages and the Celtic languages (but not Breton!) - are all spelled with the logical 'k'. Dr. Zamenhof, who devised Esperanto, *also* chose the 'k', although his language is mainly based on the Latin-derived Romanic languages! Since the *new* scientific words of today are composed mainly of *Greek* root-words-instead of Latin root-words-it is obvious that Interlang had to follow this international and logical trend. Moreover, the *Germanic* English words which were derived from Gothic, Old Saxon, or Old Norse, were *all* spelled at one time with a 'k' too! We can thus spell 'cat' as 'kat', which is 'kat', in Dutch and Afrikaans, 'Katze' in German, and 'katt' in Swedish. It has similar spellings in many other languages. The same goes for: cow, car, calf, cast, coast, cut, cork, etc.

As this is only an introduction to Interlang; I cannot go into details about the spelling of the words in the following poem. However, you can be sure that they are all based on historical and etymological facts, comparative examples, and on logical conclusions.

My dear wife Vivi - who has been a great help in my Interlang project - handed me this inspiring and very appropriate poem. It tells us that we should never (reasonably) give up in life - no matter what we do!

Hou Du Yu Now?

Huw ever sed dhat yu kuod not du
Exaktlie dhe things dhat yu'r planning tu?
Huw ever thaot dhat yu kuod not kleim
Up with dhe sun to hyts subleim?
Huw haz adveizd yu to chek yuur paes,
Ghiv up dhe struggel and looz dhe raes,
Kraol of diskuradgd and heid yuur faes?
    Noebodie but yu.

Yu aar dhe wun huw haz dun it aol -
Dezerted yuur kassels and let dhem faol,
Smodherd dhe spark ov ambisiun's feir,
Shut of dhe kurr ent and kut dhe weir.
Hou du yu now dhe dei iz kast?
Hou du yu now wen dhe kroud goes past?
Huw'l bee dhe leeder, and huw'l bee dhe last?
    Hou du yu now?

Leif iz not meerlie a gaem ov chans,
And yu'r not dhe viktim ov cerkumstans.
Nothing iz too hard for a man to du,
Provieding, ov kors, hie wishes tu.
Wishes it mor dhan a meizer's welth,
Mor dhan an invalid longs for helth,
Wurks for it, prays for it - nyt and day,
Feels dhat noe preis iz too great to pay.
Hou du yu now til yu streiv dhat way?
Hou du yu now?

(author unknown)

You will notice that this poem has a perfect rhyming effect in Interlang's spelling. Just compare the last word in each sentence! It clearly shows that the spelling of *Inglish* can be as easy as those of most European languages. Even in *them*, words still have to be learned and absorbed. . . most of them may be completely logical like arithmetic! Dutch, the closest national language to English, has an excellent phonetic spelling for most of its words, yet it does *not* have one symbol for one sound in quite a few cases. (So does Norwegian, and some others!)

I sincerely believe that Providence (or: Logos) has big plans for a logical *inglish*, as 'English' is a mixture of so many languages - the law of cause and effect - and has now become the *de facto* international language! No language has ever become so wide-spread, since the language confusion at Babylon! It is only second to Chinese in the number of speakers. But 'English' is spoken and studied *all over* the world, while Chinese is mainly 'land-locked.'

For these reasons, only *modern Inglish* - Interlang - has the best chance of ever becoming the recognized universal language, as so many different nations have their *own* words in it. How this can be accomplished will be discuss in another article.

At present, I'm looking for enthusiastic people who could provide addresses of contacts who may be interested in publishing all kinds of books or magazines in Interlang: We have formed an association for readers who wish to become Interlangers. Interlang Assoc., Toronto, Ont., Canada.

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9. The Possibilities of Change in English Orthography, by Thomas R. Hofmann, Ph.D.*

*Shimane Univ., Matsue City, Shimane, Japan.

This presentation is not primarily a proposal of some reform, although I do mention some, nor is it an argument for one in particular, or against another reform. Rather I want to stand back from specifics & ask about the whole question of orthographic reform for English. Is it possible? Under what circumstances? How? When? Even though the record of reform in English has been an almost unblemished failure, the answers to these questions do not appear to be pessimistic.

There seems always to be, from the 16th century on, many reforms proposed & many reformers ready to propose more. Because there is a ready supply of reform, especially nowadays, I will not

consider specific reforms (except as examples), & turn instead to the forces for & the forces against reform.

1. For Change.

We are probably all aware of the forces for reform; we try to exploit them when we propose a reform. I see basically only 3. There are the school children who must learn, generation after generation, the antiquated & illogical standard spellings, or orthography, of English. School time could presumably be saved, & pupils would be happier (or at least less alienated) if we had a systematic orthography with fewer exceptions. Of course, it is not only the school children; some of us never learn to spell, even at advanced years. Because many adults cannot spell correctly, we have a 2nd argument.

Democracy is served better if everyone can read & write, Adults who find it difficult to read & pure pain to write simply do not participate in a democracy. To have a *class* of people who cannot read & write, or else do not because it is too difficult, is effectively to have rule by the other class. This is the case in the U.S.A. & perhaps also in England, but Canada & Australia do not have this problem so much. Thus a 2nd force for reform is a desire for democracy, but I would not place too much hope on this force as most people are not especially desirous of sharing their wealth & power with the presently disenfranchised class, & that class is probably not over 20% of the people, although I have heard estimates as high as 50% for the U.S.A.

A 3rd possible force is the use of English as an international means of communication. It is often argued that we must make English spelling logical, to enhance its possibilities for use as an international language. Actually, however, this force appears illusory, & may even be a force against. I see 2 types of people who use English as a 2nd language in their profession. One group consisting of businessmen, bankers, scientists, etc. use the written form of English primarily. If they can speak some too, it is an added advantage, but their interest is primarily in *written language.* The other group - vendors, tour guides, clerks, & the like - use spoken English & need little or no ability in written English. Changing the written form of English - reforming it so that it matches spoken English much better - would aid this 2nd group, but they probably will not gain much as they are not going to read & write in English anyhow. And the 1st group is not going to appreciate having written English changed. In fact, I would predict that they will actively resist a speling reform. Although they might be able to pronounce English better, their pronunciation is 2ndary in their use of English - to the written formulas, business letters, legal designations, etc. that they will have to change. Thus I am afraid that the international usage of English is not a force toward change, & is probably a force against change. It is true that the teacher of English as a 2nd language will be greatly benefitted by a reformed orthography, but English teachers in other countries will have little effect on English usage, & will in any case feel obliged to teach the commonly used spelling, i.e. the traditional orthography - until the vast majority of anglophones are using a reformed spelling. So even they cannot be counted on for more than verbal support.

This completes the list of forces I know of for change - easier teaching, the ideal of better democracy, & the international usage of English, & I am afraid that this last is more of a force against than a force for change. You may know of other forces for change, & I hope that you will tell me, because there is a real need to mobilize all the forces we can find. I have not considered some arguments, like G. B. Shaw's argument of saving paper & ink, or questions of phoneticness, because a society will tolerate a tremendously inefficient writing system, so long as it serves to communicate with everyone unambiguously. Consider French, for example. Although if needs 10% more letters than English to write the same thing, that is no motivation for francophones to drop the final letters (unpronounced) or switch to English.

2. Against change.

That brings us to the forces against change: The biggest is probably the reading public. When a literate person reads, he does not read letter by letter, pronouncing each as he goes along. Rather, after grade school, he reads by recognizing the *printed shapes* of words. This makes him a poor proof-reader as he cannot see misspellings even when looking right at them, but it makes him a much faster reader. The trouble is, for us at least, that this mature reader does not care whether English spelling is logical or not. He does not "sound out" a word unless he comes across a new word, & even then, he recognizes the morphemes in it & combines them. But he *does* care, if you propose to change the *shapes* of words. His fast reading ability goes "down the drain" with any extensive reform, as he is (at least for a short while) forced into reading letter by letter. To the normal reading public, an orthographic change means learning to read all over again. Of course, with a well designed change, he can do this fairly rapidly. Indeed, my experience with reading material in non-standard orthographies is that after a page, one begins to read faster, & I imagine that within 20 pages, one is nearly back to a normal reading speed. But there is no way to convince someone that some proposed orthography is not hard to read, without getting him to read at least 10 pages. The 1st paragraph usually includes a lot of guess work, & is slow, to say the least, but that is where any new reader must begin & usually quits.

Moreover, the writing public is even more inconvenienced. They have got to learn how to spell all over again. And there can *never* be a phonetic orthography for English which will be phonemic for more than 1 or 2 dialects. [1] So the naive avoidance of new orthographies is right: learning to write means, for most writers, a lot of tedious work with a dictionary. Most writers do not like to misspell words, hence they will resist writing in any new orthography in which they will likely make many errors.

A 3rd force is the publishers, who I used to think were quite formidably entrenched with standard customs of spelling. I have found, however, that various publishers were willing to publish my work in linguistics & pasigraphies in a slightly non-standard orthography, providing that they could footnote that it was the author's desire & not the publisher's mistake. However, the cost of tooling up for some or many non-standard letters is quite expensive; something that an ordinary publisher cannot do without being sure that his investment in new letters will not be wasted.

Sufficient money could cure all these problems, but even if wisely placed, I suspect that it would require more than all the reform movement could find. There are other problem, however, that money cannot cure.

As we all know, there are some major differences in English dialects. Most proposed reforms are phonemic & represent the pronunciation rather closely. But whatever reform does this well for American English cannot do well for British or Australian English, & vice versa, not to speak of Indian English. What is liable to happen with most reforms is to split English into 2 languages, British & American, & having gone that far, Canadian & Australian will probably split off too. Now this might be good, at least for the school children, but publishing costs will go up as a book will not find as many buyers in a given orthography, & also there will not be a community of English speaking nations any longer. In fact, India might well stop using English as her lingua-franca, & the international usage of English would split up & eventually drift off to some other language(s). The result is to lower the value of being able to read & write English, perhaps way out of proportion to the lower cost of education. Wise proposals for reform are equally applicable on both sides of the Atlantic, but as the implementation of such a reform is a socio-political process, it is unlikely to be adopted on both sides of the Atlantic, & that would lead to the same result. I do not know how widely this danger is realized, & is thereby a force against reform, but I think that the trend-setters everywhere are vaguely aware of it. At least reformers should be aware of it, & do what they can to prevent 2 Englishes.

This consideration, I think, prevents any serious & thorough reform of English, but it will still allow considerable revision & regularization of spelling.

Lastly, there is some sort of irrational fear of resistance to change, whatever kind it is. Just as there is a great hesitance to metric conversion, so will there be resistance to planning any change in spelling. If conversion to metric comes off without too much antagonism, people will have learned that change is not so painful as expected. Then is the time for pushing for orthographic reform. The winds of change are in the air, & when changing, it is not too hard to "go whole hog," to change other things (like spelling) while you are at it.

Nevertheless, it should be realized that there will be extra resistance to language change. The way a man speaks is part of his identification: who he is & what community, he belongs to. To ask anyone but an actor to speak differently is to ask him to change who he is, & usually meets with much resistance. The way a person writes, the spelling he uses, is the only visible aspect of language. It reflects what nation or group of people he belongs to, & a person will seldom change that unless his whole nation is changing as well. Try writing with the spellings appropriate to the other side of the Atlantic: (-our/-or or -ise/-ize) & see if you do not *feel* different & receive social pressure to return to the standard usage.

Thus, I see a number of fairly strong forces against change. I assume that they are the reason that no serious change has ever succeeded for English spelling: Unless we can find a way to overcome these forces, there can be no hope for a successful reform, & therefore no reason to discus *what reform* would be best.

3. How?

A few comments might be in order here. No revolution political, social or orthographic - is possible when a nation is successful. When you are doing well, there is no need to change how you do it. It is even apparent wisdom to *avoid* change, for fear that you will change something vital to your success. "Leave well enough alone", has been a good policy of the status-quo advocates. I believe that this applies to orthographic revolution as well - that people will be willing to change only when they are weak & poor not too successful, & want to do better. The English speaking nations are not in that state in this half of the century, & they will probably never *all* be in that state at the ' same time. To me, this means that there are 2 strikes against any reform which uses an alphabet much different from the extended Roman alphabet. Because that is a revolution in writing, it cannot be adopted by the various English-speaking nations at the same time, & it will change the visual shapes of words beyond recognition, creating havoc in the reading habits of literate adults.

A 2nd principle, one which was pointed out by Gelb, is that all reforms of writing have come about by official or government agencies. [2] To my knowledge, this is very close to being true. Of course, if a government adopts some reform, then many civil servants will be forced to write in it, thereby creating a body of literature in it, & most people will want to read things that affect them. Thus government documents usually find a large readership. This means, of course, that if we desire to reform English orthography, we must convince governmental agencies like the Government Printing Office in the USA or the Queen's Printer in Canada.

Because of the problems with revolutions, & the need to keep visual word shape fairly constant, I can only see small reforms having a significant chance of success. But, with a series of small reforms, we will have a major reform.

One such small reform that should antagonize only the lovers of the status-quo & orthographical etymologists [3] is to change the spelling of *ch* to *ck* when it is sounded that way. Word shape is

kept roughly constant, but one of the "illogical" aspects of English spelling is removed. This would affect only a few words like *arckitect, arckive, ckronic, ckromatic, sckool, arckiology,* etc. This would leave *ch* standing only for the *ch*-sound, which might be attacked next. Of all the reforms I have seen proposed, this is 1 of the most innocuous. I would propose it as a test case. If we can get such a change adopted & used throughout the English speaking world, we are ready for bigger & more shocking changes. And then the reading public will be psychologically prepared for other changes. In fact, I would wager that if any logical change can be promulgated at all; there will be a ground swell of dissatisfaction with the present spelling system, many proposals for change & many more people using non-standard (& more logical) spellings.

If however, we cannot succeed at even such a minor change as this one - if we cannot get adoption of an obviously beneficial change, then it is a pure waste of effort to try to get some bigger change adopted. And in any case, we shall find where the resistance to change lies & what is needed to overcome it.

I should emphasize that I am not proposing the reform [4] mentioned above, changing *ch* to *ck* when it is sounded that way; I am sure that nearly every person here has considered it at 1 time or another. Rather to be a successful reform, it must be proposed by some significant body such as this one, What I am proposing is that we get together in this conference to see if there is not some small & beneficial change which we can agree on, & then promulgate it vigorously.

4. Another possibility

There is 1 other line of attack which can be pursued, independently or simultaneously with the above. This is my pet reform & I would like to recommend it to you because not only think it is good, but that it will alleviate some of the problems with the present orthography & most of all, will allow an easier transition to a reformed orthography.

For a number of reasons, which I will not take the time to go into here, phonetic [5] writing does not, as is commonly believed, have much if any advantage to writing with symbols such as the Japanese do. The 3 strongest advantages of phonetic: writing are: (1) teaching foreigners how to speak (2) allowing semi-literate people to write, & (3) allowing easy use of typewriters, telegraphs, dictionaries & filing systems. With modern communications technology, the last 2 are of less & less: importance. The biggest disadvantage of writing with symbols for ideas instead of symbols for sounds is the *large number of symbols* one would have to learn. Happily, however, linguistic science is finally discovering how to split apart ideas into component ideas.

It now seems possible to write most of the several thousand common words as combinations of 50 or so basic ideas. This is about the same number of symbols in the extended Roman alphabet, counting capital & small letters (where different), italics, numerals, etc. Like the idea of twelve can be broken down into a *one* & a *two*, which we do when we write 12, so the idea of *give* can be broken down into 3 ideas, or symbols.

The reason that I prefer this type of writing is that while any phonetically-based writing system can be excellent for a single dialect & perhaps adequate for a multi-dialectal language, it is necessarily restricted for use to a single language. A writing system based on ideas is of course not restricted to 1 language; it works for all languages. Such a writing system is called a pasigraphy & we already have several universally-used pasigraphies, the Arabic numerals, for example.

To be sure, I would not propose that we adopt a pasigraphy for writing English. That would violate every principle I know of. However, there are some pasigraphic symbols which are universally known: the Arabic numerals & the ampersand '&', for instance, which can be adopted into English in place of the written words. The advantages of this, besides making English more useful as an

international language, is that it rids us of some irregular spellings, making our present archaic orthography more tolerable. For example, if we wrote '2' instead of 'two', we will have removed 1 objectionable spelling. Another is '&' where we commonly pronounce simply *n*. (Indeed, I used to think that Arthur Conan Doyle were 3 people: Arthur, Coan & Doyle.)

The biggest advantage for pasigraphic usage comes in proposing a reform of spelling. Where a reader recognizes some words in a sentence, he can often fill in the rest with only small hints as to what they are. This means that a text in a reform orthography is considerably easier to read if it has 2 or 3 recognizable words in each sentence. This logic leads, in the long term, to get people used to reading as many pasigraphs as possible in ordinary text. Then, when a major reform is proposed, they will find it considerably easier to read than if it had no familiar words. In the short term, of course, a reform, which uses the universal symbols will be more acceptable to most readers than one which does not.

5. Conclusion.
Thus, while we have a common motivation, we have suffered because of our antiquated spelling system & we desire to make it simpler for future generations - & we have a similar goal: to rid ourselves of that inappropriate orthography, I imagine that I am the only one here to suggest the use of pasigraphic elements to help overcome the problem.

What I have argued here is that there are some strong forces against any substantial revision of present orthography. These forces are strong enough to prevent anything but minor & piecemeal revision. These forces will not be easily overcome even if all the people here join forces.

Thus, it seems to me that the most important thing to do is to join forces by compromising. Even the more radical reforms can be rendered more viable if a successful push can be made to reform spelling in some small area like the *ch-ck* reform mentioned above. Once the English reading public realizes that they will not be hurt by reform, they will be much more willing to accept other reforms. I dare say they will even be eager to participate in further reform. The advocates of all proposed reform will benefit their own proposals by compromising to a small reform that can be pushed successfully, & by pushing it.

Success, I have argued, will require a body of writing in the reformed script, writing which people will want to or need to read. This is probably best obtained by having official government sources writing in that way. Hence, the task of reformers is to convince governments not only to allow their written output to be in the new, but to *encourage* it, if not *require* it. Military orders & government directives, as well as government reports, will be a good place to start.

I have also suggested using as many symbols (pasigraphs) as possible, both in ordinary English & in the "reformed English." Using for example, Arabic numerals in ordinary English will accustom people to them & to the possibility of change, & will at the same time rid us of a few awkwardly spelled words. Using them in a reformed English will then make it look more familiar, & will support easier reading & spelling when one has to learn many new reading habits.

Lastly, I submit that this really radical approach might possibly succeed where less radical reforms have been unsuccessful. It has a good chance of success because it is a "creeping reform," changing only 1 thing at a time, & never leaving the writer or reader facing a strange orthography. 2nd, it may succeed in stimulating orthographic reform when enough words are written pasigraphically. After some time, people will forget how to spell traditionally the words commonly written pasigraphically (consider that many people cannot spell 2/9, & are uncertain how to pronounce, much less spell 11/21, & will be forced to spell them phonetically, or look them up in a dictionary & realize how illogical our traditional spelling system is. Moreover, once it is customary to write 'two' as '2',

teachers will have a hard time to get pupils to write two or eight as they will object that it is illogical.

It seems that the time for reform is soon. The English speaking world is, or soon will be, in the process of converting to the Metric system of measurement. People will discover that they can change, & will be much more receptive to orthographic reform than they have been in the past, & I would guess, than they will be for the next 50 to 100 years.

Note 1: The notion popularized by Shaw that we could all write the way we pronounce simply would not work, as most of us know. First; there is the economics of book publishing, which cannot republish but a few books in various dialects. This means that 1 or a few major dialects will become the standard dialects for publishing, with the result that most authors will need to write in those dialects to get published. And soon enough, children will be taught them, & business & governmental reports will have to be written in these dialects to have an acceptable appearance. Second, although I can understand most different dialects at the speed they are spoken, I prefer to read 10 times faster, where I do not have time to compensate for the idiosyncracies of the author's pronunciation, & I need invariant word-shapes for my eye to pick up quickly. Writing in dialect is understandable, but only if one is willing to take the time to read slowly or to learn the special orthography.

The obvious result is to return almost to the present state of affairs. While the standard dialect(s) for publishing will be phonemic for 1 or 2 dialects (I would imagine for upper-class London & for Washington or New York), most writers & readers will be working in an orthography which is not phonemic for themselves.

1. That is, completely phonetical.
2. Gelb, I. J., A Study of Writing.
3. This change is only one of many suggestions. I dont advocate it.
4. That is, phonetical.
5. Strictly phonetical writing is for teaching proper pronunciation.

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10. If You're Not a Spelling Genius, Beware of Friday, by Patricia McCune Irvine.*

*Pasadena, Ca.

While we've been fighting the chronic war of school bussing in this country, our newspapers sneaked in a not surprising informational morsel the other day: our high school students can neither read nor write up to par. Which means they can't spell, either. (Actually, some of us suspect there is a whole bunch of other things they can't do).

Nevertheless, high echelon educators are attempting to rectify the situation-with curriculum changes-special teachers-more frequent testing.

But as an interested taxpayer, I should like to suggest shutting the barn door in high school is too late. By then, we've already lost the horses. Doesn't everyone know kids should be taught to read and write and spell correctly in elementary school?

Now writing is the true key to reading. They go together - read and write. But better the other way - write and read. Because if the kids write well, they can read well. No question about that. And writing is a lot easier for good spellers. Webster often stands on the desk untried because non-spellers can't get the hang of him. Did you ever wonder what happened to those flat little spelling books with nothing but lists and lists of words that we drilled into our heads? Write the word and cover it And write it again - and again. Until perfection?

I'm not sure of the fate of composition classes in the lower grades, but I know what happened to spelling. It became *Language Study* - where words are discussed - and related. They are made meaningful - and they are understood. This is sometimes pleasant. But the actual spelling: that is; the juxtaposition of the letters in a word - is not properly studied, nor necessarily learned.

"Spelling" books suggest studying. They refer to a study plan, to study steps, and often simply give the order to study per se. However, the week goes something like this:

Monday - *Meeting New Words*. This is logical and a step in the right direction. Most "spelling" periods are 20 minutes long and rarely exceed 30 minutes, so with from 10 to 20 new words involved, the introductions have to be fast. One a minute, more or less. Although this places your genius speller in the catbird seat, his slothful friends are in a peck of trouble: Monday is not entirely fair to them.

So on Monday, we look at the pictures and read the story. We say each new word after the teacher. We find each new word in the story. We underline it.. We write the new word in the space provided - and it is provided in a way which makes it easy to copy if we are unable to write it from memory.

And that's it for Monday. The lesson is over and we are happily acquainted with our new words. But only the natural talents know how to spell them. Nothing solid in the way of accomplishment for the run-of-the-mills.

Tuesday - *Using My Words*. The pleasant thing about Tuesday is we don't always have to use the words in the same old way. We do look at the picture again, read the story once more, draw a line under each spelling word one more time, but in the remaining few minutes we surge forward.

We use the words. We fill in blanks. We write words that rhyme. We write the name for each picture. We play a crossword puzzle game. (Time falls away here in great chunks). We write words that are spelled the same but mean different things. You know, like pen and pen. We write words that sound the same but are spelled differently: you know, like by and buy. We fill in the missing word. I tried this one recently and although I'm preciously close to being a spelling genius myself, I found I looked back to the list for the desired word so I wouldn't inadvertently write cottage for house. Once you look back you might as well copy the word. And if I were writing the opposite of soft, without checking I might not know for certain the proper word was hard. After all, it could be loud.

But Tuesday is a wonderfully fun day. Even if you do get a neck-ache by constantly looking back.

Wednesday - *My Trial Test*. This shoots the whole spelling period. Anyone who isn't a spelling genius had better look to Thursday.

Thursday - *Learning About Words*. About? Nevertheless, if we thought Tuesday was fun, on Thursday we are ecstatic: There are so many things to learn about words (spelling notwithstanding), and such fascinating ways to learn them. For instance, we can put a ring around each vowel. Or draw lines under same. We write the word that begins with *gr*. Write the word that has a double *t*.

Write the word that ends in *ce.* Write play and add *s*. Add *ing*. Add *ed*. Put a ring around the silent letters (or draw lines under same). We write names for the nearby pictures. We underline (or draw rings around) letters that are the same in different words. We write words that rhyme. (We've also done this on Tuesday). We put words in alphabetical order. We write longer words made from shorter words. We write the vice versa. We learn about singulars and plurals and abbreviations. Marvelous day!

But if you can't play the piano by ear, you'd better practice. If your thumb is other than green, you'd better fertilize the garden patch. If the chef's hat doesn't fit your head, you'd better watch the ingredients you pour into the casserole.

If you aren't a spelling genius, beware of Friday.

Friday - *What Have I learned?* Notice the question? Notice the lack of finality? Not What *I Have* Learned, with definite clarity, but What *Have I* Learned, hopefully, inquiringly, as if the whole matter might be subject to dispute.

Everyone will agree botanical scrutiny, however fascinating, does not get the ivy planted, and nutritional consideration, no matter how important, does not put the cheese soufflé on the table. The electric toaster has to be plugged into the socket, and daily practice is the only way to master the piano. Or the game of football.

By the same authority, language investigation, both important and fascinating, will never teach anyone to spell. Actually, I don't really advocate returning to that flat, little meaningless spelling book, with its lists and lists of words to drill into heads.

But unfortunately, inconsistencies exist between our oral and our written language. One cannot tell how to spell an English word by its pronunciation and vice versa. Our words were created by different peoples and are rampant with borrowings, distortions; diminutions and embroideries: Our spelling has become deceptive, frustrating and often clumsy. It is highly traditional and needlessly complex and has become a basic source of academic failure. Some say spelling cannot be taught ⁻ effectively and those with less literate life styles are doomed. So what do we do now?

The logical answer, of course, is to simplify and reorganize, tidy up the situation. Create simplified spelling. But no real agreement as to how to do this exists among the experts. We have pedagogical objections and practical objections and emotional objections.

Theoretically, the best spelling system would combine consistency with simplicity. In the ideal, a character would always represent the same sound and the same sound would always be represented by the same character. And then - presto - we would have correlation between spelling and pronunciation.
Or would we?

Once, when I emerged from a California drug store with a young friend visiting from New Zealand, he referred to 'tykes.' I glanced around and saw none and asked him to repeat, which he did. Three or four times. "What about the tykes?" The tykes. Tykes. Tyke. He was very exasperated with me. I asked him to spell the word. And he did. T-a-x, *tykes.*

Everyone has had a little difficulty understanding other English-speaking people, whether from another country or simply another part of our own country. To add pronunciation symbols to simplified spelling - even if it would do any good - is asking for the moon. No one uses the ones we've borrowed with words from other languages - such as café. And we all know the difficulties of

syllabic stress, depending on use as a noun or a verb, such as *con*duct or con*duct, reb*el or re*bel* - and the change in phrasal stress from isolated pronunciation to connected speech. Homophones would create difficulty - remember *by* and *buy?* Well, what do you do about *pear* and *pair* and *pare,* to everyone's satisfaction? And *ant* and *aunt*?

Some prejudices and natural resistance to spelling reform can best be overcome by gradual steps, altho the illogic in our word structure will no doubt persist. We can flow from *although* to *altho,* from *though* to *tho,* and from *through* to *thru,* and perhaps even from *photograph* to *foto.* But it is unlikely that any system of simplified spelling will be satisfactory to everyone, and for that reason, it's best not to wait too long for it. I have a postal card sent in 1911 to the Spelling Board of New York, from someone pledging to use simplified spelling in business letters - but that was 70 years ago. What happened? Perhaps we're still not ready. But we needn't wait - simplified spelling isn't the only answer. We mustn't give up too easily. Mountains can be moved. In the here and now.

So I do advocate having a Spelling Class in connection with *Language Study*, in elementary school. And a Writing or Composition Class, also. Every day. Communication is a basic skill which eventually determines success or failure in most areas of our very competetive life and the ability to spell correctly frees the writer to concentrate on the content of his communication.

Anyway, it's the school's task to develop proficiency in spelling - no matter about the inconsistencies and degree of difficulty. If a third-grader can know and thoroly understand every electronic game on the market today and very young computer specialists can learn that machine's capabilities and limitations, the ability to spell correctly cannot be totally out of reach, if you're willing to put enough time to it. I believe pupils should be made to understand that no one becomes an expert at anything without consistent and insistent practice - the electronic game player or the baseball picker or the pianist or the spelling champ. A lot tougher courses than spelling will come up in their career. They should understand that.

Spelling should be taught as a practical tool for writing, and not as an academic discipline. Spelling correctly is useful knowledge and, if as some say, it is contrary to human nature to learn anything unless it offers a definite advantage, it might behoove us to sell the advantage, and to instill in the kids such emotions as desire, interest, pride and the necessity for it all. Reveal the advantages. The learning process would become easier with a few positive emotions going for it. I thought it was fun to spell M-i-s-s-i-s-s-i-p-p-i out loud when I was a child because of the rhythm and lilt it created. And because it was a long word and made me feel brainy. And I thought it was fun to spell E-g-y-p-t because of the three letters with tails in a row. And because the 'y' was a special surprise. Nobody has any fun any more.

Because no general rules are dependable and rote learning must be used, spelling becomes an interminable process. So spelling words must become meaningful. Therefore, a class could devise its own special spelling book with the words that are needed for class projects. Words that are in the pupils' speaking and reading vocabularies, with meanings being explained if not known. If the Westward Movement is being studied in the classroom, create usable lists from words needed or requested for the *daily compositions* - pioneer, mountain, Indian, Kentucky, westward, movement. etc.

If the Space Age is being studied in the classroom, let the spelling words be useful for *daily composition* - missile, orbit, atmosphere, etc.

Spelling lists also should be learned in related groups with endings that rhyme, to facilitate the learning of many words almost simultaneously - care, dare, rare, etc. And the same rhyme endings with alternate spellings - bear and pear, or fair and hair.

Another group of words that relate to each other are actual family members known in daily life - *father, mother, brother*, aunt, niece, etc. And perhaps some Christmas thank-you notes could be written in daily composition class after that holiday.

Our Language Study can give us many groups of words that relate to each other. I, personally, was always a stickler for requiring the class to spell our states correctly - all of them. A matter of pride. But perhaps that was a personal thing and taught more as a discipline.

A writing vocabulary is developed, then, by first concerning ourselves with the practical needs of the pupils. But they must write something every day.

Kinesthetic treatment can be particularly helpful to slow learners, when audio-visual imagery is impaired. This method of tracing words requires more individualized attention, but blackboard usage in a schoolroom is possible, as well as help from more advanced classmates.

If more practice is necessary to retain what is learned in school, home study should not be shunned . Parents can be a critical factor in the learning process. Some of them have dropped the ball. Or don't care.

Excellence should be rewarded. What's wrong with a prize for the best composition on the Westward Movement or the Space Age, or even a short fiction piece. Why not offer an award for distinction in sixth grade spelling? Why not give our spellers something to strive for? Good old-fashioned competetion is an effective incentive. Every child is not like every other and let us not be *afraid* of excellence - knowing that some may attain it while others fail. Is that not the condition of life itself? Quality spelling should be our goal, not a uniformity of nothingness - because of fear - that provides real quality to no one at all.

Remember, writing is a lot easier for good spellers. And reading is a lot easier for good writers. Draw rings around the vowels if you wish. Underline, rhyme, play, get acquainted, look at pictures, and read the stories. But if you can't write or read or spell, what difference does it make which high school the bus takes you to?

-o0o-

It might take a bullett or tu

When reformers have nothing to du
They might take a shot at the Gnu.
    To nock off the G,
    Would fill them with glee
And wouldn't embarass the Nu.

A wise old owl lived in an oak;
The more he saw, the less he spoak.
The less he spoak, the more he heard;
Why can't we be like that old beard?

From *Rimes Without Reason*

-o0o-

11. The Visual Symbolization of Speech, by David Abercrombie.*

I want to discuss in this paper what actually happens when we first set out to represent language, which is primarily a spoken thing, in signs which our eyes, instead of our ears, are to interest. Writing seems such a very natural thing to us, who are fortunate enough to be literate, that it is difficult to approach it objectively to see how it really does work; a scientific approach to writing is, in fact, of very recent date. The traditional methods of writing which are found all over the world are the result of a slow evolution of many thousands of years. No conscious theorizing went into their construction, as far as we can tell; [1] nobody sat down to think out what principles should govern the invention and application of systems of writing; what were the things to aim for and the things to avoid, what it was possible to do and impossible to do. Nevertheless, the method of trial and error, given time enough to work itself out, usually brings the results needed, and the elimination of devices which it was found did not work properly, and the further cultivation of devices which were successful, led finally to that extraordinarily ingenious invention, alphabetic writing, the basis of a very large part of human civilization.

Nowadays, however, we require methods of visual symbolization of speech for many more different purposes than we did in the past. The teaching of modern languages has become of great importance, and to be efficiently carried out, it demands the use of phonetic transcriptions. Hitherto illiterate people all over the world, brought into contact with modern civilization, require new alphabets to reduce their unwritten languages to a permanent form. And lastly, of particular interest to us here, the speeding up of modern life makes systems of shorthand a necessity. For all these purposes, we cannot allow the method of trial and error to take its own time in working out practical solutions. We cannot rely on lucky accidents any longer, but must tackle the problems scientifically. Thus it was that a century or more ago, number of people in various places set out to try to discover what the principles and theories of writing, which had been followed unconsciously in the past, really were. The problem of how to represent speech visually in the most satisfactory manner played a large part in giving rise to the science of phonetics. The problem is still one of its main concerns, though it now has many others. I want here to give a brief account of what phonetics has to say on the problem, and in particular how it applies to shorthand construction.

The first thing to notice is what appears at first sight to be the complete irreconcilability of the two modes of communication, the oral and the written. We cannot give a picture of speech by marks on paper. [2] When we say that writing represents speech, we do not use 'represent' in the same sense as when we say a picture represents a landscape, but rather as when we say a cross on a map represents a church. This is obvious enough, but it is very apt to be forgotten. Neglect of this fundamental principle has given rise to many fruitless arguments, though it is true that it has caused little serious damage except frayed tempers, lost time, and the invention of a few useless, methods of shorthand and phonetic transcription.

What are the elements to which we give our visual symbols? People are not always clear on this point, and systems of writing are often classified according to the different things that the symbols they employ are supposed to stand for words, syllables, or speed-sounds. But this is not really the best way of looking at it. *All* systems of writing known to us give their symbols to words; the differences between them lie in the way these symbols are constructed. They may be simple symbols; or they may be made up from a small number of subsidiary signs; but however they are made up, it must not be forgotten that they will be read as words, and probably written as words

also. In the process of *learning* any system of writing, one is, of course, conscious of the smaller elements which go to make up the complex word symbols; but the ordinary human being, reading naturally, pays no attention to individual letters. It is the shape of a word as a whole which his eye attends to. Were this not so, reading would be an impossibly laborious process. Those who write shorthand know also that it is impossible to attain any speed unless word symbols - 'outlines' - are written straight off, without analysis into the elements into which they were divided when they were learnt. Briefly, then, the object of writing is to provide an unambiguous symbol for every word in the language concerned.

It is possible to give each word a completely different symbol, which is what is done in Chinese writing. Very many different symbols are needed for such a system. But once they are learnt they can be managed simply enough - an educated Chinese reads as easily as, and possibly more quickly than, an educated Englishman - but the labor of learning them is considerable.

However, the number of symbols needed can be reduced by a process of analysis of the various words contained in the language. This is a complicated business involving many difficult problems, most of which, however, need not detain us here. The word is just as much a unit of speaking-or hearing-as of reading or writing. It is innervated from the brain as a whole, and the unpracticed person finds it extremely hard to isolate any one part of a word from the rest. But if, by means of an analysis which is artificial in the extreme, we do succeed in splitting up the various words of a language, we shall find that similar bits of sound - or of muscular movement - it depends on which way - we are looking at it) tend to recur. It must not be thought that these similar bits are elements from which the speaker builds up the words he pronounces; that, psychologically, would be quite a wrong point of view. But the similarities are there, nevertheless; every language employs a limited number only of types of movement of the vocal organs.

We can, then, isolate and identify, quite arbitrarily, these bits of sound, to which it will be convenient to give the name *isolates* (a term borrowed from the mathematician H.Levy). If we give each isolate a distinctive sign, we can build up a symbol for each word according to the analysis we have made of it.

So far so good; but here the real problems start. They arise out of two different things: the degree to which we split up our words, the number of different parts we divide them into, that is to say the *size* of the isolates, and the degree of similarity which we shall consider sufficient to enable any two bits of words to he identified, that is to say the *generality* of the isolates (for the bits of words are only similar; they are never, and could not in the nature of things be, identical).

Examples will make both these points clearer. Consider the English word *father*. If English was an unwritten language, we could divide the word into two isolates: *fa-ther,* allot a sign to each isolate, and produce a symbol for the word by placing these two signs together. This would be a syllabic writing system, and if we followed it out in English we should find ourselves saddled with an unwieldy number of different signs; it is a system quite unsuited to the structure of the language. Japanese, on the other hand, can analyse all its words into about 50 different syllable isolates, and it can obtain on this basis quite a convenient system of writing. In English, and languages which are like English in structure, we shall find ourselves better off if we take smaller isolates, that is to say if we divide each word into smaller parts than syllables. We could, for example, split up *father* into four bits: *f-a-th-er,* and give a sign to each of these isolates. We shall then have to make our word-symbol from four subsidiary signs instead of two, but the total number of signs required to write the language, following this method, will be much less. An analysis into smaller isolates than syllables results in alphabetic writing, but in alphabetic writing variation in the size of.the isolates is still possible. We can split up *choose* into three parts: *ch-oo-se,* or into four: *t-sh-oo-se. Steps* can be divided as *st-e-ps* or as *s-t-e-p-s.* Chance has played a part in the size of the isolates taken by

existing methods of writing; in Russian, for example, quite a large isolate, *shtsh,* is given one single sign. Practice has shown that the smaller the isolate resulting from our analysis, the fewer the number of signs required to write the language will be, from Chinese, which takes entire words as isolates, to a modern 'broad' phonetic transcription, which takes the smallest elements it can.

The first point, then, where different kinds of analysis are possible, is in the size of the isolates taken. Difference is also possible in the generality of the isolates. When we are making a 'broad' phonetic transcription of English, for example, we would divide a word such as *little* into four parts: *l-i-tt-le.* The first part and the last part have easily distinguishable sounds, but practice has shown that if they are given the same sound - if they are, that is to say, taken as the same isolate, no ambiguity will result. In the same way, we can identify the initial consonants of the two words *key* and *cow*, where the difference is smaller but nevertheless apparent. Our aim, it must be remembered, is to provide an unmistakable symbol for each word, and the amount of similarity between bits of words sufficient for them to be given the same sign depends upon whether unambiguous word symbols will result. When this has been attained, we can make further distinctions if anything should make it advisable to do so. It is a point of interest that there would probably be no confusion between any words in English if we wrote the first sound and the last sound of the word *hang* with the same sign. There is such a great difference between the two, however, that it is worthwhile distinguishing them.

Japanese and the Semitic languages both provide examples of syllabic writing, but there is a difference between them in the generality of the isolates taken: those of the latter are more general than those of the former, in that they ignore the vowel quality of the syllable. For example, *ka* and *ki* would be written with the same sign in Hebrew, with different signs in Japanese. (It became necessary in Semitic writing systems to introduce vowel pointing, or diacritics to the syllable, in order to guard against ambiguities.

When we leave naturally evolved methods of writing, and come to consciously invented systems of modern times, we find another important principle which it is well to observe.. This is that the kind of analysis we make - the size and generality of our isolates - ought to depend not only on the structure of the language but also on the purpose to which we are going to put the writing. The kind of analysis suited to one purpose will not necessarily be the best for another. If, for example, we want to work out a rational orthography for English, we should try to use as few signs as possible consistent with the resulting word-symbols being unambiguous. We want a system which can be easily learnt by children and easily handled by printers. The quicker it can be written the better, but we are not aiming primarily at speed. If, however, we are constructing an English shorthand system, then speed must obviously be the first consideration. We do not expect a shorthand to be easy to learn (though, of course, it must not be too difficult), and we can leave printers to deal with it as best they can. Our analysis of the language for shorthand will not, therefore, be made with a view to discovering the minimum number of symbols required, and it is in practice found that a combination of all the different types of analysis will give the greatest speed. Every kind of isolate can be found in a well-constructed shorthand. Arbitraries or grammarlogues are like the symbols of Chinese writing: the entire word (sometimes even the phrase or sentence) is the isolate. In most modern systems the beginning part i.e., the part before the vowel - of words like *strip, try, clear, Spain, choose,* are all equally regarded as single isolates, and given one sign each. Writing without vowel points is very much the same as the Semitic kind of syllabary, and the sign ')' in Pitman shorthand is a good example of a very general syllabic isolate, since at the beginning of a word it stands for any vowel plus s.

Writing is not an end in itself, and if we need systems of writing not as beautiful or as true as possible, but as well fitted as we can get them to the purpose for which they are required. When

constructing any system of visual symbolization of speech, convenience must in the long run be the only guide, and practice, not abstract logical principles, the only valid test.

Notes.

[1] The use of the silent terminal 'e' to indicate the length of a previous vowel, as in "name", is certainly not the result of conscious theorising. It happened, one might say, by accident through the spoken language undergoing radical changes, leaving the spelling far behind. "Name" had a long first vowel, and was a word of two syllables in Chaucer's time; but the final vowel had disappeared by a century later, though the first vowel stayed long. The spelling was not changed, however, and so the `e' acquired this diacritic value, but not by conscious theorising

[2] Although Bell tried it with his *"Visible Speech."*

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In the planning stage, a new hard-cover book:
Spelling Reform - a comprehensive survey of the problems
The topics discussed and the number of articles in each:

1. The history of spelling reform	2
2. Arguments for and against spelling reform	11
3. Viewpoints on spelling reform	9
4. Spelling reforms in foreign languages	6
5. Countering arguments against spelling reform	4
6. Which way to go in spelling reform	12
7. Ways of implementing spelling reform	6
8. Specific designs for reform, with their critiques	3
9. Spelling in relation to reading, writing, phonetics	9
10. Teaching of spelling	1
11. Spelling and oracy	1
12. Criteria for spelling reform	9
13. Spelling and literacy problems	9
14. Spelling and commerce and marketing	1
15. Spelling and electronics, photo-typesetting	3
16. Historical changes in spelling	1
17. Psychology applied to spelling	4
18. Principles of Eng. spelling in relation to language	2
19. English as a World Language	4
20. Why there has been failure to adopt a reform	2
21. Illiteracy and crime	5
H. Humor, as space is available	11
	115

For more information, write the editor of this magazine.

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12. Book Reviews, by Emmett A. Betts, Ph.D., LL.D.*

*Winter Haven, Fl.

English Illiteracy, Deification of Decadence, Paulsen, Vic.

Torskript Pub. San Francisco, Ca, 1981, 66pp. $4.95.

The above paper-bound volume, subtitled Deification of Decadence, is Vic Paulsen's 66-page, eloquent, pellucid readable discussion of the hazards of the traditional English spelling system and a proposal for remedying the "pathographic" situation. This interesting presentation was made at the 2nd International Conference on Reading and Alphabets, Nene College, Northampton, England, 1979.

Vic Paulsen very ably presents his case against the "deification of decadence" of traditional English spelling, using side-by-side T.O. (traditional orthography) and Torskript Mark 2 Orthography, which he devised. In addition, he provides a list of Torskript pronunciation symbols (inside front cover), sound values of Torskript symbols, suggested Torskript spellings of the 70 most common words, a quote from Benjamin Franklin on spelling reform, and judiciously selected references. All in all, Vic Paulsen has made a very effective presentation which merits study by educators, linguists, psychologists, and others interested in the escalation of reading /spelling instruction.

As Paulsen proceeds with his presentation, he multiplies his indictments of the loose fit between antiquated English spellings (based on Middle English speech) and language as it is spoken today: ". . . 'a falling away' from classical alphabetical principles." (p. 3) ". . . the fact that its [Modern English] spelling is based primarily on another language, Middle English, which hasn't been spoken for at least 400 years, and is no longer understood. !' (p. 9) ". . . the existing system . . . with its scandalous lack of utility" (p. 11) "The people. . . are now circumventing the antiquated writing system which has been the bottleneck in mass communication. . . they have become less able and less willing to cope with its irrational complexities." (p. 11) ". . . - the relationship between the speech and the writing has departed from the reality of alphabetic procedures. " (p. 19) "The succession of influences that produced linguistic turmoil in England prior to the 18th century and the subsequent orthographic chaos of which w e are the inheritors. . ." (p: 19)

"Conventional English spelling is commonly spoken of as 'crazy' or 'insane'. . ." (p. 25) ". . . writing. . . has produced irrational. mental processes in the society." (p. 27)

"But as the pronunciation of the language changed while the spellings remained the same, a distortion occurring in the meanings, some of the terms expanding to include multiple meanings. The result of this is that any discussion of the relationship between speech and writing tends to become futile because the terms mean different things to different people." (p. 29 "Also, certain non-alphabetic innovations, such as the so-coiled etymological spellings contributed to the declining acoustic reliability." (p. 31) ". . . an outdated orthography has been enshrined as a standard. . . " (p. 37) ". . . conventional English spelling . . . has, in fact, become irrational and pathogenic!' (p. 41) "Traditional spelling is 'pathography,' . . . 'sick writing." (p. 43) ". . . pathography is not yet thought of as an evil monopoly existing in spite of the anti-trust laws. . ." (p-47)

It will be noted that Paulsen offers a strong case for a return to the alphabetic principle to update English spellings. He also challenges etymological spellings so often quoted by defenders of the "status quo" - defined by Amos and Andy in their radio show of the 1930's as "de mess we're in." And he condemns the ineffective, confusing "look-and-say" approach to word perception, which has

been increasingly under attack by informed educators. In general, Paulsen is on the solid premise that writing no longer represents the sounds (phonemes) of our language.

In fact, Paulsen goes so far as to state that *dyslexia* and other types of serious reading disabilities, or "afflictions" are "nothing more than normal human defenses against a pathological influence." (p. 431) This pathological influence is caused, he says, by "pathography" - the pathological nature of conventional spelling.

But this reviewer uses *dyslexia* as a neurological term, misused by most "reading specialists" today. He is convinced that the dyslexia classification, assigned by educators, *represents undiagnosed reading disabilities in the plural* - a meaningless label, an abstraction of zero semantic and pragmatic value. At the same time, present-day spellings certainly do add to the confusions and uncertainties of the dyslexics, neurologically defined. So Paulsen hedges his view of traditional orthography with the statement that it "might very well" be a factor in dyslexia.

For his Torskript system, Paulsen departs from the recommendations of other alphabeteers and orthographers. First, he continues to use capital and lower case letters. But Sir James Pitman's i.t.a. uses only one set of letter forms: lower-case letters as in traditional orthography (T.O.) and enlarged lower-case letters as capital letters. This latter tactic alone is a boon to beginners in reading. Second, Paulsen uses reduced capital letter forms A and I to represent /a/ and /i /. Third, he introduces the schwa /ə/ symbol for unstressed syllables, as in *nation, neishən*. This tactic merits consideration for this vowel sound in *both* unstressed and stressed syllables.

Fourth, he introduces a diacritical ʉ, to indicate the stressed schwa sound, as in *but,* bʉt. That is, he shifts from phonemic to phonetic symbolization, which may introduce unnecessary hazards for beginners in reading.

Fifth, he introduces the delta symbol (δ) to signal the voiced sound / *th*/, as in *this,* δhis. For W.E.S., i.t.m., Godfrey Dewey retained the *th* spelling for both voiced and voiceless phonemes because English-speaking beginners in reading make automatically correct responses. The distinction may be needed by persons learning English as a second language.

Sixth, Paulsen uses the phonetic symbol [ŋ] for spelling *ng*, as in among, əmʉŋ. In this one example, three new (non-T.O.) symbols are used, possibly adding to word perception difficulties.

Seventh, Paulsen's Torskript introduces problems in symbolizing certain phonemes and phoneme sequences involving graphic *r*. (See Betts' "Graphic R" Spelling Progress Bulletin, Winter, 1979, pp. 6-18.) As in T.O., Torskript graphic *r* is used for consonants, vowels, and centering diphthongs.

For the elementary phoneme /ər/, ʉr is used, as in hʉr (*her*), in stressed syllables. But ər is used in unstressed syllables, as in *after*, ʌftər. This distinction is moot, especially for beginners in reading. Centering diphthongs (and tripthongs) are perennial problems for lexicographers and spelling reformers. But for authors of reading programs, they are considered as phonograms: e.g., *ar* in *star*, *arr* in *carry*, *ear* in *hear*, *oor* in *door*, and so on. On the other hand, the vagaries of T.O. spellings remain a perceptual problem.

In general, Torskript can be questioned on at least four bases: compatibility with T.O., economy of letters, perceptual efficiency, and handwriting facility. Alphabeteers, however, are to be encouraged, not discouraged. But a multidisciplinary approach to spelling reform and to perceptual learning is on the horizon *now. fini.*

The New Spelling - Orthographic Structuralism, part one. Laurita, Raymond E.
Yorktown Heights, N. Y; Leonardo Press, 1981, 192 pp.
1,001 Affixes and their meanings - a dictionary of Prefixes, Suffixes, and Inflections.
Yorktown Heights, N. Y.: Leonardo Press, 1.981., 87 pp.
The Vowel Category Resource Lists. Laurita, Raymond E.

Yorktown Heights, N.Y.: Leonardo Press, 1930, 112 pp.

This review was done without access to Laurita's four *Spelling Mastery* programs: *The Spelling Mastery Kit, The Individual Spelling Set, The Elementary Transparency Set, The Diagnostic Word Processing Test* - listed on pages 6, 7 of the *Vowel Category Resource* List. Perhaps some of the reviewer's questions may be answered therein.

Laurita has developed an interesting - and challenging -concept which he labels *Orthographic Structuralism.* In chapter one, he states eloquently the basic purpose of Orthographic Structuralism: ". . . to lay the foundation for the development of a new approach to the study of the English orthographic system of structural transfer underlying the transformation of orally produced symbolic language into graphically produced symbolic language." (p.4)

Laurita comments on "changes in the pronunciation of specific phonemes," the "gradual loss of associational dependence in sound to symbol transference. . . ,"and on the "use of more complex inflected endings. . .and the increasingly complex additions to original root words in the form of prefixes and suffixes." (P. 5)

In chapter two, Laurita discusses the grammatical system and the phonemic/ orthographic system. He relies on the eight parts of speech (noun, verb, etc.) of traditional grammar rather than structural or transformational grammar.

Furthermore, he finds that linguistic rules used for dictionary classification of words are not adequate for understanding orthographic structure. Instead, he proposes "familial orthographic" categories "whose members may or may not have a common meaning relationship and a common etymological origin." (p. 11) In short, he distinguishes between *spelling roots* and *root elements.*

Disturbing to some spelling reformers and alphabeteers is this reiterated rationale: "Orthographic Structuralism is an approach to graphic symbols that will attempt to achieve its goal of regularizing speech to print relationships through the exposition of a number of Principles of Graphic Linguistic Structure." (p. 14)

These principles of linguistic structure are stated and elucidated in chapters three and four. The first principle presents the vowel as the essential structural element. Using this principle, Laurita develops "vowel" categories, or "The Fifteen Stages of Vowel Category." In its simplest form, the vowel inter-reacting with other orthographic elements "forms words of a single pronounced syllable"; in its most complex form, the "essential structure 1 unit," the vowel of the root element and/or spelling root is identified in inflected and affixed words. (p .21, 22)

"The Second Principle of Graphic Linguistic Structure" is stated and explained in chapter four. Using this principle, he identifies two general categories, or two levels, of graphic word processing:

1. "The Primary Level of Graphic Word Process at which structurally simple words ire processed "in terms of the directness of the sound to symbol relationship with speech." (p. 28)

2. The Secondary Level of Graphic Word Process at which structurally complex words "have sound to symbol relationships which require the application of indirect processing procedures." (p. 28)

Chapter five details "The Primary Level of Graphic Word Process." At this level, legitimate members "form a single, discrete and complete sound unit." This single sound unit (e.g., *cat, black)* can be "directly associated with its duplicate 'form' on the printed level. . ." (p. 31) Laurita lists categories of words at the Primary Level. For example, *home* and *bone* but not *love, done, some,* and other "irregularly" spelled words. Furthermore, he explains that *was* "is an example of a word of extremely great abstraction," yet "learned easily" by the child, a word whose use is signalled "as the result of relational factors existing elsewhere in a sentence. .." (p. 38) He also discusses words such as *their, who, were, are,* in terms of abstractness and relational factors. (p. 39) He would postpone introducing children to the present spelling of "orthographically erratic" words during "the early stages of their exposure to graphic language." (p. 40) How he would achieve this goal possibly is demonstrated in other Laurita publications not available to the reviewer.

Chapter six elucidates "The Secondary Level of Graphic Word Process." At this level, Laurita is concerned with "visual signal response" requiring "indirect secondary processing." (p. 48) Here he confuses the phonemically oriented reader by listing *digraphs gn* (e.g., *gnat, sign*) and *mb* (e.g., *lamb*) as consonant blends! (pp. 52,92) On page 43, Laurita adds these digraphs as blends: *kn* (*knee*), *wr* (*write*). He does, however, list *qu (quack)* as a blend! But in this chapter, the author follows through on "additive processing at the secondary level" - on the addition of infected endings and affixes in which the words "bear an indirect sound to symbol relationship with their oral counterparts." (p. 63)

Chapters seven to twelve, inclusive, are explicit accounts of the author's Five Levels of Graphic Word processing. Again, these chapters emphasize and detail concepts crucial to his "holistic organizational system" (p. 65) - his systematic, hierarchical plan for the development of spelling skills, abilities, and attitudes.

In general, Laurita believes, with considerable justification, that "thought and language are inextricably interwoven. ." (p.107) On this point, he quotes Lacan: "The structure of the unconscious is the structure of language ." (p. 107) Laurita indicts alphabeteers: ". . . there is at least a scientific rationale underlying these generic experiments, one based on a long series of breakthroughs which appear to have allowed men to perceive the essential structure underlying the operations of genetic synthesis and genetic transfer. Such cannot be said for most of the tinkering undertaken in the name of science in efforts to make an unwavering one to one relationship between speech and print. " (p. 108)

Laurita claims neurophysiological support for his Orthographic Structuralism. He refers to Jaynes (p. 8), Nissen (p. 29), Hebb (pp. 47, 78, 94, 156), Senden (pp. 7 8, 94), Meil's *Lacan (p.* 124) - all reputable scholars.

Laurita's last chapter deals with "speculations about, and suggestions for the reform of, the essential governing structure of the English print system resulting from orthographic structuralist insights." (p. 157) Herein, he opines that Orthographic Structuralism may be "viewed as a breakthrough" in perceiving "a new dimension to the existing structure of the English print system."

Laurita's comments on gemination (e.g., *fatt* for *fat)* to signal the short vowel are interesting and thought provoking. (pp. 169-170) His rejection of phonic rules for teaching children to read is convincing and relevant. (See Black and Oaks studies, *Spelling Progress Bulletin,* Summer, 1981.) He labels rules as "flawed, inconsistent, inappropriate" (p. 25), 'ambiguous" (p. 166), "damaging, fragmenting" (p. 176). Here, Laurita is on solid ground, supported by many studies.

There are, however, several limitations to be considered in Laurita's *The New Spelling - Orthographic Structuralism.* First, what corpus was analyzed to obtain the 13,421 word count? Thorndike's List? Reading textbook vocabulary studies?

Second, why was the list of "r-controlled vowels" limited to graphic *ar* (*farm*), *or* (*corn*), *er* (*herd*), *ir* (*bird*), *ur* (*turf*)? Why was the elementary vowel sound /ər/ (as in *herd, bird, turf*) included in a *partial* list of centering diphthongs? (See Betts, "Graphic R," *Spelling Progress Bulletin,* Winter, 1979.)

Third, why was graphic *r* listed as part of final consonant blends (as in *curb, urge,* etc.) when it is used
with the adjacent vowel to represent the vowel sound /ər/? (pp. 106-110, *The Vowel Category Resource Lists*) Why was graphic *r* listed as part of a final consonant blend when it is used with graphic *a* to represent the centering diphthong /är/ in *barb, bard, barge,* etc.? (p. 100, V.C.R.L.)

Fourth, references to other significant studies are curiously missing: Edward L. Thorndike's *The Teaching of English Suffixes* (1941), Russell G. Stauffer's "A Study of the Prefixes in the Thorndike List to Establish a List of Prefixes that Should Be Taught in the Elementary School" (1942), Arthur I. Gates' classic studies of hard spots in spelling.

The author claims to have developed his Orthographic Structuralism over a period of almost two decades. This reviewer believes him because this type of creative endeavor requires painstaking effort, much persistence, and creative thinking. His contribution merits thoughtful evaluation by educators, psycholinguists, orthographers, and spelling reformers. In short, Laurita's books are a rewarding experience for scholars who have the staying power to understand them.

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13. A Letter to the Editor
Re: Your proposed book on Spelling Reform.

Dear Newell: **Raymond H. Pierson, San Diego, Ca.**

I hav felt for a long time that meny of the excellent articles in SPB just didn't get red by meny who should hav been interested but did not see them.

So now in answer to your letter referring to the proposed book on spelling reform, I can't giv you a good succinct reply as your letter indicated you would like to hav. In other words, "it all depends" on how the proposed objectiv is approached and carried out.

So, tentatively: Interested?   yes
                      Saleable?   don't know
                      Reserve a copy?   depends
                      Additional topics?   no (but see below)

Your proposal present a very complex situation, as you no dout ar very well aware.

In general, a compilation bringing together the best articles from SPB is something I would like to see done. But I think the whole project should be something much more comprehensiv. I should like to see someone make the project into one that could be used to SELL simplified spelling and one that advocates a well-organized step-by-step approach to spelling reform. This would not be the eclectic sort of presentation often used in SPB. Insted it would be somewhat like Lindgren's plan in some ways: e.g.,

giving *only rebuttals* for opposing views to reform and emfasizing the need for and the advantages of a reformed orthography.

It makes me *feel good* and *comfortable* to spell *bred, let, freed, gest, bed, meny, pleasnt, sed, thred,* etc. in the *logical* way! Note also that there ar no serious problems with SR-1 such as those encountered when one tries to change illogical "gh" spellings or to delete silent letters.

In format, I would like to see something like that used by H. L. Mencken in *American Language,* with the selling-story supplemented by references and quotes therefrom. Mario Pei's books could also constitute a guide in this respect. I think that a format that is typeset and 6x8 or 6x9 in size would be much more convenient for the reader and more saleable than 8½x11.

I'm fed up with research and research and more of the same with not enuf *application* of the well-developed conclusions. What good would the research that developed the laser beam be if knowledge derived had not found applications? In the case of the laser, it is, of course, finding meny valuable applications.

I think *organized groups* composed of highly intelligent and informed experts on spelling reform need to go all out to SELL simplified spelling to government, teachers (and their superiors in the field of education) and to the public via newspapers, magazines and, as suggested on a recent card from Harvie Barnard, to the advertizing agencies.

With governmental spending being tightened these days, perhaps it would be useless to think of a grant to help publish a book on simplified spelling, even tho it could lead to enormous benefits to our country in meny ways.

If Pres. Reagan or the V. P. or a cabinet member or a Senator or Representative in Congress *or enyone else* could get spelling reform properly started and keep it rolling, that person would be doing a great service for his country, other English-speaking peoples and (by the way of English as THE world language) the whole human population. It would not only be a *great* success but a boon to mankind.

Yours cordially, Ray.

-o0o-

Dear Ray:

Thanks for your letter and suggestions. Some have merit but not the change to 6x8 or 6x9 size. Most magazines are in the 8½x11 size - and that is why it was selected in the first place - so that articles could be reprinted without the cost of re-typesetting. If we had to reset all the pages of a new book, the cost would be prohibitive. Also as printers charge the same per page regardless of size, it would result in a 70% increase in printing costs. The main reason we could hope to put out a limited edition is because we would have no typesetting costs.

Your suggestion that the Book be devoted to SELLING the *idea* of spelling reform is exactly the objective we had in mind. Just read the list of topics covered (page 17). It was also considered as a data and argument source for students desiring to write papers on the subject and to their congressman extolling the need for and the merits of spelling simplification. To encourage the latter, we want, offer cash prizes for the best letter written to the congressman or legislator, not only here but in other English-speaking countries. But where can we get the money for such a campaign? Would any foundation be interested? Or perhaps some oil company would realize the vast amount of publicity they would get sponsoring the campaign.

Newell

Montefiore Follick (31 December 1887[1] – 10 December 1958[2]) was a British Labour Party politician, a campaigner for spelling reform, polyglot and advocate of decimal currency. He was Member of Parliament (MP) for Loughborough from 1945 to 1955, having previously held the post of Professor of English at the University of Madrid in Spain.[3] He had been adopted by the Loughborough Labour Party in 1936 as prospective parliamentary candidate but had a long wait because of the war years before being elected.