

Note to the User: For Abstract-length material, see the blue-block summary at the “Book Titles” page and/or the Student & Tutor-search posters on the adjacent “User Helps“ button. For a long (6pp) but comprehensive Precs, review the following short- and long-form presentations. *****

Dear Educator:

Please permit me to make a brief summary here of material that’s presented at length below. Because it deals with simplified phonetics, not the guesswork of “sound-out,” *Practical Word Power* (or *PWP*), serves--admirably well--the Special Needs students (including dyslexics and the deaf who choose to speak). . .as well as for ESL, for which it was developed.

For dyslexics, it offers specificity. For the deaf, it minimizes over-pronunciation (such as wa-Ter, butTer, and fa-THer). HS seniors who need community service credits will make excellent tutors via the verbatim text--they don’t need independent knowledge of linguistics. Major advantage: Given the codes, ESL students can find in their bilingual dictionaries any word in their native language that they wish to use, find its English counterpart, and pronounce correctly and understandably--immediately! That’s the end of memorized, generic word lists. Pronunciation is the root of understanding and communication! Because of dictionary use, spelling is also taught indirectly.

Support in brief:

Consider: The computer has identified over 1,100 ways by which to write the 40 sounds of American-English. Dictionary diacritical codes can render all of the same words and sounds in 45 codes (phonemes). After a century, shouldn’t we consider an alternative to sound-out?

Further, a study by Dr Eraldo Paulesu at the University of Milan/Bicocca has concluded that language complexity (1,100:40?) can aggravate dyslexia in students who are genetically susceptible. We’re not all susceptible, but those non-dyslexics who still have problems simply drop out of class or school. No more problem for the public school system.

Yes, the published computer count and Milan research are cited on my website, as are the community college and community ethnic-group certificates and reports. For details and credence documents, see ‘Site-Map’ for “Science” “Psychiatry” button. In addition, because “PWP” was created to be a self-help workbook for volunteer tutors, it is an ideal community service vehicle for those graduation candidates who need service credits: only 16 classroom hours for a complete “PWP” cycle of 8 sessions x 2 hours each.

My consultant for “PWP” was Dr John Haskell, now retired as Chairman of the Linguistics Dept at Northeastern Illinois U, Chicago, and then-simultaneously the Editor of the TESOL Newsletter (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages).

In any case, please give this proved simplification project your unbiased thought--this ain’t them rules what you was taught in school or in education courses! But “PWP” works! Teach much more practical information and skills than “merely” pronunciation. . .pronunciation is the basis of understanding, which is itself the basis of communication!

Both a short-form and long-form argument follow my signature, below. If any of those prospects interests you, would you prefer to read this formal presentation later, when your own time better permits, or to print out now (about 65 mb, total) and carry it with you? Or assign it to a trusted assistant? What does your immediate time frame dictate to you?

Cordially,

Richard Cavalier

310/671-7262

PS: My e-mail ID says “Richard Arthur,” my first and middle names. My family name is so generic as to be a target for spam and junk mail. Or worse, given the “Cavalier” girlie magazine. Sorry--but it matters only the first time. I’m not trying to hide.

--RAC

Short-form summary:

Computers have established that there are over 1,100 ways by which to write the 40 key sounds of the American-English language. By dictionary, only 45 codes (diacritical marks). Because it uses only those 45 codes, *PWP* simplifies the learning of basic phonemes. New vocabulary becomes specific every time!

Studies at the University of Milan/Bococca have established that language complexity (1,100:40?) can aggravate dyslexia in students who are genetically susceptible. Milan compared relatively-specific Italian to floating French and insane English methods. The dyslexics suffer from complexity. We're not all susceptible, but the nonsusceptible students who have problems probably drop out of class or school. End of the problem for the school? Not for the individuals or their society!

A better way: the dictionary presents all of the same sounds and words in only 45 codes (diacritical-count in the paperback American Heritage dictionary used with the verbatim volunteer tutors' book/course, *Practical Word Power*; (or *PWP*). It's fully proved). Quotes re: proofs are posted on this website; long-form copies of documents and certificates can be found on the author's business books website, www.meetingsCavalier.com. "Roadmapping" to this website appears in the long-form presentation, below.

Long-form presentation:

We can all admit that the standard method of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) is not a joy for either the teachers or the learners. Because it uses specific phonemes for individual letter combinations, *PWP* is especially useful for reconstructive language learning for any purpose, including remedial coaching and ESL.

But in the U.S., the Federal and State governments have not aided the ESL education process independently of the school systems, which are not winning applause. Nothing significant has changed during most of a century. The learners are placed in a no-win situation in the U.S. and also in American-schools in other countries. So the likelihood of similar learning problems at American-schools (plus any language schools in other countries) is hardly surprising. In the world of international trade and economics, and in a web-world wherein English is the major default language, English is now more valuable to more people than ever before.

Not only has a new and simplified approach to the language-learning problem been developed, but also the tutoring that it provides and envisions can be completed within a brief period--only 8 sessions of 2 hours each. . . tutored by any native speaker of American-English because the book *Practical Word Power* is verbatim for the tutor. It makes community-outreach worthy for both graduating students and others because your certificated teachers can proctor the community volunteers in order to multiply results via general community outreach to LEPs (limited-English). For non-speaker ethnics, tutor in their own language, but assign a tutor-assistant to model the dictionary sounds and to present chalkboard examples (provided in the verbatim text).

How does it work?

Where ESL offers options and guesswork regarding American-English pronunciation, the dictionary offers specifics. Persons who learn the dictionary diacritical codes skip months or years of traditional memorization of generic word lists during study. Using the *PWP*-taught dictionary-code skills in conjunction with their natively language bilingual dictionary, learners can develop personal vocabulary to personal need--immediately and for a lifetime!

By using dictionary codes together with a bilingual dictionary, each learner can create new vocabulary and correct (to dictionary code) pronunciation. . .to learners' personal needs, not to generic word lists. That process is quick, extremely easy (compared to "sound-out") and inexpensive. And valuable, life-long.

Key point from a life-long writer: English grammar, syntax, and semantics, etc., are easy to learn. The English language does not assign arbitrary genders to inanimate objects and then require the conjugation of cases accordingly; you know that we simply say "it." However, the rules for spelling and vocabulary development range from silly to insane--and that creates the problem for second language learners, especially those whose language is highly regular. More-detailed comments can also be found, nearer the end of this e-mail.

For example: Spanish is highly regular, with 6 vowels and 6 sounds, plus printed-coded, but regular variations (cedilla and circumflex, plus accent markers); English has the same 6 vowels and 19 sounds (one, the schwa) artificial--with no printed codes. So learners have 2 chances to be wrong and 1 chance to be right whenever they guess. But sound-out demands guessing about words that kids probably know but English-illiterates won't.

German has the 16 cases that must be memorized and conjugated (which is a bear), but its spelling and pronunciation are absolutely regular; and even the special sounds are regular, according to their printed codes (called

‘Umlauts’). The Ethiopian language has 100- character combinations of syllables built each together with one vowel and one consonant or labilant. The characters might be rough to learn, but if you can say the word, you can spell it. The Ethiopian character-alphabet is ancient--why haven’t we learned?

Another example: After you’ve memorized all of the public school’s rules, should the E-A-R combination sound like *ear, bear, early, or heart?* Should O-U-G-H sound like *through, although, rough, bough, or ought?* The rules don’t say. So just guess! Guessing is the confounder for dyslexics and the deaf. It’s no wonder that forayn- (foreign)-born students have difficulty with the wayrd (weird) rules and spelling. Besides, someone forgot to tell those rules to Keith and Sheila, who sayze (seize) every opportunity to state their hayte (height) in inches. “Sound-out” is counterfayt (counterfeit) learning!

Guesswork is sorry instruction!

Let’s be logical. In the opinion of this ESL program developer, the greatest success achieved by the school systems of the U.S. has been to convince the language-handicapped ethnics that they can do nothing for themselves regarding ESL! That fear has evidently been transferred to other locations around the world. But keep in mind that US-children who are born to US-born parents speak English before kindergarten. Brilliant parents and children--or a language that’s easier to learn than the school systems admit or permit?

Yet, the school systems cannot recognize the Paulesu research without also committing themselves to reeducate their own English- and ESL-teachers. That seems to be a major job that none of them wants to take on; therefore, “Paulesu who?” Result: the students and other learners must continue to use a faulty system in school.

Why should any learner want to go to traditional schools for the easy basics that can be taught by an English-speaking mom? Let learners get a jump on phonetic language-learning now, and go to more advanced classes later, if they wish. But at least they can learn to function without biased helpers and unhelpful rules!

Or should students just guess, as sound-out requires? How would a person who doesn’t recognize an English word possibly know when it’s mispronounced? Schools are attempting to teach adults by the same methods as grade school pupils are traditionally taught! Except that the grade school kids already know and use the storydirected and picture-coached words! They learn to associate used-work with the picture-code (spelling). It’s no wonder that the forayn- (foreign)-born learners have so much trouble with ESL.

Formal schooling is not required for such basics as can be taught by Mom:

Are all of the mothers (whose children speak English before kindergarten) PhDs in Linguistics? Most kindergarten kids have vocabularies of a thousand words or more. By second grade’s reading instruction time, the majority of kids have vocabularies of up to 8,000 words--which, with pictures and related stories, let them identify the look/spelling of already-known words. The foreign-born don’t come so equipped.

Foreign-nationals who are new (or relatively new) to spoken English rarely have the advantage of an already-established vocabulary. Is there a message for your school in that fact? Persons who have studied book-English in their own countries often have learned accents that should be suppressed if they wish to do international business.

If Spanish has six sounds for six vowels and English has 19 sounds for the same six vowels, as stated above, (including the artificial vowel, “schwa”), then when the Special Needs students and non-speakers of English get to the common-but-problem combinations (such as O-U-G-H and E-A R), there’s no “correct” sound for them to speak. Therefore every individual word must be learned and memorized separately in class. Otherwise, just guess!

For kids in grade-school step-system, generic word lists work. But teens/adults have highly divergent lives and needs--now! Preserving the faulty “sound-out” system is not wise or instructive, but it does preserve the school systems’ monopoly on learning approaches.

The schools’ old approaches are faulty and should be challenged. Dewey-plus has survived for nearly a century, but Dewey lacked computers and brain scans. When will we change, if ready-research is being ignored? We don’t have time to wait for a conversion of those whose current positions are challenged.

Cavalier’s tutor text and workbook, *Practical Word Power*, also works very effectively as an accent-reduction course for executives and professionals, most of whom resent being treated as a “student.” More about that book below. Do these concepts make enough sense for your school to be willing to test the simplification concept locally?

Remember that the need to simplify English spelling was first advanced by George Bernard Shaw in 1904. Okay; no one wants to learn how to re-spell everything, as was proposed at that time. His proposed method might have been ungainly, but his fundamental ideas were correct--and ignored by the educational establishment. Could we switch to a new printing system whereby we actually print the phonetic code above the affected letters? In only a relatively

few cases would that not be possible (no relationship between spelling and pronunciation.)

An option that been proved workable and successful in classroom and community:

Cavalier's tutor workbook/course *Practical Word Power* was designed especially to be tutored in the community by anyone who speaks standard English. Your school can teach it directly, of course. But the course's capability can be multiplied if your teachers simply proctor native-English volunteers in the local community. Because English has become the default language of the web, many more persons have personal interest now than ever before. So the school can perform a wider public service as well as its known personal service for registered students. *PWP* is not intended for double-illiterates, if any exist in the community!

In addition, *PWP* was one of the first books to identify the unaddressed gap between the end of Federal funding (Fifth Grade completed; 5.9) and GED (starting 8.1). . .and might have been the very first program to do something about the gap! But by doing so for something in the middle category, *PWP* lost its status as a potential Basic Level book/course and so, can't be funded as Basic.

Volunteers can handle it. Any high school honors student or American-English-speaking community activist can tutor *PWP*. Why? Because *PWP* is verbatim: all lecture material, chalkboard entries, charts, and drills So the tutor need NOT be a certificated teacher. "Phone call" role playing, newspaper interpretation of non-grammatical headlines; advertising moxy (denotation/connotation, such as expensive/inexpensive/cheap); and other practical matters are addressed. The teen/adult learners uses only a paperback dictionary (\$6 each). *PWP* is keyed to the *American Heritage* Dictionary (Boston; Houghton-Mifflin)---one of America's finest.

Moreover, the American-English variant is not essential to the validity of this course. If your school wishes to teach the British-, Canadian-, or Australian-English variations, simply use dictionaries based on those sounds. It will be necessary, of course, to change the printed chalkboard markings within *PWP*, but the decisions about how best to combine the matters of plosives, sibillants, and ligatures, etc., have already been made--and so the *PWP* original--when modified--will still be useful for your purposes.

PWP's study is not limited to dictionary diacritical codes. Besides the "phone call" role playing and interpretation of non-grammatical newspaper headline, etc, as mentioned, *PWP* emphasizes the English language's most important function words: prepositional phrases. Most of the sense of our English communication is embodied within prepositional phrases, which then guide the rhythms of the spoken language.

Instructions to the tutor and class use newspapers articles in which the prepositional phrases (identified in a handout page) are bracketed in pencil by the learners and are then read back to the class--individually. Response time for each learner individually is factored into the class timing: most information comes from the tutor in the first few classes, and most sound/word/sentence-production originates with the individual students during the remainder of the 8 classes.

Costs are minor: Books for the entire class (tutor plus 10 learners, maximum) can be purchased for just under \$100, retail, total. Moreover, any community can forever offer multiple low-cost classes if a) tutored by volunteers who speak standard American- (or variant)-English and b) the learners each pay \$10 for their own dictionaries. That \$100 will buy all needed books for the tutor and the first class. The author does not recommend holding all learners' dictionaries in the school's library, because skills that cannot be further practiced soon fade, as all teachers know.

If community business organizations will sponsor purchases of entire book-sets or just contribute to the book cause, this program can be made self-sustaining. . .and can be continued as often and for as long as your community group wishes. Other classroom needs: only a chalkboard (minimum, 3x4' portable) and writing surfaces (table & chairs or tray-seats).

PWP does not require the help of certificated teachers; . . .however, certificated teachers could proctor groups of volunteer tutors, who would then conduct their classes according to group-selected options that are offered. In either case, *PWP* can be implemented in the community with or without the direct involvement of teachers if your school's charter will not permit such broader service. In fact, the traditional method of teaching "sound-out" phonetics (memorized rules and generic word lists) could interfere with this simplified version (as it can be tutored in the community classes via *PWP*) if teachers are overly-reliant on their original professional training. However, if teachers choose and can forget their own educational bias toward "sound-

out,” then they can proctor volunteer tutors in the ethnic communities

If tutored in English to mixed-ethnic persons who already have some ‘limited-English proficiency’ (LEP), then any language groups can be mixed in the same class. . .because everyone in the class will be at ground-zero in learning the codes and pronunciations--and English itself is the common denominator.

If tutored in translation in a single foreign language by an accented tutor, *PWP* works equally well if a native-speaker assists by voicing the dictionary-coded sounds and probably handles the chalkboard work, too.

What’s “LEP” for practical purposes? The learners must understand simple English in order to be instructed in English--otherwise they will merely parrot the sounds without knowing purpose. Generally, anyone should succeed in this course if he/she has worked with (broken) English at least occasionally over a period of a year or more. ESL levels III, IV, and V can all succeed easily. ESL Level II learners can succeed if they already have good study skills, such as professionals have. ESL level VI doesn’t really need it. Not for the doubly-illiterate!

Yes, friends can occasionally interpret individual words in class, if necessary, for a confused co-learner. But someone who’s not competent to understand most instruction should not be in that classroom! A friend who is busy interpreting regularly will experience split attention--and so will not himself/herself be listening to the instruction and be learning. Do not allow unqualified persons into a class that’s intended for a higher level, because that person will likely fail to keep up--fail--and become discouraged, possibly forever. Remember, English is easy--the traditional ESL rules are crazy!

This *PWP* system works equally well to upgrade the language skills of any American-born persons who speak non-standard English. However, the two groups (American- and foreign-born) should not be mixed in the same class because they relate differently to the language.

Unbiased credence material? Sure:

Two important findings since *PWP* was first developed, back in the early 1980s (and first published in 1989). Both relevant articles appeared in the March 16, 2001, issue of *Science Journal*:

--1) The computer has identified more than 1,100 ways by which to write the 40 key sounds of the English language (L. Helmuth). That’s needlessly complex, because the dictionary resolves all of the same words and sounds with only 45 codes. Which system would you rather be learning, if learning now--1,100 variations or 45 specific codes?

--2) Dr Eraldo Paulesu, et al, of the University of Milan/Bicocca have concluded that language complexity aggravates dyslexia in those students who are genetically susceptible. We are not all susceptible, of course. But those non-dyslexics who have problems with language complexity (such as 1,100:40) simply drop out of class or school. No further problem for the school systems of the nation--only for the individuals and the society. Both articles can be read in full or summary under the “*Psychology*” button, with citations.

Does Practical Word Power really work? It’s been proved in both the classroom and community at Truman/ City Colleges of Chicago, IL, USA (where it was developed) and also by six Hispanic groups in Chicago (nationality was irrelevant), under the auspices of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico’s Department of Community Affairs. Ethnicity and native language are irrelevant when the course is taught in English because all learners are new to this system of codes. So any combination of native-languages can be combined in the same English language class. Related documents are presented on the web. Moreover, *PWP* can be taught in translation if an accented translator-tutor is assisted by a native-speaker of English, who can model sounds and write chalkboard entries.

Educational credence:

Illinois is not a book-adoptive state. After development at Truman College (a Chicago City College) and first-publication in Chicago by a distributor of ESL books, *PWP* received the California Certificate of Compliance (and so is legal to teach there) and also is listed on the website for accepted books for New York City’s Department of Education. If your local school system resists using a simplified method, ask “Why?” Because it’s not for lack of quality or validity of *PWP*’s simplified dictionary-code system.

The consultant for *PWP* was Dr John Haskell, now retired as the Chairman of the Linguistics Department at Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago. Professor Haskell was also the Editor of the TESOL Newsletter (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) at that time. He knew all of the creators of then-new material and stated that he “didn’t know that it could be approached in another way.” Other of his comments are printed in his Foreword to *PWP*. Yes, *PWP* works! In class and community.

Furthermore, *PWP* was/is consistent with the key and advanced ESL theories both at the time of its creation (in 1981), long classroom development, and publication (1989). It is still consistent with advanced ESL theories as summarized in the influential book *The Foundations of Dual Language Instruction*, by Judith Lessow-Hurley (Boston; Addison-Wesley-Longman; 2000). Evidently the theories of even ESL specialists are not provoking action by the educational establishment. Something needs to change, and *PWP* can help to make it happen!

Roadmapping re: my book-promo website: For the author’s personal credence material, see the documents and other information on the author’s **website: www.meetingsCavalier.com**, under “About the Author.” For book information, at the home page, click on “Book titles.” Then, under the *PWP* cover photo, read the blue-block summary of the book/course. At the bottom of the block are multiple buttons with related topical material.

Multiple buttons on the first line under the blue block offer various categories of material, as labeled. The credence materials are concentrated under the “Support and Validation” button; then click the individual buttons that follow the Note. Paulesu (summarized) and Helmuth articles appear under the *Psychology* Journal button; Truman College’s funding application and the Chicago City Colleges certificates are labeled; as are the CA and NYC documents; plus the thank you report letter from the Gov’t of Puerto Rico’s Community Affairs Dep’t to Budget Rent A Car Corporation, which funded \$1,000 for the purchase of books for the field tests.

To aid discussions among your community group leaders and members, you might print out a 2-page, back-to-back, 8.5x11” brochure (folded into three panels) that can be found under the “User Helps” button. Posters seeking both students and volunteer tutors, too, separately.

When seeking funds (please don’t dun Budget) and publicity, you might also adapt any of the targeted press releases that can be found under “User Helps.” All of these releases were/are actually used by the author.

What relevant personal background does Cavalier bring to this literacy problem? All of his grandparents were foreign-born; he was reared in a community whose grandparent generation (to him) were predominantly foreign-born and so he grew up with fractured English; he has traveled in more than 40 countries--usually language handicapped, although he has studied academic German, dabbled in Berlitz Spanish and tutored French, and learned survival Korean and Japanese while in the military. Finally, he has been a life-long writer (with a writer’s affinity for the language) who developed a specialty in group communications, which includes the corporate training of adults. In short he knows what works, and why. . .and has the job skills to develop a workable program.

Personal examples? On the same website’s home page, click on “Idea Support”; then “Recognition/Industry or Client.” The many facets of Cavalier’s relative experience are uncommon in one individual and were coalesced here in a simplified approach to the American-English language.

And that’s why *Practical Word Power* really works!

The author has attempt to answer the most-frequently asked questions here. But if you have questions that were not answered in this communications, just respond with specifics, and you’ll be answered to the best of his ability.

Do we have a workable program?

Cordially,

Richard Cavalier

PS: My e-mail ID says “Richard Arthur,” my first and middle names. My family name is so generic as to be a target for spam

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