

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CORRELATION
BETWEEN ENGLISH SOUND FORMATION
AND SIGNIFICATION**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Nerissa Phillips, declare that except for the quotations indicated in the text and such help as I have acknowledged, this thesis is my own original work and has not been submitted for a degree to any other university.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "N Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "N".

.....
N Phillips

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Edgard Sienaert, for his support and encouragement.

The research and original material presented here, has been in drawers and cupboards for over a decade. Without my supervisor's interest, it would not have been amalgamated.

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INTRODUCTION

Modern communications help to make us aware that we are the heirs of all previous history. They reveal the rich variety of human societies; but at the same time they remind us that mankind is one. They make us realize that every man's past is nothing less than the whole human past, and that every man's present will contribute to the whole human future.¹

My aim in this thesis, is to examine aspects of the English phonological system in relation to signification, in order to establish the biological and gestural origins of speech.

My thesis is that:

- a) there is correlation between oral movement and signification (sound and meaning).
- b) the establishment of such proof of correlation, would provide scientific evidence of the biological and gestural origins of speech.

In this thesis, I aim to submit evidence to support this contention.

My Masters dissertation is entitled; "An Enquiry into the Phylogensis of Speech with Special Reference to the Implications of Laban's Analysis of Movement".

In this dissertation I will expand on and extend my Masters' dissertation in the following major areas:

A. Speech: Oral Gestures

- i) An exploration of the dynamic energy of the sounds involved in English word-making.
- ii) English Phonology: The classification and description of the English vowels and consonants.
- iii) An examination of English vowels and consonants in terms of their articulatory movement shapes, and their correlation with signification.

Poetry and prose examples are provided from English literature.

¹ Walter Allen: *Communication and Language*. p.21

B. Man's Recorded History: Our Legacy Through the Written Word

- (i) A summarized history of the gestural origins of alphabetical systems.
- (ii) Spelling and sounding inconsistencies in the English vocabulary.

Two new translations have influenced and inspired my conviction of the value of my contribution to this research area, viz. the importance of the role played by the organs of articulation in human speech.

The one is an article entitled “Language: A Perfected System of Articulatory Gestures?”, by Alvaro Rocchetti. This appears in *Geste et Image* published by the National Centre for Scientific Research, in Paris.

This paper is about the interpenetration of the two components of the message, i.e. the linguistic and the gestural components.

The dichotomy which is seen to exist between word and gesture, Rocchetti claims, is a product of the written approach to communication, which has influenced our thinking for the last three thousand years.

Traditional Western culture has chosen to consider only the phonetic elements and has ignored the important role of the gestural elements of speech.

Rocchetti claims that the speech gestures are fundamental, and that the linguistic message is based in a sub-conscious knowledge of those parts of the body which are used during phonation.

Language structure is based on the respective positions of the gestures of articulation.

Rocchetti is convinced of a definite correlation between these respective positions of the gestures of articulation and signification in the French language.

Rocchetti says that research which aims to discover the links that exist between form and meaning is more scientific than the research which states, as soon as it meets any difficulty, that the word is arbitrary.

He says that no-one has interpreted the use of the index finger to point someone or something out, or the gestures of a baker kneading bread as arbitrary; why should arbitrary only apply to the gestures of the linguistic system? This hypothesis is completely unscientific.

The second influence is Marcel Jousse, the French linguistic anthropologist, who, in *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm* came to the conclusion that all human communication is rooted in balanced, rhythmical movement, movement of the whole of man's being.

For Jousse, human expression is gestural expression; man did not first express himself with his mouth, but with his entire body, and with his hands.

At the time of writing my Masters dissertation (1985), I did not have access to Jousse's theory. (Part of Jousse's work was first translated in 1990).

The similarities between Jousse's and Laban's theories are discussed later in this paper.

The similarity between Jousse's thinking and of the theory I proposed in my Masters thesis, can be seen in this quotation from the introduction to my Masters thesis.

This theory...discounts the idea of language being an arbitrary tag to concepts or categorisation processes, and establishes the basic identity of all languages despite their "surface" variations and dissimilarities. It proposes that language universals are to be found by examining man as a biological organism whose physical activities are determined by his structure and the physical forces of his environment. The audible activity of speech was originally part of the organism's complete activity.

CHAPTER 1

AN OVERVIEW OF LINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION AND THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF SPEECH

Introduction

The question of the origins of speech and language has always held a fascination for mankind. These faculties have enabled mankind to influence and manipulate his environment, as no other species can.

Language has been thought of as being the expression of man's reason, a result of onomatopoeia, invented as a means of communication, considered basic to the formation of society, or simply a gift of God. Each of these definitions of language has been used in the construction of a multitude of language theories.¹

For my Master's thesis, I researched:

Chapter 5. LINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION AND THEORIES

1. A brief history of linguistic enquiry.
2. A Summarised Presentation of Theories of the Phylogenesis of Language.

Chapter 6. A CONSIDERATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF SYMBOLIC FORMS

Volume 1: Language: Ernst Cassirer.

Chapter 7. TWENTIETH CENTURY LINGUISTICS

1. A Consideration of Twentieth Century Linguistic Enquiry.
2. The influence and development of Twentieth Century Linguistic Enquiry.

In this thesis I shall

A. summarise the philosophies and theories which involve a consideration of the biological and gestural roots of speech;

¹ D S Diamond, *The History and Origin of Language*, pii.

B.: present additional research.

In his Dialogue *Cratylus*, Plato (427 - 347 BC) contended that suggestions of a divine origin of words was simply side-stepping the whole issue; what was necessary was an investigation into the source of names.

It is interesting that Plato recognized the vital importance of the organs of articulation, in creating a name.

Answer me this question:

If we had no voice or tongue, and wished to make things clear to one another, should we not try, as dumb people actually do, to make signs with our hands and head and person generally?...

And when we wish to express anything by voice or tongue or mouth, will not our expression by these means be accomplished in any given instance, when an imitation of something is accomplished by them?...

A name then, it appears, is a vocal imitation of that which is imitated, and he who imitates with his voice, names that which he imitates.²

In this Dialogue, we find that Socrates remarked on the fact that some of the sounds of Greek speech had a shaky, quivering quality; some had a penetrating quality; and others made him particularly aware of their articulatory movements. The presence of such sounds in words that labelled referent categories which also had attributes of shakiness, penetration or movement, made these words appropriate names. Socrates concluded that there was a definite link between name and referent.

Epicurus (341 - 271 BC) was one of the first philosophers to raise the subject of the origin of language in Greek philosophy. In his investigation, he concluded that neither God nor reason, but nature, was the source of language. Language was a biological function like hearing and vision.

² The Works of Plato. Loeb Classical Library No 167, pp142-164

In the second century BC, the Greek language of Homeric texts began to be evaluated and interpreted by grammarians, and interest in language took another turn.

One school, headed by Aristarch (220-142 BC) said that language was ruled by analogy - physics: natural laws. Another philologist, Krates, said that it was ruled by anomaly - nomus, and was man-made.

In Roman times, grammarians were primarily concerned with the standardization of language for political unity.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, Christian doctrine was content to presume that language was God-given.

John Locke (1632-1704) claimed that there was so close a connection between ideas and words, that it was impossible to speak of knowledge, without first considering the nature, use and signification of language. He came to the conclusion that societies needed to communicate thoughts and ideas, and that man used the articulate sounds which he found he could so easily make, to do so.

Abbe Etienne Bonnot de Condillac (1715-1780) contended that man's first language consisted of gesture and inarticulated noises based on the construction of his bodily movements. As articulated sounds increased, gesture language was replaced. He contended that sounds are capable of expressing the physical characteristics of objects; that the first names reflected the speaker's attitude to, or impression of the object, not the nature of the object itself.

de Condillac said that any enquiry into languages would have to consider the language of our body organization (biology), and that this principle would apply to all languages.

Charles de Brosses (1709-1777), believed in an original, natural human language ability, inherent in all languages, but unrecognisable, because, due to language changes, it had lost its original link between sound and meaning.

Language had been determined by the organs of articulation and phonation, and the objects named. The sounds were a result of man depicting the properties of the object with sound. This sound eventually became a symbol, and could arouse the idea of the object. de Brosses was amongst the first theorists to attribute speech to a natural basis. For him, language development, however, was a product of man's reason; reasoning man had lost the original contact that primitive man had experienced with nature.

The main argument in the Eighteenth Century was whether man's reason or his nature had formed his language, or whether it was God's revelation. The Prussian Academy of Sciences held an essay contest to resolve this controversy. It was won by Johann Gottfried Herder.

Herder believed that both reason and language were natural to man. Language was a factor in the structure of consciousness itself, and helped man develop his reasoning powers. Language grew from within and was not invented. It was the tool by which the world of sensation becomes the world of intuition. Herder believed that only through analysis of the physical aspects of language could we reach an understanding of humanity.

William von Humboldt (1767-1835) developed Herder's essay. Reason was a natural endowment and must be studied as a natural subject, not a philosophical one. For Humboldt, every language represented a particular view of the world and the word reflects man's image of the object. Languages are different because of different world views.

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) believed that man's sounds and the ability to link them with ideas, were shared by animals. Man however, has an infinitely larger power of associating sounds and ideas.

Darwin said that the different languages were, like the different species, organic, and that both had evolved and developed through gradual processes. The fact that man possessed articulate speech, did not preclude his having evolved from a more primitive form.

Darwin noted the connection between brain damage and speech disorders. He also noted the empathy that existed between oral and hand gestures. e.g.

- (a) that when young children draw pictures, or learn to write, their jaw, lip and tongue movements imitated their hand gestures: and
- (b) the jaw actions of someone cutting with scissors.

In the mid-Nineteenth century, the linguist August Schleicher (1821-1868) decided that linguistics should be grouped with Natural, not Social Science.

He believed that languages had evolved from animal sounds and developed simultaneously with the development of the speech organs and the brain. He said that the first sounds would have been to signify precepts, not concepts.

The famous Nineteenth Century psychologist, Wilhelm Wundt wrote two volumes on Language and Speech in his *Folk Psychology*.(1907)

I summarize: gesture language arises from emotion and the involuntary expressive movements that accompany it. Ideas are communicated by movements of the hands and arms as they supplement expressive facial movements. It would be only natural that the movements of the articulatory organs joined in to supplement the mimetic and expressive body movements.

A spate of theories on the subject of the origin of language appeared around the end of the Nineteenth century, and has continued to do so into the Twentieth century.

Otto Jespersen, (1922) a Danish philologist was interested in sound symbolism. His theory was that a sound is always produced by movement. This movement makes an impression on the ear and the word expresses this movement in its sound.

His theory accounts for onomatopoeic words; e.g. bubble, but cannot account for all words. However, Jespersen had interesting theories concerning heights of vowels, in relation to the sounds they produced, and about the movements of the tongue.

Sir Richard Paget published *Human Speech* in 1930. He developed Wundt's gesture theory. Paget says that early humans would have used gesture to communicate, and gestures made with the hands were unconsciously copied by movements of the mouth, tongue, lips and jaw.

If air was blown through the nasal and oral cavity at the same time, whispering would occur. If this air was vocalized, voiced sounds are heard.

Alexander Johannesson corresponded with Paget for many years, during his own research for his four essays, *Origin of Language* (1949). He said that Paget's theory was, of all theories, the most probable, and likely to revolutionize philology. Johannesson showed evidence to support Paget's theory from his own research.

He noted that the same theory had been propounded by Doctor J. Rae, in 1862, in *A Treatise on the Polynesian Language*.

The first Indo-Europeans, as well as the first semitic people began to speak by imitating the signs of the hand with their speech organs.³

Rae's theory was also known to and accepted to by the language historian Henry Sweet, who considered symbolic roots an important element in the beginning of language.

In his book, *The History of Language* (1900), Sweet says:

Sympathetic, at first unconscious, lingual gesture would then accompany the hand gesture which by degrees, would be dropped as superfluous... such roots as these contained in the English "wind", German "munchen" (which means "blow"), may be regarded either as a result of actually blowing with the mouth, or as imitation of the sound of wind.⁴

Wolfgang Köhler, the primatologist, wrote *The Mentality of Apes* (1931). He concluded that there are nineteen prerequisites for language, and only man possesses them all.

³ Quoted by Alexander Johannesson: *Nature Journal* No. 166.

⁴ Henry Sweet; *The History of Language*. pp37-38.

Koehler said that chimpanzees greet, groan and grumble; however only man has the ability to attach names or symbols (words) to concepts which enables him to combine and permute concepts.

The French philologist, Noiré, proposed that language arose out of communal action. Any strong muscular effort results in the forcible emission of breath, setting the vocal mechanisms vibrating. These sounds would be the result of different vocal releases, resulting from the differing activities in which man was occupied or engaged in group labour. Such sounds came to be symbols for the performance or activity - words.

In his book, *The Language of Gesture*, (1939), the neurologist and surgeon, Macdonald Critchley, discusses the importance of gesture for survival in the animal world.

In relation to human gesture he says:

Evidence collected from developmental comparative philology shows that gestures may constitute an important aspect of speech with origins perhaps more remote than verbalization. In this way, gestures or sign talk may represent a forerunner, or one of the forerunners, of human speech.

Critchley concludes:

...it is clear that gesture is a primitive component of speech... amongst mankind, the most voluble are also the most addicted to gesture. The two faculties, that of speech and that of gesture, seem to have developed side by side, gesture being comparable with an elder brother of speech.⁵

Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian philosopher and educationalist, like Laban sought, in an industrial and material age, to re-educate man into an awareness of the inter-relationship and unity of his physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects.

⁵ Macdonald Critchley. *The Language of Gesture*. p121

Steiner, like Laban, recognised the important, strong link between the body and the mind. He cites an example; when an impression arouses a feeling of wonder, of awe, the throat opens to produce (the jaw drops): "ah": "aw". When the mind is in an open and receptive state, the body and all its movements reflect this attitude.

He said that the breath which makes the voice, corresponds to the total movement of response in the body. Word cannot be separated from action; nor thought from word.

In his monumental and impressive work *The Philosophy of Symbolic Form*, Ernst Cassirer devoted one volume to language.

... it becomes evident that concepts of space, time and number are the essential framework of objective intuition as it develops in language. But they can fulfil this function only because...by holding fast to the form of sensuous expression, they progressively imbue the sensuous with intellectual content and mould it into a symbol...⁶

All logical analysis of concepts seems eventually to lead to the study of words and names...the content of the concept merges with the content and function of the word....Thus the question of the significance and origin of concept inevitably leads back to the question of the origin of the word...An absolute "pure" speechless thought would not know the opposition between true and false, which arises only in and through speech. Thus the question of the significance and origin of the concept inevitably leads back to the question of the origin of the word: inquiry into the genesis of word significations and word classes becomes the only means of elucidating the imminent meaning of the concept and its functions in the development of knowledge..⁷

He concludes:

An unbroken path leads from sensation to intuition, from intuition to conceptual thought, and thence to logical judgement...intellectual expression could not have developed through and out of sensual expression if it had not originally been contained in it...language shows itself to be at once a sensuous and an intellectual form of expression.⁸

⁶ Ernst Cassirer; *The Philosophy of Symbolic Form*. Volume 1. Language; p.278.

⁷ *Ibid.* p.285.

⁸ *Ibid.* p.289.

The psychologist, Vygotsky, published *Thought and Language* in 1962. He considered the inter-relationship between thought and speech to be one of the most complex problems in psychology. His investigation examines "the living union of sound and meaning that we call word".⁹

He contends that the view that sound and meaning in words are separate elements leading separate lives, has done much harm to the study of both the phonetic and semantic aspects of language. It was impossible to study speech sounds without considering their function, which was to bring out their physical and psychological properties. In the same way, a study of semantics could not be divorced from speech sounds.

He believed that "word meaning" was the area to investigate: in it, thought and speech unite into verbal thought.

The relation between thought and word is a living process: thought is born through words. A word devoid of thought is a dead thing, and a thought unembodied in words remains a shadow.¹⁰

Vygotsky quotes Faust; "In the beginning was the deed...".

The word was not the beginning, action was there first... a generalized reflection of reality is the basic characteristic of words... they are the key to the nature of consciousness. Words play a central part, not only in the development of thought, but in the historical growth of consciousness as a whole. A word is a microcosm of human consciousness.¹¹

Vygotsky says that modern linguistics distinguishes between the meaning of a word and its referent. He examines this question of disparity, and gives historical examples: e.g. Russian has two words for "moon", arrived at by different thought processes. One word derives its name from the Latin word meaning "caprice"; inconstancy; here, the important aspect labelled, was the moon's mutability. The other word means "measurer": here, the aspect that impressed, was that time could be measured by lunar phases.

⁹ L.S. Vygotsky; *Thought and Language*. p.2

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.234

¹¹ *Ibid.* p.234

Original names reflect aspects of the referent which arrested attention, and impressed enough to arouse the original vocal response. This original link is forgotten in time.

Use of the word is an integral part of the development of consciousness. The word maintains a guiding function in the formation of concepts, to which these processes lead.

Vygotsky quotes Osip Mandelstam:

I have forgotten the word I intended to say, and my thought, unembodied, returns to the realm of shadows.¹²

Vygotsky says that the use of words provides the means of actively centering attention; of abstracting certain traits, synthesizing them, and symbolizing them by sign.

Vygotsky supports his argument with extensive research into the ontogenetic development of speech.

He concludes by saying that for too long, the word has been seen as the external concomitant of thought, its attire only; "thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them."¹³

Karl Popper, from the University of London School of Economic and Political Science, published "*Evolutionary Theory - Paths into the Future*" (1984).

The chapter entitled "Evolutionary Epistemology" deals with "the theory of knowledge, especially of scientific knowledge."

I look upon human language, upon human knowledge and upon human science, as a product of human evolution, especially of Darwinian evolution through natural selection.¹⁴

¹² *Ibid*, p.153

¹³ *Ibid*; p.125

Popper considers that the specifically human ability "to know", is a result of natural selection closely connected with the evolution of a specifically human language.

He views the evolution of scientific knowledge as a process involving the evolution of "better" theories; the theories become adapted through natural selection, to give us better information about reality.

Faced with practical problems, organisms become problem-solvers. This is done through processes of trial and error. The unfit theories are rejected and only the best survive. Human language enables man to formulate theories outside his organism - to objectify them and criticize them.

Popper dismisses the "observationalist" approach to epistemology, which assumes that our sense organs are the sources of our knowledge, i.e. that knowledge is the result of perceptual information received.

Popper says that it is "we" who actively explore the environment. It is not a case of information streaming into us. He asserts that sense organs are prior to sense data. Our sense organs are the equivalent of theories. They are adaptations, and have evolved in order to interpret our environment.

The camera and its structure, comes before the photograph, and the organism and its structure, comes before the information.¹⁵

Popper says that life is usually characterized by the following dependant features:

1. procreation and heredity;
2. growth;
3. absorption and assimilation of food;

¹⁴ Karl Popper; *Evolutionary Theory - Paths into the Future*, p.239

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.244

4. sensitivity to stimuli;
5. modifications of physical organs, or in behavioural repertoires, based on the construction of theories about the environment.

He says that (4) should be changed to:

- 4(a) problem solving - problems emerging from the environmental or internal situation of the organism;
- (b) active exploration of the environment - often involving random trial movements.

All of these functions originate in the organism, and are actions, not reactions to the environment. It is the organism and its state, that selects significant environmental stimuli with which it reacts. The reactive energy can be expended in different ways and amounts.

Popper relates the significance of the active and exploratory nature of animals and man, to the evolution of language. He cites Karl Buhler, who published a paper in 1918, in which he distinguished three stages in the evolution of language.

First stage: the biological function of language; to outwardly express, by sound or gesture, the inner state.(response; reaction etc.)

Second stage: the responding animal learns that the expression is a signal; the sign releases a definite response; a communication has occurred.

Third stage: expressive and communicative functions are retained; however, language takes on a descriptive function.

Poppers' thesis is based on the premise that in the evolution of man, the descriptive function of human language, has been the prerequisite for critical thinking. Prior to human descriptive language, all theories could be said to be part of the structure of organisms.

Descriptive language enabled man to be objective, i.e. to formulate a theory, and to interrelate with it so that it provides a feedback.

I summarize Popper's theory of three worlds.

World one: comprises all physical, chemical and biological processes within living bodies.

World two: conscious experience of thoughts and feelings, through language, creates the human mind.

World three: all myths, theories, art, culture; the world of human creativity, are products of the human mind, which is based on human language.

Popper concludes; the interaction between worlds two and three, between our mental growth and the growth of civilization and achievement, allows us to "transcend ourselves". It is this self transcendence which Popper considers the most important fact of all life and evolution.

... in our interaction with world three we can learn, and thanks to our invention of language, our fallible human minds can grow into lights that illuminate the universe.¹⁶

Jean-Paul Sartre, in *The Psychology of Imagination*, concurs with Popper in terms of the importance of imagination in the development of human consciousness, and the physical structuring of consciousness.

Sartre attempts to bridge the gap between psychology and philosophy, which, he says, have been separated for over a century, the former having once been a branch of the parent tree, philosophy.

This treatise reveals Sartre's way of conceiving the nature of psychic life and the mind's relationship with the external world.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p.254

Consciousness never precedes the object. It is our perception of the object, the act, which reveals it to our consciousness.

Consciousness is therefore based on perception, not conception, and is the result of conscious activity. All consciousness is consciousness "of" something.

An image is never anything more than the consciousness we have of it. Sartre looks at the relationship between the image we see and the object. The image is an act which envisions - either from the world of real things, or from the inner world (consciousness of movements; feelings, etc.).

Consciousness is therefore dependent on imagination; the relationship between the physical image and its object resemble each other.

Every perception is accompanied by an effective reaction...Every feeling is a feeling of something; i.e. it envisions its object in a certain manner and projects upon it a certain quality.¹⁷

Sartre, concludes that consciousness is born out of imagination, which is developed through perception and the kinaesthetic sense.

In the *Oral Tradition* Jousse says:

Over the last fifty years or so too much has been said about the brain; it has been said that thought is a secretion of the brain, which is nonsense, or that thought is somehow linked to the functions of the brain. The time will come when this will be laughed at: it is simply not true. Psychological phenomena, and what we call thought are not the functions of any particular organ...

What we call ideas, the phenomena of psychology, belong to behaviour as a whole, the individual as a whole, considered in his entirety. We think with our hands as well as with our brain, we think with our stomach, we think with everything: we should not separate one part from the others.¹⁸

¹⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre; *The Psychology of Imagination*. p.37.

¹⁸ Marcel Jousse, *The Oral Tradition*, p.34.

Jousse propounds the holistic and natural basis of perception, memory, imagination and thought, which provided humans with self-awareness, consciousness and “knowledge - becoming the other whilst remaining oneself”.¹⁹

I concur with Jousse’s philosophy.

The ability to focus attention, concentration, recognition and memory, are all rudimentary in the animal mind. Human language allows us to “zoom into”, and extend, the animal mind. In addition, it provides us with an inner voice which is a necessary prerequisite for a working memory and mind - which constitute consciousness.

I would also agree that the “two world” theory is a psychological myth, which was based on a philosophical myth, which was a physiological error.

The inner world, the mind, does not denote a separate status. One cannot sensibly ask of a given thing or event, whether it is mental or physical, “in the mind” “in the body” or “in the outside world”.

Impressions and sensations, e.g. pain, are experienced by the person who feels them; i.e. the sensation of pain is “in” the person who feels it, and it is a physiological and mental experience and reality.

Physical sensations, feelings, images and thought are all parts of our stream of consciousness, and help to constitute, if they do not completely constitute, the composition of the mind.

One can physically hear a tune and the words of a song, in one’s head; likewise, one can summon an image of a face or of a landscape, or visually and emotionally re-experience an incident; a memory.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p.33.

Thinking things involves saying things to oneself in one's head: a sequence of words is involved.

The above examples cannot be considered as purely mental operations. The mind and the body cannot be separated.

Visualization, imagination, thought and sensation can, therefore, be seen as the mental awareness and recognition of physical experiences, which constitute "mind".

Gilbert Ryle, Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy at Oxford University, in his *The Concept of Mind*, also discards any distinction between the inner and the outer world. He says that the dichotomy cannot be sustained.

Will, feeling, imagination, perception and thought cannot be separated: they all constitute "mind".

In relation to Jousse's statement above

we think with our hands as well as with our brains, we think with our stomach,
we think with everything:

it is interesting to see that language reflects how emotions are rooted in the physical body. Many words used to designate thoughts and feelings are also used to designate bodily sensations.

Emotional glows and agitations have correlations with body glows and agitations. A flutter may be a flutter of anticipation, or it may be a flutter of bodily exhaustion; one may squirm with embarrassment or with stomach-ache.

We have pangs; glows; chills; qualms; hankerings; sinkings; curdlings; liftings; throbs; twinges; wrenches; itches; prickings; squirms; flutters, etc.

e.g. a twinge of remorse; a chill of disquiet; a tug of sympathy; a pang of guilt; a glow of pride; a shock of surprise; a throb of compassion; a qualm of apprehension; a glow of warmth; a surge of tenderness.

We may wince from a prick of a finger or a prick of our conscience; we can feel the sinking feeling of despair in the pit of our stomach; or the clench in the tense feeling of anger in the muscles of the jaw and fist.

I.A. Richards considers such linkings to be emotional metaphors, rather than sense metaphors.

e.g. a voice, a face, an action, or a person may be called “icy” or “cold”, because they arouse the same emotional reaction. The natural correlation of sense qualities provides the basis for the metaphorical extension.

Voices are often described in terms of physical, sensuous and emotional “attributes”.

e.g. brassy; brittle; quivering; smooth; hoarse; coarse; light; gravelly; cold; warm; scintillating; rasping, shallow; dark; icy; thin, etc.

These attributes of sensation are used to describe other human qualities: temperaments, manners and intellect.

Temperaments can be fiery; cold; icy; hot; luke-warm; brittle. Manners can be coarse; smooth; brash; rough. Intellects can be bright; dull; thick; narrow; quick; slow.

Vygotsky had noted that words denoting body parts could be transferred to denote similarities - metaphors.

e.g. the leg of a table; the elbow of a road; the arm of the chair; the seat of a chair; the neck of a bottle - a bottleneck.

In his book *The Ape That Spoke*, John McCrone also noted the importance of metaphors in human language systems and thought process.

We do not feel we really understand something until we ground it in commonplace experience...which is why we use everyday objects to mimic the way unfamiliar or even totally abstract things are going to work...
Language gave us the space to step back and see ourselves but we have no automatic ability to understand what we see. We need good metaphors to feel we understand ourselves...The whole of human intellectual achievement rides along on the back of metaphors...This raises the point that the depth of human thought must be limited by the metaphors available.²⁰

He says that originally nature provided metaphors, e.g. fire, water. When man discovered technology he created a wealth of new metaphors, and throughout history, the dominant metaphors of cultures have reflected their latest technologies.

The ancient Greeks used images of pottery and spinning to help explain the heavens and stars: Plato spoke of the universe as a spinning spindle; hanging balls of yarn were the celestial spheres and gods measured and cut the thread by fate. By the Middle Ages, clockwork was the popular motif for explaining the world, and when the industrial revolution brought steam power and hydraulic systems, these became the new driving images...Today it is the computer that dominates as a metaphor.²¹

It is interesting to look at metaphorical extensions in language-making. The following are definitions from Dr Johnson's *Dictionary*, published in 1755.

dog. A domestick animal...the larger sorts are used as a guard; the less for sports.

dog is a particle added to anything to mark meanness, or degeneracy, or worthlessness; as dog rose.

dog-trick. An ill turn; surly or brutal treatment.

dogcheap. Cheap as dogs meat; cheap as the offal bought for dogs.

dogfly. A voracious biting fly.

dogged. Sullen; sour; morose; ill-humoured; gloomy.

doggish. Currish; brutal.

doghearted. Cruel; pitiless; malicious.

doghole; A vile hole; a mean habitation. "France is a doghole, and it no more merits the tread of a man's foot...Shakespeare; All's well that Ends Well.

dogsleep. Pretended sleep.

²⁰ John McCrone, *The Ape That Spoke*, pp.107:109.

²¹ *Ibid*, p.108.

dogsmeat. Refuse; vile stuff;(offal sold to feed dogs.)²²

It would appear that the English were not always a nation of dog-lovers.

In Shakespeare's *King Richard the Third*, Queen Margaret says of Richard: "I pray God, that I may live to say the dog is dead".

The word "cur" had similar connotations.

cur. A term of reproach for a man.

currish. Having the qualities of a degenerate dog; brutal; sour

cursome; malignant; churlish; uncivil; untractable.

curship. Dogship; meanness; scoundrelship.

curst. Forward; peevish; malignant; malicious; snarling.

to curtail. It was anciently written "curtal"...dogs that had their tails cut being called curtal dogs; the word was vulgarly conceived to mean "to cut the tail". To cut off; to cut short.²³

It is interesting to compare: In the *Oxford Dictionary*, 250 years later, we have:

cur; worthless dog.

curse; call for evil to come on a person or thing.

curtail; cut short.

curt; rudely brief.

dog; four legged wild or domesticated animal

dogged; follow persistently.

dog-eared; with page corners crumpled through use.

dogcollar; clerical collar.

dogged; determined.

doggerel; bad verse.

doghouse; kennel; in disgrace.

dogmatic; saying things in an authoritative way.

dogmatize; be dogmatic.

dogsbody; drudge.

In this chapter, we have looked at theories of the origin of speech and language.

²² Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*, pp.154-155

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.142-143.

We have looked at philosophical, epistemological and psychological proposals concerning the relationship of thought and speech.

I finalise this section, with Christabel Burniston's thoughts on, and views of, speech and language.

Christabel Burniston is a voice and speech theorist and specialist in America. Her vocal training methods are founded on the use of the whole body in the production of resonant and flexible vocal expression.

She observes that, for hundreds of years prior to the development of human speech, the organs which have been adapted to articulate speech, must have been primarily used for appetite-related functions; chewing, biting, licking, sucking etc.

Taste, smell and texture - desire, satisfaction and pleasure - must have permeated the process of speech for thousands of years. She quotes the scientist, Lewis Thomas:

In order to get a language really to work from the outset, as a means of human communication by speech, it must have been obligatory to make, first off, the words needed to express the feelings aroused by things, particularly living things in the world...for ideas to begin flowing in and out of minds... the feelings would have to come first into speech, and that sense of the roots must persist like genes in all the words to follow.²⁴

Thomas reminds us that words connect us with the natural world around us as well as with each other.

Burniston reports:

that Eskimo tribes have recently lost their ability to find their way home, after three or four month long hunting treks into uncharted wilds, by "singing the landscape." Their voices and the shapes of hills, rivers and valleys, merged to make a journey-song, which mapped and navigated their travels. When they were taught to read, this skill was erased.²⁵

²⁴ Christabel Burniston. *Freeing Shakespeare's Voice.*, p.12.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.12-13

Burniston concludes:

the neuro-physiological pathways connecting words with the sensory apparatus of the body and with nature have not disappeared...we can awaken dormant energies of speech...by indulging sensory, sensual, emotional and physical responses to vowels and consonants - the component parts of words - we begin to resurrect the life of language.²⁶

1.1 An Over-View of Developments in the Field of Linguistics in the Twentieth Century

In the early Twentieth century, two American anthropologists had a great influence on linguistic ideas of the time. Franz Boas (1850-1942) believed that language reflected culture.

Edward Sapir (1884-1939), also viewed language in its cultural context. He established that the sounds (phones) of a language are structured, and appear in different patterns in different languages. His research convinced him of the firm relationship between speech and thought. Benjamin Lee Whorf, a student of Sapir's, continued investigating the interrelationship of language and culture.

He said:

the background linguistic system ...of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for naming ideas, but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide to the individual's mental activity.²⁷

Leonard Bloomfield developed Sapir's language patterning into a formulation of phonemics in linguistics. He investigated the interrelativity of sound laws (phonemic correspondences) in different languages, and made immense contributions to comparative philology.

He used the phonemic system to analyse similar features of vocal utterance in various language groups, in order to establish their genetic relationship, and in search of a common ancestral language.

As a result of comparative philology, a group of linguists set out formulating detailed procedures by which one could discover the basic units of language.

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp.12-13

²⁷ Benjamin Lee Whorf. *Language, Thought and Reality*. p.199

This procedure came to be known as structural linguistics, which aims at discovering general laws and universals. The structural linguist extracts the phonetic reality of distinctive features. When he has found the same phoneme in several languages, this shows the basic identity of different entities.

The structural linguists Jakobson and Halle said:

...the supposed multiplicity of feature proves to be largely illusionary...the same laws underlie the languages of the world, both in their static and dynamic aspects.²⁸

Naom Chomsky, working in structural linguistics, developed what has come to be known as the "generative" nature of grammar.(1957). Chomsky called attention to two facts about language.

1. Every sentence that a person utters and understands, is a brand new combination of words. Language therefore cannot be a repertoire of responses, which was the view of the behaviourist school current at the time. There must be a program - a mental grammar - in the brain that can create unlimited sentences out of a limited number of words.
2. Children learn to construct and understand grammatical constructions without being taught them. So children are innately equipped with a plan common to all languages - a universal grammar - that tells them how to make and understand sentences.

This universal grammar was a deep grammar which could be transformed into the surface grammar of any language. Chomsky set out to prove that humans are born equipped with language knowledge i.e. with an inborn capacity for language competence. This presupposed an innate mechanism which Chomsky called "the Language Acquisition Device," (LAD) which would have occurred as a result of an evolutionary process.

²⁸ Jakobson and Halle. *Structural Anthropology*. p.112

Chomsky's ideas have had vast reverberations in linguistics, psychology, anthropology, biology and philosophy.

The biologist, Eric Lenneberg based his book *The Biological Foundations of Language* on Chomsky's theory. (1967)

He investigates the in-born capacity for language in humans. The rules of language are biologically determined. Language is part of behaviour which is species-specific.

The rules that underlie syntax are of a specific kind, so there must be a central mechanism which has a specific internal organisation. Rules must have been built into this grammatical organiser.

Lenneberg says that, phylogenically, there must have been an alteration, a genetic change in the brain tissues, which created a critical stage for human language acquisition: - a central mechanism (Chomsky's LAD).

Lenneberg discounts any possibility of speech and language playing any role in concept formation.

Chomsky's LAD, has had revolutionary implications for what is now called "the science of language". It has taken speech and language into the realm of "cognitive science", which combines the tools of psychology, computer science, linguistics, philosophy and neurobiology to explain the workings of human intelligence.

Chomsky's theory attacked the foundations of sociolinguistics: that man's world-view and language were based on, and influenced by his cultural environment; and that language and world-view were inter-related.

This has led to denouncement of the importance of "speech" and cultural relativity, and to the separation of speech and language from the realm of conceptualisation, which is presently prevalent in current linguistics.

Words, are now considered, as Lenneberg termed them: "arbitrary tags to conceptual processes."

The psycholinguist, Elizabeth Ingram (1975) researched the ontogenesis of speech - its development in children. She dismissed Chomsky's observation which claimed that cognitive development precedes linguistic development. She said:

(Language) is part, and a very important part, of cognitive development in general. There is no "Black Box" which accounts totally and exclusively for language development.²⁹

Chomsky's theory was not accepted by those who supported the priority of communicative competence over linguistic competence.

Neither was it accepted by the sociolinguists who had examined linguistic form in relation to its communicative role in culture. Communicative utterances in a group are communicable within the group, because they are shared by the group, and reflect the group's view of the world. If language reflects our way of looking at the world, are our ideas and cultural outlook determined by language? This question, concerning the relationship between the sign and the meaning, was termed :linguistic relativity.

Chomsky's arguments about the innate nature of the language faculty, were based on technical analyses of sentence structure, and language was now an innate biological faculty.

One of the latest books on language (published 1995) is also influenced by, and founded on, Chomsky's theory.

It is entitled "*The Language Instinct*" - *The New Science of Language and Mind* by Steven Pinker, who is a Professor in the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at M.I.T.

²⁹ Elizabeth Ingram; *Psychology and Language Learning*. p.223

I had presumed that Pinker's investigation would consider the natural biological roots of speech and language. He states: "human language is a part of human biology - an instinct."

I would agree that original speech sounds were instinctual; i.e. a result of natural impulses, as is all of man's movement.

However Pinker sees this instinct having developed when the genetic changes, which made Chomsky's LAD, occurred in the brain.

The complexity of language, from the scientist's point of view, is part of our biological birthright...³⁰

Pinker sees language ability as being the result of a biological adaptation to communicate information. This is why language is an instinct. Pinker also considers words to be arbitrary.

Since a word is a pure symbol, the relation between its sound and its meaning is utterly arbitrary.³¹

Pinker gives examples of how the innate syntactical organiser operates.

The /i/ sound in ride, prize, five is longer than the /i/ in write, price, five.

Does this mean, he asks, that there are five rules operating to alter /i/? i.e. change /i/ before z versus /s/; change /i/ before /v/ versus /f/ etc.

No, he concludes; we need only one rule; change /i/ whenever it appears before an unvoiced consonant.

He claims that the operation of these phonological rules is triggered by the fact that the "mental grammar organ" recognises the fact that there is a class of phonemes that share one or more features. The rule is applied whenever one of this class of phonemes is spoken.

³⁰ Steven Pinker; *The Language Instinct*. p.19

³¹ *Ibid*, p.132.

This suggests that rules do not "see" the phonemes in a string but instead look right through them to the features they are made of... it is features, not phonemes that are manipulated by the rules.³²

Pinker infers that there is a "mental grammar organ", somewhere in every English speaker's brain, that rules that they always make the /i/ sound shorter before an unvoiced consonant, than they make the /i/ sound before a voiced consonant.

In the examples above, the diphthong /i/ is shorter, simply because the voicing is curtailed to facilitate a change in vocal production; voice is stopped, and the breath force prepares to shape the succeeding voiceless sound.

It is longer (only slightly) before voiced /d/, simply because there is no change in voicing, and the voiced diphthong glides directly to voiced /d/.

Pinker 'proves' his case.

The proof that this is the real rule in people's heads is that if an English speaker succeeds in pronouncing the German /ch/ in "the Third Reich", that speaker will pronounce the /ei/ as in "write", not "ride". The consonant /ch/ is not in the English inventory, so English speakers could not have learned any rule specifically applying to it. But it is an unvoiced consonant, and if the rule applies to any unvoiced consonant, an English speaker knows exactly what to do.³³

Pinker says that English speakers "know exactly what to do" because of a ruling in their innate syntactical organiser, which says that /i/ must be shorter before a voiceless consonant, than before a voiced one.

However, there is a very simple explanation: the difference in vowel length is due to the fact that the articulatory organs which shape the oral gestures of the sounds, know exactly "how" to do so with ease and economy of effort.

Pinker gives another example of how phonological rules adjust features.

³² *Ibid.*, p.177.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.177

In walked, slapped and passed, the /ed/ is pronounced as a /t/; in jogged sobbed and fizzed, it is pronounced as a /d/... the /t/ pronunciation comes after voiceless consonants like k, p, and s; the /d/ comes after the voiced ones like g, b and z. There must be a rule that adjusts the pronunciation of the suffix -ed by peering back into the final phoneme of the stem and checking to see if it has the voicing feature.³⁴

The voiceless /ed/(t) occurs after the voiceless consonants because the articulatory organs find it much easier to continue the voiceless flow: it would be extremely awkward for them to have to stop the breath-flow and vocalize the suffix. e.g. walk...d.

Pinker would, I'm sure, be convinced that the reason we say "a" before a consonant, and "an" before a vowel, is because the innate syntax-organising "grammar organ" in our brain, has rules which instruct us to do so.

However, it is simply because our articulatory organs can move easily from a vowel to a consonant: "a man"; "a dog". Moving from a vowel to another vowel is also easy; diphthongs glide into each other comfortably; but to articulate the movement necessary to distinguish the end of one word, and the beginning of another, the articulatory organs find it very much easier to glide through the tongue/teethridge contact of; e.g. "an apple"; "an orange"; "an old man".

If the initial vowel was directly followed by the second, the vocal cords (folds) would have to close, and then re-open - the breath and vocal flow would be interrupted and temporarily halted; the oral gestures would be awkward movements.

There is one thing of which we can be sure - the articulatory organs do not waste time or effort - the gestures of speech which constitute our phonological system, are performed with ease and economy of effort.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.177

The origin of language has also been sought in finding an "original language," which would have been the ancestor of all languages: a "mother tongue" from which all spoken languages are derived..

In 1963, an American linguist, Joseph Greenberg, examined thirty languages, from five continents, and found in them, many commonalities; language universals.

Since then many other surveys have been conducted, involving languages from all of the world, and hundreds of universal patterns have been recorded. Universals show that languages do not differ greatly in their deep structures.

From this, the linguists have inferred:

1. Language evolved only once, and all existing languages are its descendants, and retain some of its features.
2. Language universals might reflect universals of thought or of mental information processes that are not specific to language. (Greenberg's critics claim that languages can resemble each other because of lateral borrowing, rather than vertical inheritance.)

Greenberg, his associate Ruhlen and a school of Russian linguists, have uncovered Nostratic, which they claim is the "mother tongue" of all languages.

Nostratic would have been spoken by hunter-gatherers: there are no names for domesticated animals among the 1,600 words the linguists say they have reconstructed.

Speakers of Nostratic would have occupied all of Europe, northern Africa, and most of Asia, about 15,000 years ago, from an origin in the Middle East.

In 1988, the University of Michigan hosted an international and inter-disciplinary conference on the academic implications of Nostratic - our ancestral language.

Pinker and Lenneberg, as we have seen, both base their theories on Chomsky's supposition of an innate biological grammar organ.

In his conclusion Lenneberg says:

... the now existing association of language with the central nervous system peculiarities, does not mean an evolutionary and inevitable relationship.³⁵

I find it inconceivable that some inexplicable molecular evolutionary change took place in the brains of all Cro-Magnons - presumably at the same time - which afforded them a state of language "readiness". This made it possible - for all Cro-Magnons, simultaneously - to acquire language, which was activated and controlled by a hidden central mechanism.

Lenneberg and Pinker both say that language is only possible because of the innate structure and mechanisms of the brain, as these determine behaviour. They also both claim that the cognitive function is a more basic and primary function than language: language "tags" concepts and categorisation process by means of arbitrary symbols - words.

Both are obviously oblivious of the inherent rhythm and movement-logic which is to be found in spoken words, that they can dismiss their dynamic role as "arbitrary tags."

Lenneberg considers whether this "tag" could be responsible for making the concept salient. He comes to the conclusion that as experiences in the physical world are given the arbitrary tags in all languages, the concepts tagged are not arbitrary, but are a necessary prerequisite for language.

He illustrates his conclusion: he cites that the externalisation of concepts in mathematics; science; music and the visual arts, is not dependant on language.

This is untrue; the externalisation of concepts in the above disciplines depends on their own "languages": their specific "forms" of expression.

³⁵ Eric Lenneberg. *Biological Foundations of Language*, p.375.

For Lenneberg, concepts and cognitive process are independent of language. However, it seems, from the following quotation, that he concedes the need for words to make concepts salient, after all.

People in undeveloped countries who are suddenly introduced to a new technology for which there is no terminology in their own language, can learn the new concepts by simply introducing foreign words into their vernacular or by making new use of old words.³⁶

I cannot accept the theory that language evolved only once, and that all living languages are descended from one ancestral language. Man, and his languages, differ. Nor can I accept that language universals reflect universals of thought processes.

I suggest that language universals reflect the interrelationship of man's biological structure and the physical forces of his environment.

"Original" vocal sounds, the audible movements from which all languages developed, were part of man's total movement repertoire.

The biological features of man, his structure and sense organs, determine the possibilities and limits of physical movement and activity.

The environments in which speech developed, are subject to physical laws, eg spatial, temporal and gravitational forces.

Language universals can thus be seen to reflect the gestural origins of all languages.

Current linguistic research techniques, methodologies and directions, have lost connection with the biological "body".

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.356.

They appear to show no interest in, or perhaps have no knowledge of, the organic nature of the gestures which shape speech sounds. The sounds which, in all probability, became tools for early man; tools with which he could form and manipulate concepts.

Academic linguistic research appears to be "grounded" in conceptual mechanisms and verbose jargon.

However, the investigations continue: into the uniqueness of human language, and the secrets it might reveal about man's own essence and humanity; and the nature of reality.

1.2 Summary of Marcel Jousse's Theory of the Origin of Language

"Twenty years before he is born, a man is born in his mother".³⁷

Jousse's Background

Jousse was greatly influenced by his early childhood and his up-bringing. Born into a rural peasant community in France, he experienced a childhood rich in spontaneity and oral tradition, and devoid of intellectual pretensions.

All his thinking has been influenced by his first memories of rhythmic sensations; the balanced vocal rhythms of the cantilenas sung to him by his mother, and the rhythmic movements of her rocking him.

His environment was one in which he experienced the sensations of "real" things; real chestnuts and "sweet cider". His mother and the community were mostly illiterate, but highly intelligent, and possessed vast repertoires of folktales and stories which had been handed down from past generations by word-of-mouth, and were sung or chanted at social gatherings.

³⁷ Marcel Jousse, *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*, p.xvii. (I have been greatly privileged to have had access to this book which has just been translated by Professor Edgard Sienaert, Director of the Centre for Oral Studies at the University of Natal, Durban.)

From this dynamically real background, Jousse gleaned his first impressions. The inter-relationship of physical and verbal balanced rhythm and movement; the vast potential and power of the memory, and the power of mnemonics as a memory trigger. He also experienced the joy of discovering and experiencing "learning" processes in the realm of reality; through the sensations of real things, as opposed to books.

Jousse's first learning experiences left him with the ability to remember things as vibrations within his whole body; and to feel sounds in his mouth and on his lips.

These first impressions inspired Jousse, and have been important areas of his subsequent intellectual quests; viz. his vast studies on oral style and tradition, his primary learning theory, and his holistic approach to the study of the *anthropos* (Jousse's word for the global man).

When Jousse began to study, he found that the so-called intellectuals, who had lived with and by, the printed word, had lost their primordial link with the world of sensation; their link with reality.

It would seem that our Western science is afraid of life. When the subject of study is man and his experience, it is not interested in the living gestes of man but in the dead remains of these gestes.³⁸

Professor Elizabeth Sneddon concurs with Jousse. She says in a personal communication

Western Science can only look at life when it is inert and dead and can be put under a microscope. But under a microscope you have lost the essence of life which is movement. Movement is the externalization of the instinct "to survive" - "to live". Movement distinguishes the living from the dead.

Jousse's Theory of the Origin of Speech and Language

Jousse's thinking is so multi-dimensional and multi-layered, that it is impossible to do his work justice in this short chapter. It is also very difficult to simplify or summarise his

³⁸ Marcel Jousse; *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*. p.625

thought processes; however I shall attempt to do so. I submit that where Jousse uses the word 'language', we read 'speech'.

Jousse uses a specific terminology, which I will first elucidate.

A geste: "Viewed from the outside, man is a complexus of gestes.³⁹ To all the movements executed by the human composite, I will give the name - gestes."⁴⁰

Intussusception: "is the grasping of the external world and the internalising thereof. i.e. the synchronising of all the gestes that flow from nature into man, so that he can then ex-press them."⁴¹

Mimisms: "elements of understanding that have been developed by a process of intussusception - a process of the impression and ex-pression of meaning, psycho-physiologically."⁴²

Basic to Jousse's theory is the fact that man, a structurally bi-lateral organism, is a product of motor responses. His humanity is a result of human psycho-physiological mechanisms which inform him about the reality of his surroundings. Brain and body are one.

Basic, too, is the holistic and biological basis of speech acquisition; that the external world was made known to the anthropos through the gestes of his whole body. Language expresses the whole being.

To spontaneous man who is the echo and mirror of the reality that surrounds him, each being is seen and mimed as an action, as a geste which belongs to that reality, which is "in essence" the reality itself. This essential, characteristic geste becomes, as it were, the Name of the being, regardless whether the being is living or inanimate.⁴³

³⁹ Jousse's 'geste' cannot be translated as "gesture". It "is the expression of the entire being".

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.625

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p.629

⁴² J. Conolly, *From Mimism to Music in the Child*. p.xvi

⁴³ Marcel Jousse; *Ibid.*, p.61

Jousse says that Anthropos interacted with the environment; everything that impinges on our senses has an attitude, a characteristic which will impress us. e.g. the old man will be characterised by his shuffling; he will be named and known as "the shuffling".

For Jousse then, the name is the essence of the thing named; the name is the essential action. The anthropos "mimes" the external world; in this way he intususcepts (knows and is conscious of) the environment. The resulting mimeme becomes a thought.

Mimism, therefore, allows man to hold the whole universe within him. It is the microcosm possessing the macrocosm and replaying the macrocosm.

Anthropos is now able to replay these global mimisms, despite the lack of presence of the original stimulus. This is memory.

Jousse points out that dreams are kinetic plays and replays of mimisms in our unconscious, which involve the whole being. When we are awake, this same play and replay is called thought.

Schizophrenia and asphasia are a result of disabled gestes which are not able to be replayed in their normal sequence.

All civilizations which are alive and connected with reality, have traditional (not myths, but) mimodramas, (usually in oral form) which record their cultural traditions and history. In the same way, religious and traditional dances and ceremonies are living mimismological expressions, full of vitality.

Man "is a "Mimer" who plays and replays the macroscopic and microscopic gestes of an interssuepted reality".⁴⁴

Jousse says that abstraction, or abstract ideas are rooted in concretism (reality). They are metaphors, based on mimemes which are drawn from an observed fact and transposed onto

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p81.

something unknown. e.g. "conception", and "to conceive" are concerned with childbirth; this has been used as a metaphor into the realm of thought.

To summarise so far; "Corporage", (actions and movements of the whole organism) is superseded by "Manalage", (gesticulations of the hands), which is gradually transposed onto the laryngo-buccal muscles, language (speech). It demanded great effort for the organism to express himself with the whole body. When the laryngo-buccal muscles took over, energy was conserved.

Just as the human body was the "replayer" of the movement of things, by echoing the ear, the human mouth became the "resonator" of the sounds of things. The phonemes became adjusted to the mimemes without suppressing them: the concrete intussusception of what was real remained notwithstanding".⁴⁵

Jousse maintains that the vocal sound of the mouth is the echo of the sound of the object; that phonomimic expression is "full of the sap of life". He records that when man is involved in arduous physical exertion, he emits sounds. Jousse thinks that original sounds would have been consonantal articulations; vowels would have automatically come into play as the articulators moved from consonant to consonant.

After having received the object through its characteristic sound, man will therefore, little by little and thanks to the sound, become detached from the object...from the real. This separation from the real will even go so far as to make certain metaphysicians believe that they have the right to say that language is something conventional... This does not withstand close examination. There is no conventional language when the language in question is elaborated from life itself.⁴⁶

Although Jousse gives importance to onomatopoeia in the development of language, he insists that language was only able to develop as a result of the primordial anthropological anthropos having total organic unity with, and in, his interaction with the environment.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.111

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.119

This is why, for Jousse, language was a reflection of reality. Wear and tear has removed this vital meaningful link with reality (this is “algebrosis”).

We live by a system in which all gestes are diminished and degraded, be they corporal, manual or laryngo-buccal or graphic, because they are emptied of their original concretism.⁴⁷

Jousse refers to "the dynamic laboratory of the mouth"; rhythm and logic coincide in the human mouth; the throat is the vital centre in which all the fibres of man resound the world. For the Semites, Jousse says, the throat symbolised the whole essence of living, thinking man.

I have not dealt with Jousse's fascinating sections on rhythm, the deep pulsations of life, as expressed in the beats of tom-toms and African drums.

However it is interesting to note that for Jousse, the different languages of mankind were a result of differing physiological responses to the biologically propelled explosions of energy: rhythm.

As we have seen, Jousse saw speech and language as being part of the living tissue and experience of reality.

As he was so aware of the importance of the integration of the physical movement interaction between Anthropos and his environment, I regret that Jousse did not extend his theory into the movements of the organs of articulation; after all it is their movements which create the sounds.

These sounds create words/ names : and Jousse had recognised the fact that a name was "the essential action".

1.3 A Summary of Rudolf Laban's Theory and Analysis of Movement

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.614

Rudolf Laban's analysis of physical movement is dealt with in detail in my Master's dissertation.

Laban did extensive studies into the dynamics, which he termed "effort rhythms" of human physical movement.

Physical movement is affected by the three motion factors of: weight, space and time. Human movement reflects "attitudes" to these motion factors: it can "fight" them or "indulge" in them.

The following is a summary of the actions and movement qualities of Laban's eight basic effort actions.

WEIGHT	SPACE	TIME	ACTION
strong	direct	sudden	punch
light	direct	sudden	dab
strong	flexible	sudden	slash
strong	direct	sustained	press
light	flexible	sustained	float
light	direct	sustained	glide
strong	flexible	sustained	wring
light	flexible	sudden	flick

Laban also isolated three ATTITUDES: moods which are evoked when two of the above motion factors are combined. Words describing these attitudes are approximations of the feeling in body sensation experienced by the mover.

THE NEAR MOOD:

This involves weight and time changes. (rhythmic; ritualistic movements)

WEIGHT	TIME	ATTITUDE OR QUALITY
strong	sustained	concentrated; powerful
strong	sudden	energetic; vigorous
light	sudden	bright; brisk; crisp
light	sustained	peaceful; soothing; quiet

THE STABLE MOOD:

This involves weight and space changes. (An architect, Laban saw buildings as expressions of attitudes to weight and space - as "frozen" movement - concrete; stone; filigree)

WEIGHT	SPACE	ATTITUDE OR QUALITY
strong	flexible	sinuous; lithe; twisting
strong	direct	solid; focused; firm
light	flexible	roundabout; gently twisting
light	direct	gentle; delicate; pinpointing

THE AWAKE MOOD:

This focuses on the "here and now"

SPACE	TIME	ATTITUDE OR QUALITY
direct	sudden	sharp; spiky; pouncing
direct	sustained	smooth; linear; can last in time
flexible	sudden	swirling; twirling
flexible	sustained	swirling; twirling; can endure

I submit that the dynamics of oral gestures and their resultant sounds, are subject to the same analysis as those of the gestures of physical movement.

Words are movements: they are comprised of a series of audible oral postures, gestures, and shapes, sounded in sequences.

In terms of the motion factors of weight, time and space, words also involve "effort" activity, as we shall explore in the following chapter.

Words also contain what Laban called "attitudes" and the moods associated with them .

I submit that the analysis of the "movement" combinations and sequences of words, in relation to Laban's theory and analysis, will reflect a remarkable correlation to their signification - their meaning.

Jousse and Laban both lived at the same time, in Europe; but it seems unlikely that they knew of each other's existence, or about the similarity of their views and ideas.

We can see how closely the views of Jousse and Laban correlate:

The integration of body and mind penetrates every human action, since all actions and reactions spring from movement within us. In the domain of the

arts, this fact becomes especially clear. There are the visible arts such as architecture, sculpture and painting in which trace forms are fixed through the movement of drawing and the shaping of different materials. There are the audible arts, such as music and oratory (including the speaking of poetry), in which the trace forms of bodily movements give shape to the sounds and rhythms, which characterise ideas and emotions.⁴⁸

and

...effort rhythm was the cohesive medium of all living styles of architecture, painting, sculpture and fashion in ancient times. It was the basis too of movement and behaviour in every elementary life, and of all working actions...Today all that remains of this former rhythmic vitality has been directed into mechanical devices in which the living, driving factors of man have been neglected and left without articulate expression.⁴⁹

1.4 An Exploration of the Dynamic Energy Inherent in the Spoken Word (The dynamics of the sounds involved in English word-making)

There are many onomatopoeic words in English - words whose sounds imitate or resemble the sounds of the words they stand for, or that they mean. e.g. cuckoo; bang; swish.

It is interesting to note that the number of syllables in onomatopoeic words corresponds to the number of divisions heard in the sound - the rhythm of the sound. e.g. cuckoo.

It can also be noted, that onomatopoeic words which describe a sound with an abrupt onset, usually begin with a plosive e.g. bang; whereas a sound which has a gradual onset usually begin with an initial aspirant sound e.g. swish.

The plosives /p/; /b/; /t/; /d/; /k/ and /g/ make little explosions as they are released. We find them in initial and final appropriate action words throughout the English language. e.g.

/p/ : puff; tap; punch; hop.

/b/ : bang; rub; beat; dab.

/t/ : touch; hit; tear; beat.

/d/ : dash; thud; drop; bend.

⁴⁸ Rudolf Laban, *Choreutics*, pp.114-115.

⁴⁹ Rudolf Laban, *Effort*, p.xv.

/k/ : kick; shake; cough; blink.

/g/ : guffaw; tug; grab; hug.

As we can see from the above plosive examples, a great many English words do not simply imitate, but are nevertheless full of sound clues in a far richer way. The sounds give a sense of movement, rhythm, texture, weight, space and time.

This dynamic sound energy and vitality within words, is often uncannily able to suggest to us, not only the qualities mentioned above, but their emotions and their meaning.

I believe that these clues are interpreted by the kinaesthetic sense. Our kinaesthetic sense makes us aware of motions and rhythms of muscular effort which accompany body movements. It enables us to be aware of positions and tensions of muscles. Through the basic rhythmic nature of our physiology (heartbeats; breathing etc.), and our kinaesthetic sense, we are able to "feel" our gestures and actions, and to retain an awareness of this "feel".

Rhythm is one of the universal laws of nature, the manifestation of which we see in all movements...the whole of organic nature is characterised by periodicity...The physiological bases of rhythm are complex. Certain chain reflexes of the body are so organised that they are self-maintaining, eg breathing. The sensory apparatus is continually under the influence of the rhythm-determining processes of a vegetative order...the vegetative rhythms form the basis of our rhythms of both movement and understanding; ...the kinaesthetic processes (in muscle, tendon and joint) as well as audition and vision, whether consciously appreciated or not, undoubtedly play a large part in the maintenance of rhythmic contractions.⁵⁰

In the following words, the articulatory "curve" in /um/, ending in an "explosive" /p/, is shaped by the organs of articulation. You will notice that each word example signifies this movement in shape .e.g. bump; jump; hump; slump; pump; lump; thump; rump; dump.

⁵⁰ Meader and Muyskens, *Handbook of Bilingualistics*, pp.236-266.

Like physical movements, the audible movements which make our words, also move through space, time and gravity, and display, in their sounds, "attitudes" to these motion factors.

When the sounds of the words are combined with their implied physical movement, the "clues" are re-inforced: our kinaesthetic sense is involved both vocally and physically, and meanings inherent in the action words become explicit.

Words are energized with vitality and meaning, when the sounds are absorbed by, and incorporated into the body, and the implied movements are integrated with the sounds.

So we can see that audible gestures which shape our words can express "attitudes".

Words express attitudes to space. They can:

- a) indulge in space; using it freely.
wheel; curve; whirl; twirl; swing; wriggle; swirl; climb; slither; droop; spiral; swerve.
- b) fight space, taking a direct path through it. (Notice how "straight" these words are.)
shoot; point; dart; dive; hit; punch; prick; jab; cut.

Words express their attitude to time:

- a) they can fight time:
jerk; jolt; run; sprint; rush; dash; hit.
- b) or indulge in it:
flow; stroll; stroke; stretch; saunter.

In terms of gravity, words contain clues as to whether they are light or heavy.

- a) they can indulge in gravity:
fly; float; glide; flutter; flick; puff.

- b) or they can fight gravity:
stamp; march; punch; thrust; push; wrench; dig.

In the verb examples in this section, through the movements of the organs of articulation, and the sounds produced, we find clues to their meanings.

As mentioned previously, the inherent sense and meaning becomes explicit when the implied movement action accompanies the sound. e.g. if one makes the action of "giggle" as the word is spoken, one will feel where and how the word originated. The same applies to "yawn".

Mouth, nose and lip words can:

titter; sigh; murmur; mutter; babble; gurgle; cough; sneeze; snore; snort; snap; sneer; snigger; snarl; hiccup; choke; pout; scoff; guffaw; squawk; shriek; slobber; slurp; burp; suck; hiss; sniff; snuffle; munch; chew; crunch; slur; stutter; stammer; bite; nibble; swallow; laugh; smile; grunt; croak; call; shout; speak; gulp; belch.

Eyes can:

stare; peer; peep; see; gaze; glare; blink; glance; wink; squint; leer; glower; look; glaze; gleam; glint.

Hands and arms can:

clap; press; snatch; knock; prick; peel; catch; squeeze; squash.

In the last two examples, notice how the changes in the vowel lengths and final consonants alter the effort energy - the movement actions - and therefore the meanings.

The movements of the organs of articulation shape the sounds and make the meaning of the action.

In both words, the initial forward propulsion of the sibilant voiceless /s/, is retracted to the back of the mouth, and reinforced with vocalised energy as the back of the tongue contacts

the soft palate to shape the voiceless velar plosive /k/. This sound is "exploded" forwards: there is a strong "preparatory" connotation in the oral movements.

In /squeeze/, this action is followed by the long vowel /ee/ and the final sustained consonant /z/. The oral gestures and sounds are long and sustained: the action of the meaning of the word.

Dictionary definition:

squeeze: exert pressure on: hug.

In /squash/, the initial oral preparation is identical. However the "explosion" is forcibly directed outwards through firmly rounded lips /w/. the initial preparation is "reinforced"; then retracted to the short, open back vowel /o/ (as in hot); there is a connotation of further reinforcement; before it shoots forwards for the final voiceless friction of /sh/. Again, we have the movement of the meaning of the word.

Dictionary definition: crush; flatten.

Arms and shoulders can:

shake; push; nudge; throw; fling; slap; punch; toss; smack; pull.

The following examples show that the movement/shapes (oral gestures) and resultant sounds of words "contain":

Shapes:

round/flat; level/curve; straight/twist; stretch/slump.

Textures:

rough/smooth; hard/soft; prickly/fluffy; crisp/soggy.

Sizes:

long/short; enormous/little; vast/small; large/tiny.

The effort action and rhythm of movements:

trudge; stagger; kick; punch; bounce; dodge; glide; hop; swerve; trot; run; plod; sprint; stumble; hobble; limp; push; toss; jolt; jostle; catch; jump; leap; stamp; twist; squeeze; lift; scratch; pat; shake; dig; jerk; jab; slip; slide; fling; poke; twiddle; flick; clasp; clutch; clench; snatch; slither; squirm; shiver.

Notice the broken movement rhythms in:

stagger; hobble; stumble; dawdle; limp; totter; teeter; toddle; wobble; shuffle; waggle; tumble; waddle; fumble; warble; stutter; stammer; splutter.

Notice the oral movement elevations in:

bounce; hop; jump; leap; lift; flick; toss; fling.

Notice the concentric movements in:

squirm; twist; twiddle; wriggle; screw; wring; cringe; coil; swerve; spiral; writhe.

Sounds:

loud; soft; raucous; quiet; noisy; shatter; clatter; rattle; bang; boom; clang; jingle; tinkle.

All of the mouth, lip and nose sounds above can be included here e.g. whisper; babble; gurgle; shriek; giggle.

Sound changes, change word-meanings in terms of height and direction. In the following hyphenated words it can be heard that the higher the vowel, the higher the movement in space, and visa-versa.

ding-dong: the forward and upward; downward and backward movements of a bell.

sew-saw: a forwards and backwards motion.

tick-tock: the sideways swinging of a pendulum.

criss-cross: forwards and upwards, then backwards and downwards.

topsy-turvy: there is a change of a vowel and a consonant, making an upside down movement (and connotation).

hanky-panky: a change in the initial consonant, infers a change in action, which the expression implies.

dilly-dally: the vowel change from high to low, infers a slowing down of action, which the expression implies.

tittle-tattle: the tongue action is one of talking - the change of vowel involves the jaw moving down, reinforcing the talking action.

pitter-patter: the vowel change echoes the rhythm of repetition.

There are many more examples in English usage: namby-pamby; fuddy-duddy; hocus-pocus; hodge-podge; hurly-burly; higgeldy-piggeldy; nick-nack; hurdy-gurdy, etc.

In pairs of words, the initial high, light vowel generally changes to a contrasting open vowel, making a change of weight suggestive of a change of movement, or a finality of movement. eg, toss and turn; safe and sound; home and dry; spick and span; prim and proper.

Examples are numerous; I have simply given a few with which to experiment combining sound and implied action simultaneously.

Before completing this chapter on the dynamics of sound in English word making, it must be noted that onomatopoeic words occur in all languages.

The Zulu language is particularly enriched by its use of onomatopoeia.

The telling of *Izinganekwane*, Zulu folk tales, is characterized by the extensive use of ideophones: expressive sound combinations used to describe sounds, actions, physical appearance, physical feelings, emotional states etc.

It is necessary to approximate the pronunciation of Zulu before giving examples.

Zulu Vowel Sounds

Whereas English has 21 vowel sounds, which include 5 long vowels, 7 short vowels and 9 diphthongs, Zulu does not distinguish between vowel length. Vowels do not follow each other consecutively in Zulu, so there are no diphthongs.

Zulu has basically 5 vowels corresponding to the 5 vowel letters of the alphabet:

a as in cat

e as in bet

i as in Afrikaans Piet

o as in Afrikaans pot

u as in took.

Zulu Consonants

English consonant sounds will (roughly) adequately approximate. /g/ in Zulu is always “soft” (wage) - never “hard” (linger).

Zulu Clicks are vocally expressive and energised.

nc - approximates the sound made when expressing sympathy.

nx - approximates the click one makes when irritated.

nq - approximates the click made to imitate the sound of a horse’s hooves.

In pronouncing the clicks, the tongue which touches the palate with its front, sides and back, produces a rarefaction in the middle by a sucking movement. When the closure around this rarefied space is released, air rushed into the vacuum with an audible pop...clicks are implosions. In all clicks the back of the tongue is in the same position, touching the velum, while the front can vary its position, thus changing the sound of the click.⁵¹

Examples of Onomatopoeia

slipping - shibilika

breaking, eg wood - phoqoka

leaves rustling - hlofo-hlofo

motorbike - isithuthuthu

machine-gun - qhuqhuqhu

⁵¹ Carl Meinhof, *Introduction to Zulu Phonology*, p.101.

Examples of Ideophones

- ngo - the sound of knocking
- dwaa - the action of gaping into space
- tsaa - the sound of spurting
- boxo - the sound of walking in mud
- hwi - the sound of snatching away
- du - the sound of silence
- dufu - the sound of heavy breathing
- mbee - the sound of running
- xhomfu - the sound made when eating greedily
- vikishi - the sound made by falling in a heap
- phogo - the sound of something snapping
- mfi - of being full to the brim
- dishi-dishi - the sound of a fat person's gait

There are many expressive Zulu idioms. For example:

The timid girl has a fluttering sensation within - a bird has entered the girl.

You are whispering - you are putting mouths together.

I have had nothing to eat - I am full of mind.

He is prosperous - He eats life.

Go quickly - Take feet.

They talk continually - They throw the mouth up.

The last month - The moon that is dead.

These are interesting in terms of the discussion in Chapter 1 about ideas and feelings being given sensuous expression.

It is of interest to mention here that there are many English expressions which use the word "hand".

Human life has been enriched because of what our hands allow us to do. The human hand with its fingers, palm and opposable thumb, makes it possible for humans to hold objects and to manipulate the environment; we can hold tools, pens and other hands.

Many scientists and anthropologists support the belief that it was when he learnt to handle tools that man became capable of speech and abstraction: man became man.

These include Raymond Dart *Adventures with the Missing Link*, Robert Ardrey, *African Genesis*; Dr Richard Leakey, *Origins*; and Jacob Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man*.

Julian Huxley, in *Evolution: The Modern Synthesis* has the same theory. I summarise.

An arboreal life was a necessary prerequisite for man, because only in a tree-living mammal could the forelimb become a true hand.

Geographic and climatic changes forced the anthropoid from the trees and into the plains, which was significant in the development of man.

The terrestrial creature could develop erect posture which was essential for the final conversion of the arms from locomotor limbs into manipulatory hands, and for liberation of the throat, chest, lungs and lips.

He could give full voice to his feelings through sound: concurrently his hands were free to handle implements and gesture.

The arboreal primate was physically ill-equipped to cope with the new environment and was forced to become a hunter, which made the use of weapons necessary. Along with the use of weapons and tools speech developed; control of hand and speech are both situated in the dominant cerebral hemisphere of the brain.

It is a matter of instinct that in man the movements of his hand cannot be separated from his thought.⁵²

Expressions using the word “hand” occur in all languages and have enriched the English language.

Some examples are:

to win hands down

to get caught red-handed

to come cap-in-hand

hand-over-fist

to be hand-in-glove

to be hand-in-hand with someone

a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush

to be under-hand

to give with one hand and take with the other

to be slight-of-hand

In this chapter, I hope to have illustrated that the gestures of speech, ie the movements of the organs of articulation, express attitudes which correlate with Laban’s analysis of movement. These attitudes are expressed through the oral gestures’ use of space, weight and time.

Laban had noted the link between physical movement and inner attitude: inner attitudes are reflected in physical actions.

However, the reverse also applied, ie a movement sequence could induce an inner state.

eg: repetition of the action of “swing”, while saying the word and making the action, induces a free, relaxed feeling;

contrasted with the repetition of the word and gesture of “kick”, which induces a fighting, aggressive mood.

These words, “swing” and “kick” involve opposite attitudes to the space, weight and time factors.

⁵² Marcel Jousse, *The Oral Tradition*, p.35 .

Laban also noted that “upwards” movements of the body involved

- a) a lifting, a lightness; not only of the body, but emotion: transversely, moving downwards involved;
- b) strength; fighting against gravity; or;
- c) a heaviness of emotion; a surrender and submission to the gravitational pull.

Many English expressions reflect these attitudes.

- a) up in the clouds
floating on air
jump for joy
light as a feather
in the dizzy heights
keep your chin up
- b) come to grips
hold your ground
take a firm stand
firm as a rock
keep a stiff upper lip
- c) heavy with grief
down in the dumps
with drooping heart
in the depths of despair
weighed down with troubles
bowed down with cares
take the bounce (air) out of
weak at the knees

All movement contains attitudes to the motion factors Laban has identified; including the oral movements of the organs of articulation (audible movement).

These attitudes reflect “inner” attitudes - mental and emotional responses. Audible movements, which shape words, also contain within them inner attitudes: emotional and mental responses.

One of the basic experiences of the dynamics of movement is that its different spatial nuances always show clearly distinguishable mental and emotional attitudes.⁵³

In this chapter on verbal dynamics we have seen how words embody the motion factors.

Chapter Three analyses how the gestures of the articulatory organs employ the motion factors.

⁵³ Rudolph Laban, *Choreutics*, p.27.

CHAPTER 2

ENGLISH PHONOLOGY: THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE ENGLISH SOUND VOCABULARY

The most lively of the speech organs is the tongue, and it is by far the most important of them all: indeed "tongue" is a synonym for "language" in many languages or tongues, and "language" itself derives from the Latin word for tongue.¹

As in all languages, English speech sounds are classified as:

Vowel sounds: there are five vowel symbols in the English alphabet, but there are twenty one vowel sounds in English; and Consonant sounds.

Vowel sounds are shaped in the oral cavity (mouth) by the tongue and the lips. They are all voiced sounds made on an uninterrupted stream of voiced breath.

Consonant sounds are made by an obstruction or interruption (partial or complete) in the breath stream. Consonants are either voiced or unvoiced (breath consonants).

English Vowels (Using the International Phonetic System)

Vowel sounds are classified as monophthongs and diphthongs. A monophthong is a one-sound vowel: it is a pure sound and there is no change of the shape in the mouth, or of the sound quality.

Monophthongs are further classified as being long or short. Long monophthongs can be sustained (sounded for longer) than short monophthongs.

¹ Anthony Burgess; *Language Made Plain*. p.34

A diphthong is a vowel which has two sounds. The tongue glides from the first to the second shape, and the two sounds merge into each other and are said as one sound. They are all long sounds.

Vowel sounds are classified according to the following three considerations:

a) Which part of the tongue is raised.

In order to classify vowels, the tongue is divided the front (behind the tip), the centre (the blade) and the back.

- i. if the front of the tongue is raised it is a front vowel.
- ii. if the centre of the tongue is raised it is a central vowel.
- iii. if the back of the tongue is raised it is a back vowel.

b. To what height the tongue is raised.

- i. If the tongue is low in the mouth it is an open vowel.
- ii. If the tongue is close to the palate it is a close vowel.
- iii. If the tongue is about half-way between the base and the roof of the mouth it is a mid-vowel, a half- open vowel.

c. Lip shaping is important. Some vowels are shaped with the lips well-rounded e.g./aw/; some with the lips closely-rounded e.g. /oo/. Most vowels are shaped with the lips in a neutral position, i.e. the jaw and lip corners are relaxed and the space between the teeth is about 2.5 centimetres.

There are five long English monophthongs.

Vowel	Classification
1. /a/ as in car;	long, open and central.
2. /aw/ as in jaw;	long, half-open and back.
3. /oo/ as in too;	long, close and back.
4. /er/ as in her;	long, half-open and central.
5. /ee/ as in see;	long, close and front.

There are seven short English monophthongs.

Vowel	Classification
1. /e/ as in set;	short, half-open and front.
2. /i/ as in sit;	short, close and front.
3. /a/ as in fat;	short, open and front.
4. /ʊ/ as in hut;	short, half-open and central.
5. /o/ as in hot;	short, open and back.
6. /u/ as in put;	short, close and back.
7. /ə/ as in about;	short, half-open and central.

The last short vowel is known as the neutral vowel. It is the most common vowel sound heard in English because most English vowel sounds are not given their pure vowel sound when they are in unstressed positions: the neutral position is an easy shape for the tongue to make.

The English Diphthongs

In the first five diphthongs below, the tongue is raised for the second vowel; they are known as closing diphthongs because the second sound moves closer to the palate; the first sound is more open.

1. /ow/ as in now; the tongue begins in a low, open position and moves up to a close back one.
2. /ay/ as in day; the tongue glides from a half-open front position to a close back one.
3. /igh/ as in fight; the tongue moves from an open front position to a close back one.
4. /ou/ as in blow; a short glide is made by the back of the tongue, from a half-open back position to a close back one.
5. /oy/ as in boy; This glide begins in a half-open back position and moves through the centre of the tongue to a close front one.

The next three diphthongs are known as centring diphthongs; the tongue moves from a close position down to the half-open central neutral vowel.

6. /air/ as in hair; the glide is from close, front /e/ as in /set/, to the neutral.
7. /ear/ as in fear; the glide is from close, front /i/ as in /sit/ to the neutral.
8. /ure/ as in lure; the glide is from close back /u/ as in /put/ to the neutral.

The English Consonants

Consonant sounds interrupt the voice flow and break it into distinct units. Consonants, unlike vowels, can be voiceless; and use the nasal passages.

The Organs of Articulation which Shape the Consonants

1. The lips. They can be pressed together (as in /p/;/b/); or make contact with the teeth (as in /f/;/v/). Sounds made with the lips are called labials; sounds made with both lips are called bi-labials.
2. The tongue. This muscle can be moved to many different shapes and positions.
3. The teeth ridge behind the top teeth; the alveolar ridge.
Sounds made here are called alveolar consonants.
4. The hard palate. This starts at the teeth ridge and curves back in the roof of the mouth.
Sounds made here are called palatal consonants.
5. The soft palate - the velum. This is the soft part at the back of the hard palate. At the end of the velum there is a moveable flap which can close, so that the entrance into the mouth is close off. The air then goes through the nose to make the nasal consonants /m/;/n/ and /ng/. When the back of the tongue closes against the velum we make /k/ and /g/; these are called velar consonants.
6. The teeth. Sounds made with the teeth are called dentals; /th/.

Consonants are classified in three ways:

1. The place of articulation and which speech organs are used.
This is the place in the mouth where the breath stream is impeded or blocked. Normally two speech organs are involved in this action i.e. a passive articulator which is a fixed organ against which the active articulator (usually the tongue) moves to impede or block the airpassage. The speech sound is given the name of the organ against which the contact occurs e.g. alveolar, the tongue contacts the alveolar ridge, e.g. /t/;/d/.

2. The manner of articulation, i.e. how the articulators shape the sound. Consonants can be shaped in the following ways:

Plosive; the airstream is completely closed and then released with an explosive sound.

e.g./p/;/b/.

Fricative; the airstream is forced through a slit or groove. e.g./s/; /f/.

Affricative; the articulators form a complete closure which is released into a fricative. e.g. /ch/ as in church.

Lateral; in English, the only lateral consonant is /l/. The air flows over the relaxed sides of the tongue.

Nasal; the velum is lowered, blocking the air passage to the mouth, and the voiced sound flows through the nasal passages.

Consonants can be voiced or voiceless; a breath sound. When the vocal folds are relaxed and open, as in normal breathing, no voice is produced. When they are drawn close together, the air passes through the small gap which causes the vocal folds to vibrate. This vibration vocalizes the breath, and the sound is enlarged in the resonating cavities.

There are twenty six English consonants. Many can be considered in pairs because they are shaped in the same manner and place; however one is voiced and one is a breath sound.

1;2 ; /b/;/p/: these are bi-labial plosives; /b/ is voiced; /p/ is voiceless.

3;4; /v/;/f/; these are labiodental fricatives; /v/ is voiced; /f/ is voiceless.

5;6; /θ/ as in this; /θ/ as in thin; These are dental fricatives. The first is voiced; the second is voiceless.

7;8; /d/;/t/; these are alveolar plosives; /d/ is voiced; /t/ is voiceless.

9;10; /z/;/s/; these are alveolar fricatives. /z/ is voiced;/s/ is voiceless.

11;12; /ʒe/ as in beige; /ʃh/ as in shop; these are palato-alveolar consonants. /ʒe/ is voiced; /ʃh/ is voiceless.

13;14; /j/ as in jazz; /ch/ as in chop; these are palato-alveolar affricatives. /j/ is voiced; /ch/ is voiceless.

15;16; /g/; /k/; these are velar plosives. /g/ is voiced; /k/ is voiceless.

17;18; /w/ as in wet; /wh/ as in when; these are bi-labial semi-vowels. These begin in the position of a close vowel and the sound is made as the speech organs glide rapidly to another vowel. They are classified as consonants because they function as such. /w/ is voiced; /wh/ is voiceless.

19;20; /l/ as in let; /l/ as in milk; these are laterals. The letter /l/ stands for two different sounds in English. The first is known as the "clear" /l/, and occurs in initial positions, or in the middle of words. It is made with the tongue tip against the alveolar ridge, and the front of the tongue is lifted.

The second /l/ is known as the "dark" /l/. It occurs after vowels, usually at the ends of words. The /l/ sound is drawn back in the mouth by the sounds before and after it. In sounding the word "lull", it can be noticed that although the tongue tip is also against the alveolar ridge for the second /l/, the front of the tongue is not raised; it has dropped.

21. /n/; is a voiced alveolar nasal consonant.

22. /m/; is a voiced bi-labial nasal consonant.

23. /ŋ/; is a voiced velar nasal consonant.

These three nasals can be sustained i.e. sounded as long as there is breath. They have strong nasal resonance.

24. /h/ as in hot; is a voiceless glottal consonant: the breath passes through the open vocal folds, like a sigh. /h/ is voiced between vowels e.g. aha!; ahoy!.

25. /y/ as in yellow; is a voiced palatal semi-vowel. Again it is classified as a consonant because it functions as such. The tongue tip is behind the lower teeth and the centre of the tongue is raised very close to the hard palate. The sound is released as the tongue glides to the following vowel shape.

26. /r/ is a voiced alveolar (frictionless) fricative. The English /r/ has lost its friction over the years and is now termed a frictionless continuant because it can be sustained. The tongue tip is close to the alveolar ridge, but not close enough to cause friction. /r/

is never sounded when it is followed by a consonant, e.g. arm; verse; farm; cart; or at the ends of words e.g. care; air; fear; care.

Vowels have been compared to the muscles of the body; they "carry the voice out"; consonants have been compared to the bones of the body; they "structure and shape" the sounds. A language with no vowels would be as lifeless as a boneyard.

2.1 The Characteristics of Spoken English: Words In Connected Speech

The rhythm of spoken English, is created by the following aspects of speaking.

Pause

Words fall into groups called phrases, which express the meanings and ideas we want to communicate. We automatically pause between phrases, while we think, or while we breathe in. Pauses separate ideas; they are natural oral punctuation and serve the same function as commas or fullstops in writing or printing. On the page each word is separate, but when we speak, words are not separated; they flow into each other and sounds influence each other because the speech organs take "short-cuts".

Intonation

Printed words move across the page in a straight line; but when we speak, our voice rises and falls. It moves up and down, continually changing its pitch ranges. These pitch changes are largely unconscious; they express our meanings, and reflect our feelings and emotional attitudes and energy.

In English these rises and falls of the voice are known as intonation patterns. English has two main inflexions; a rising inflexion and a falling inflexion.

Generally, when a thought is complete, we use a falling inflexion; most English phrases fall at the end.

Generally only questions which have a 'yes' or 'no' answer rise.

e.g. Would you like more tea?

Are you going out?

The English intonation patterns (the speech tunes) are based on the stressed and unstressed syllables in phrases.

Stress; or Emphasis

Words which carry important information or emotional content are stressed; that is we emphasise them by using more breath force to say them. They are therefore louder than the surrounding words, and "stand out" from them. In English, unlike many other languages, the meaning of a phrase or sentence can be changed by moving the stress from one word to another.

In the following sentences the stressed words are in capitals.

Are you GOING shopping today?

The stress on GOING enquires whether you ARE GOING or NOT GOING.

Are YOU going shopping today?

Here, the question is whether YOU or SOMEONE ELSE is going shopping.

Are you going SHOPPING today?

The stress on SHOPPING implies that shopping MAY or MAY NOT be something you will be doing today.

Are you going shopping TODAY?

Here the stress directs attention to WHEN you will go shopping. Perhaps it will be tomorrow?

The stress-timed nature of spoken English is a very distinctive feature.

The last stressed syllable of a phrase is the most important syllable in English intonation phrases. It is the "key" to the meaning of the phrase; it is called the nucleus of the phrase. In English, the nucleus, as well as being stressed, always involves a pitch change in the pronunciation.

The first stressed syllable of a phrase is called the head of the phrase. As well as being stressed, the head always carries the highest pitch in the phrase. It directs the attention and focus towards the nucleus - the meaning.

In the following sentences, the first words in capitals are the heads, the second are the nucleuses.

It was an EXTREMELY long and a very BORING lecture.

I DON'T like SPINACH at all!

I LOVE CHOCOLATE!

Pace

Words, in print, are evenly spaced and paced. However, natural speech reflects our thought processes, which move in the brain at uneven rates. The pace or rate at which we speak (the quickness or slowness) has great variety and reflects our mental and emotional attitudes. If we are excited or agitated, we may speak very quickly; if we are bored or tired we may speak at a very slow pace. If we are angry we may speak very quickly; if we are extremely angry, we may speak very slowly and deliberately.

Volume

Printed words have no sounds; when we speak the amount of vocalised breath we send out determines how loud or soft our speech will sound. Too soft can be difficult to hear and understand; too loud can be aggressive and unpleasant to listen to; appropriate volume is important.

Rhythm

The above speech attributes show that phrasing, pause, pitch, range, stress, the rate of speech and volume, are all natural expressions of our active thinking and feeling processes, and give the rhythm to our speech.

Speech therefore has three aspects.

The physical aspect includes the body; posture, gestures, movements and facial expression. It also involves breathing and shaping speech sounds.

The intellectual aspect involves the ability to visualise ideas and to use the accurate word to define the idea, eg bird: kingfisher, hawk.

The emotional aspect is determined by the motivation inherent in the idea, eg bird: the bluebird of happiness, the dove of peace.

The speech process is dynamic, and involves the movement and energy of living words. When we communicate face-to-face, we reveal what we feel and think; our speech reveals our individuality and our personality.

CHAPTER 3

AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH VOWELS AND CONSONANTS IN RELATION TO SIGNIFICATION

Introduction

An analysis of audible movement (the oral gestures which shape English sounds) in relation to their occurrence and signification in spoken English.

This chapter will necessarily involve descriptions of the movement action involved in the shaping of individual English sounds, ie an analysis of the individual movements of the organs of articulation. These organs have been described in the previous chapter.

The purpose of this exercise is to determine whether the oral movement connotations, ie the movement actions suggested in the formation of the sound(s), occur in words in such a manner as to express frequent similar connotations.

This analysis includes English vowels and consonants, and consonantal clusters which commonly occur in English usage. Word examples are mostly taken from the group known as "action words" - verbs.

In this chapter, I aim to establish proof that, even in present English usage, there is sufficient evidence available to show that:

- (a) correlation exists between sounds and meanings (the gestures of articulation and signification).
- (b) the establishment of such proof of correlation will provide scientifically analysable evidence of the biological and gestural origins of English speech, and subsequently, of all language systems.

3.1 An Investigation into the Shape and Size of English Vowels in Relation to their Occurrence and Signification

If the associations in language are a purely arbitrary convention, it seems odd that they should be systematic, with magnitudes increasing as vowels move back in the mouth and fall in pitch. Perhaps there is something inevitable in these associations of sound, size and brightness. Perhaps all people, whatsoever their linguistic training, would make the same judgements.¹

As discussed in the previous section on the sounds of English, vowels are made on uninterrupted vocalized breath released from the oral cavity.

The size of the oral cavity is determined by

- a) the position of the jaw,
- b) the postures of the tongue: the height to which the tongue is raised, and which part of the tongue is raised;
- c) the degree of lip-rounding

Mouth size, determines the "size" of the sound; i.e. the inherent pitch (high, medium or low). The pitch, in addition, appears to carry an inherent tone colour. i.e. high tones e.g. front, close vowels = light, bright; low tones: back, close and open vowels = dark, gloom, doom.

As the tongue is raised from open to closer positions, there are changes in acoustic level: the sounds become smaller. As the tongue moves forward from back to front positions, distinctions of direction, as well as level seem to be indicated.

I shall examine the English monophthongs in terms of:

- i) how they are shaped and sounded in the oral cavity;
- ii) what the sound/shape appears to denote;
- iii) give examples of the vowel sound in word usage, in order to illustrate the correlation between oral connotation and signification in English words.

¹ Roger Brown, *Words and Things*, p.115.

3.1.1. /a/ as in car.

Description: This is a long, central, open vowel.

The lips are relaxed and wide open; the lower jaw is dropped, and the tongue lies flat in the base of the mouth. The sound can be sustained for as long as there is breath.

Oral connotation:

This is one of a large, open space in the oral cavity, which should be reflected in the signification of words which contain this sound.

Word examples:

large; vast; charge; march; cast; sparse; far; gasp; argue; laugh; snarl; gargle; argue; advance; prance; arduous.

3.1.2. /a/ as in had.

Description: In contrast, this is a short, front open vowel.

The lips are relaxed; the front of the tongue is slightly raised, so we have an open space with a forward-directed shape. There is no “spill-over” in time, the sound is short.

Oral connotation:

Here, the short, fronted sound in the oral cavity should be reflected in the signification of words in which this sound occurs.

Word examples:

wag; smack; flap; clap; lap; pat; rap; dab; catch; lash; snap; bash; crash; pad; slap; dash; flash; snaffle; rant; stamp; gash; stagger; collapse; yap.

3.1.3. /i/ as in sit.

Description: This is a short, front close vowel.

The front of the tongue is raised high in the mouth and the jaw is raised, enclosing the small space.

Oral connotation:

This short sound has a fronted elevation which gives the small shape a sense of lightness. This should be reflected in the signification of words.

Word examples:

titter; flip; whip; wink; whisper; prick; swing; titter; flit; pinch; nibble; whisper; swig; swill; giggle; tickle; itch; spin; hit; spit; lick; blink; snigger; little; glimmer; glitter; blink; whistle; grin; sniff.

3.1.4. /ee/ as in see.

Description: This is a long, front close vowel.

The front of the tongue is raised even higher than in the previous vowel, and this is a long vowel.

Oral connotation:

We should expect this sound to denote similar small and enclosed spatial qualities and lightness, but the sound can be sustained, so it is longer in time.

Word examples:

peep; see; free; flee; spree; gleam; speed; peak; steep; peak; breathe; weep; sneeze; scream; heave; cleave; eat; gleam; sweep; bleep; beam; leap; preen; lean; reach.

3.1.5. /aw/ as in saw.

Description: This is a long, back half-open vowel.

The back of the tongue is lifted half-way towards the soft palate (velum).

Oral connotation:

The large, backed and sustained quality of this sound made with open-rounded lips, indicates a largeness. It suggests a cavity.

Word examples:

yawn; enormous; gaffaw; squawk; gawp; sprawl; brawl; caught; ball; jaw; tall; drawl; call; fall; roar; soar; swarm; warble; taunt; bawl; gnaw; crawl; caterwaul.

3.1.6. /oo/ as in cool.

Description: This is a long, back close vowel.

The back of the tongue is raised almost to the soft palate; the jaw is raised and the lips are closely rounded. There is a very narrow space through which the sound can escape.

Oral connotation:

This has an oral connotation of a long, narrow shape; the sound too is long and can be sustained.

Word examples:

shoot; coop; hoop; loop; chew; croon; ooze; swoop; swoon; puke; smooth; stoop; gloom; tomb; loom.

3.1.7. /u/ as in put.

Description: This is a short, back close vowel.

The back of the tongue is lower in the mouth than for /oo/; the jaw is raised; lip-rounding is retained.

Oral connotation:

Here, we have a less enclosed space; the sound is short; it has an abrupt quality. These qualities should be indicated in signification.

Word examples:

push; put; pull; look; took; nook.

3.1.8. /er/ as in her.

Description: This is a long, central half-open vowel.

The lips are firmly rounded and pursed; the centre of the tongue is raised half-way to the hard palate as if for action.

Oral connotation:

With the firmly rounded, pursed lips and raised tongue, this is a shape which inherently carries a forward propulsion of movement. It is a long vowel and can be sustained.

Word examples:

burp; slurp; slur; whirl; hurtle; turn; blurt; purr; burst; chirp; swerve; whirr; curve; lurch; burst; pert; squirt.

3.1.9. /u/ as in hut.

Description: This is a short, central half-open vowel.

The centre of the tongue is slightly raised towards the hard palate; the lips and lower jaw are open and relaxed.

Oral connotation:

As in /er/, there is a connotation of preparation for action. However, it will not be as firmly forward - focussed and, being a short sound, it will be more abrupt.

Word examples:

huff; puff; butt; bump; gush; abrupt; punch; run; rush; shut; crush; crunch; cut; much; bunch; stub; utter; mutter; stutter; flutter; stun; jump; thump; club; mumble; grumble; grunt; shunt.

3.1.10. /o/ as in hot.

Description: This is a short, back, open vowel.

The back of the tongue is slightly raised towards the soft palate; the jaw is relaxed and open.

Oral connotation:

This short, back-propelled, open (spatially large) and forward-directed shape/sound suggests a short open movement into space.

Word examples:

knock; jog; romp; rock; topple; wobble; wallop; waddle; waft; shock; mock; botch; toss; drop; hop; waddle; jog; wallop; romp; chop; swat; lock.

3.1.11. /e/ as in get.

Definition: This is a short, front, half-open vowel.

The front of the tongue is raised half-way to the palate. The jaw and lips are relaxed and open.

Oral connotation:

The raised front of the tongue is prepared for a forward movement; which will be short/abrupt.

Word examples:

get; fetch; peck; heckle; smell; swell; wend; set; hedge(in); tell; enter; project; edge; wedge; spread; pelt; thread; pet; clench.

In “clench”, whether it be a clench of the jaw or the fist, the oral gestures shape the movement of a “clench”.

The movement begins with the voiceless plosive /k/, which is lifted to mobile /l/; the tongue-tip drops down to /e/, and the breath is slowly released in the voiceless friction of /tsh/ which draws the jaw closed as the tongue-tip closes against the teeth-ridge.

In the vowel examples above, we find that the specific sound serves the same function in all the word samples. This commonality in usage correlates with the analysis of the oral connotation, and with signification.

3.2 An Investigation to Examine Whether any Evidence of Correlation Between the Gestures of Articulation and Signification can be Established in English Speech

In this section, we shall examine consonants and consonantal combinations, shaped by the articulatory organs. This section comprises:

- a) An analysis of the articulatory formation of consonants, individually, and in consonantal combinations commonly found in English usage.
- b) An analysis of the oral connotation(s) of the movement(s).
- c) An analysis of examples of the sound and sound combinations in English verb usage to establish whether the sound(s) and their connotation(s), can be seen to serve similar functions in English usage; i.e. to examine the occurrence of the sound(s) in English usage in relation to their signification.

Because the letter /s/ is the alphabetical letter with the most words in the dictionary, I shall begin with it.

In this initial /s/ section, after each sound combination, I shall analyse the oral gestures of a sample word, in order to show the correlation to the dictionary definition; i.e. to the meaning of the word.

3.2.1. Consonant /s/

Definition: /s/ is a voiceless alveolar fricative consonant. Friction is heard as the sound escapes between the tongue tip and the alveolar ridge. The sound can be sustained for as long as there is breath.

Oral Connotation:

The raised tongue tip and forward sustained movement suggests a reaching forward with a sense of flow or fluidity; a sustained forward direction.

Consonant /s/: Examples of /s/ in the Initial position.

surge; seize; sigh; soar; sip; send; sail; salute; sing; sob; seek; search; secrete; sense; separate; set; settle; sew; soothe; sop; sound; sow; subdue; submit; subside; succeed; suckle; suffer; suffocate; suggest; sue; sunder; sup; support; supply; surprise; surrender; survey; suspect; survive; suck; serve; seethe; sack; saddle; sally(forth); sap; satiate; saturate; surfeit; savour; save; savage; say; see; sidle; signal; sag; silence; sink; sit; sock; soak; sever; salivate.

In "sag", the forward flow of /s/ drops, as the tongue tip and the lower jaw drop, to the open, front vowel /a/ : the movement is then retracted to the back of the mouth to the velar voiced plosive /g/; the oral gestures and the sound, "sag".

Dictionary definition:

sag: to droop; to wilt; to become limp.

3.2.2. Consonant /s/ in the final position.

Here there is a sense of the movement continuing into space and time.

Examples of /s/ in the final position.

collapse; hiss; kiss; toss; floss; miss; glance; prance; dance; press; praise; race; guess; sense; pass; loose; raise; rise; rinse; release; caress; bounce; pounce; curse.

In "toss", the voiceless plosive /t/, is retracted to the open back vowel /o/, from where voice is propelled forward and out, to be continued in the sustained /s/.

The initial and final consonants are sudden, voiceless plosives. The oral gestures lightly "toss" the sound out.

Dictionary definition:

toss: lightly throw; send spinning into the air.

3.2.3. Initial /sw/ combinations:

When /s/ is followed by the semi-vowel /w/, voice is added and directed firmly forwards from closely rounded lips; the voiced sound is sent out very forcibly.

Oral Connotation:

/s/ again supplies the forward direction: the propulsion of vocalised breath from /w/ carries the sound outwards, with a "swing".

Examples of initial /sw/ combinations.

swing; swoop; swell; sway; swat; switch; swirl; swear; swoon; swill; swipe; swagger; swim; swish; swivel; swank; sweep; swerve. swaddle; swab; swathe; sweat; sweep; swig; switch; swivel.

In "swoop", the forward propulsion of /s/ is vocalised, elongated and lengthened by the firmly rounded lip shaping for /w/; the sound is extended further by the long vowel /oo/; the forward movement is suddenly closed off by the lips closing for the sudden, voiceless plosive /p/.

The oral gestures and sounds "swoop".

Dictionary definition:

swoop: to make a sudden downward rush.

No English words end with this combination.

3.2.4. Initial /sk/;/sc/ combinations:

The sustained voiceless forward direction of /s/ is retracted to the back of the mouth for the short, voiceless plosive /k/.

Oral Connotation:

The oral movement suggests a withdrawal of the forward movement and flow; a "re-think" of action, either to re-direct it or reinforce it.

Examples of initial /sk/;/sc/ combinations.

skid; skate; ski; skip; skirt(verb); scamper; scoff; scurry; skulk; scoop; scoot; scorn; scour; scare; scan; scold; scoop; scale; scatter; scourge; scotch; scud; scheme; score; scout(verb); scat; scowl; scuffle; scuttle; .

In "skid", the forward breath flow is retracted to the back of the mouth for the voiceless plosive /k/; the forward movement is temporarily withdrawn; then continues upwards to the close front vowel /i/, and ends in the sudden, voiced plosive /d/.

The oral gestures move forwards; backwards; upwards; and downwards.

Dictionary definition:

skid: to slide uncontrollably.

3.2.5. /sk/;/sc/ in final positions:

/sk/ has the forward direction of /s/ withdrawn to the voiceless velar plosive /k/.

Oral Connotation:

There is a sense of a) movement being arrested: b) movement being reinforced.

Final /sk/ examples;

a) bask; mask; b) frisk; whisk.

3.2.6. /skw/: Initial /skw/ combinations.

There is an interesting turn-about in the /skw/ combination. The voiceless forward-directed /s/ breath is retracted to the back of the mouth for the voiceless velar plosive /k/, and then almost coughed forward to the firmly rounded and protruding lips for the voiced /w/, which propels the sound forwards.

Oral Connotation:

The Oral Connotation is one of the forward flow being halted, retracted and then forcibly redirected. The oral gestures move; forwards/ backwards/ forwards; they squiggle and squirm.

Examples of initial /sq/: /skw/ combinations.

squeal; squelch; squeeze; squash; squat; squirt; squint; squabble; squeak; squawk; squib; squirm; squall; squiggle; squish;

In "squirt", the forward flow of /s/ is retracted, and reinforced as it is exploded forwards from the back plosive /k/, which propels the breath forwards into the firmly rounded lips for /w/; voice is added, and the lips further rounded and extended for the long vowel /er/, which directs voice into the sudden breath plosive /t/.

The oral gestures "squirt out" the sound.

Dictionary definition:

squirt: to send out in a jet; to wet thus.

No English words end with this combination.

3.2.7. Initial /skr/ combination.

We have the identical /sk/ Oral Connotation as above to begin with; forward then retracted. However, instead of the "winging" movement of bi-labial /w/, the tongue-tip curls upwards and backwards towards the teethridge to shape /r/.

Oral Connotation:

Here, the Oral Connotation is one of the forward direction being retracted to the back of the mouth and then propelled forward from a point further back and wider in range than the /w/. The shape and sound has a wider, larger spatial range than /skw/.

Examples of initial /skr/ combinations.

scream; screech; scrawl; scramble; scrounge; scratch; scrummage; scrub; scrunch; scrape; screw; scribble; scrabble.

In "screech" the forward flow of /s/ is retracted to, and reinforced by /k/, then propelled to the forward, voiced roll of /r/; the voice is then lifted to the long, close front vowel /ee/ (a long, high, small sound); which then moves forward to be blocked by the tongue tip against the teethridge, and the voiceless, slow release of /ch/ (tsh).

Dictionary definition:

screech: a harsh, high-pitched scream.

3.2.8. /sn/ combination.

The Oral Connotation of the /sn/ combination is very interesting in relation to the word examples, most of which pertain to the nose. (snout) The forward breath-flow is retracted into the nasal passages for the nasal /n/, which can be sustained.

Oral Connotation:

The initial forward flow is suddenly drawn in and up; a withdrawing action, with nasal connotations.

Examples of initial "sn" combinations.

snore; snarl; sneer; snort; sneeze; sniff; snap; snooze; sneak; snigger; snaffle; snuffle; snivel; snub; snip; snuffle; snuff; snuggle; snatch; snare; snoop; snicker; snitch.

In "sniff", the forward flow of /s/ is withdrawn into the nasal passages /n/ where it is voiced; the nasal is released into the short, front close voiced /i/, which is released into the breathy friction of /f/, as the upper teeth lightly contact the lower lip. The initial oral gestures move the air into the nose (sn); the final gestures send the air out and up /iff/ - to "sniff" it.

Dictionary definition:

sniff: to draw air in, audibly through the nose;
to try the smell of.

No English words end with this combination.

3.2.9. /sm/ combination.

The initial forward direction is closed off by the lips, and the breath is redirected through the nose where it is vocalised.

Oral Connotation:

Here the connotations are: a) the outward flow has been stopped and internalised;
b) the outward flow has been stopped and internalised to be reinforced.

Examples of initial /sm/ combinations.

a) smirk; smile; smell; smarm; smirch; smoke; smooth; smart(v); smooch.
b) smack; smother; smite; smoulder; smear; smash; smirch; smudge; smuggle; smirch.

In "smooth", the forward flow of /s/ is closed off by the lips and redirected through the nasal resonant /m/ which releases the voice, without any movement of the tongue, only an opening of the lips, into the long, close back vowel /oo/.

The breath is directed out between the tongue tip and the teeth; it is released as the tongue tip releases contact with the teeth.

The oral gestures are smooth; there is hardly any movement of the tongue; no jolt; twist or turn.

Dictionary definition:

smooth: to move evenly without bumping; to make an even surface with no projections.

No English words end with this combination.

3.2.10. /sh/ combination.

The forward /s/ shape is retracted and lifted as the sides of the tongue are raised to the alveolar ridge.

Oral Connotation:

The area of friction is enlarged and the forward direction has been elevated; we have a forward movement with great impact - the voiceless, aspirant quality of the sound, enlarges the sense of "forward extension". The oral movements suggest a forward-direction, extending into a greater spatial range.

Examples of initial /sh/ combinations.

shriek; shout; shake; shiver; shudder; shatter; shrug; shine; shock; shuffle; shirk; shamble; shift; shove; shut; shun; shoot; shimmer; shift; shunt.

In "shoot", the elevated breathy /sh/ propels forward, into the voiced, long, close, forward vowel /oo/, which has firmly rounded lip projection; when the tongue tip contacts the teethridge and then releases contact, we hear the sudden breath plosive /t/. The oral gestures shape a narrow forward direction; they "shoot" the sound out.

Dictionary definition:

shoot: to send out directly ; to move swiftly.

3.2.11. /sh/ in the final position.

Whereas the /s/ endings spilled over into time, /sh/ endings also spill into space; they have the spatially larger movement range noted above.

Oral Connotation:

The forward direction is extended further into space. We can see that /sh/ in final positions has many words signifying these movement connotations.

Examples of /sh/ in final positions.

crash; trash; flourish; burnish; polish; push; gush; rush; lash; gnash; bash; slash; flush; gash; swish; squash; clash; crush; brush; smash; mash; flash; dash; thrash; swish; splash.

In "push", the lips close, and on the plosive release, direct the breath out /p/; strong vocal reinforcement is supplied from the short, close, back /u/ vowel; the movement then extends forwards into space.

In the action; /p/ makes contact; /u/ moves the object forwards; /sh/ extends the forward movement further into space.

Dictionary definition:

push: to move away by force; to thrust forward forcibly.

3.2.12. /ge/ combinations.

The voiced equivalent of /sh/ is /ge/ as in beige. No English words begin with this sound.

Oral Connotation:

The sound is shaped in the same place and manner as /sh/ and has the same description and Oral Connotations. However, being voiced, the sound has a stronger impact and stronger force, as the noun examples show.

Examples of final /ge/ combinations.

massage; collision; erosion; explosion; conclusion; confusion; delusion; occasion; provision; pleasure; leisure; mirage.

3.2.13. /sp/ combination.

In initial /sp/ combinations, the forward direction of /s/ moves forward into a little explosion as the lips close and separate for the short, voiceless /p/ plosive.

Oral Connotation:

Here the connotation is one of the forward direction being abruptly and lightly stopped; then a little "explosion" propels and projects the movement further forward.

Examples of initial /sp/ combinations.

spill; spank; sparkle; spit; spangle; spatter; spew; spurt; spiral; spurn; speak; spasm; span; speed; spar; spin; spark; spawn; spear; spike; sport; sponge; spoil; spot; spout.

In "spurt", the forward flow of /s/ is suddenly closed off by the lips /p/, which explodes into the firmly rounded lip projection of voiced /u (er)/ ; this vowel is propelled further forwards into the plosive /t/.

In "spew", the initial actions are also retracted; the body of the tongue humps up to make contact with the hard palate, and the voice is strongly propelled outwards from the released /y/(as in yes) contact; there is no further movement of the tongue; the voiced close front vowel /ew/, is a continuation of the /y/ release. "Spurt" has a forwards movement and a direct ending; "spew" has a strong "outwards" projection in the movements and an undirected finality.

Dictionary definitions

Spurt; send out suddenly; gush.

Spew: Vomit; project in a stream.

Noun examples have the same connotations - of projected direction;

spire; spear; space; spade; sphere; spike; spindle; spine; spirit; spittle; splinter; wasp; asp.

When /sp/ is in final positions, the forward direction of /s/, expires in a little explosion of finality.

Oral Connotation:

The forward direction is halted and enclosed.

3.2.14. Examples of final /sp/.

gasp; rasp; grasp; clasp; lisp.

In "gasp", the oral gestures are a gasp. The voiced, velar guttural /g/ explodes from the throat; the jaw drops for long, open /a/; the tongue tip lifts up to voiceless /s/, which is not sustained; the lips close, and open to release the sudden breath plosive /p/.

Dictionary definition:

to gasp; a) to draw in the breath sharply in exhaustion or surprise; b) to speak breathlessly.

3.2.15. /spl/ combination:

The voiceless forward direction of /s/ is arrested by the plosive /p/, which is followed by the voiced "mobility" of /l/.

The forward action is halted, and then retracted as the tongue tip is lifted to the teeth ridge.

The vocalized breath spills over the sides of the tongue.

Oral Connotation:

The initial forward direction of the movement /sp/ has been interrupted, retracted and the voiced /l/ spills over sideways.

Examples of initial /spl/ combinations.

splutter; splatter; splinter; splotch; split; splash; splay; splurge; splodge; splice.

In "split", the initial forward direction of /sp/ is drawn back to the teethridge for /l/, and the voiced sound spills over the sides of the tongue; the shape and sound is enlarged before it moves to short, close, front /i/ (a high, small sound) which ends with the sudden breath plosive /t/.

The oral gestures shape the action and sound of split.

Dictionary definition:

split; come apart lengthways.

3.2.16. /spr/ combination.

When /sp/ is followed by /r/, after the explosion of air for /p/ the tongue-tip is retracted to the teethridge; there is a forward rush of vocalized breath.

Oral Connotation:

The Oral Connotation is one of the movement being enlarged in a spatially wider, forward direction.

Examples of initial /spr/ combinations.

spread; sprinkle; sprout; spring; spray; sprawl; sprint; spruce.

In "sprawl", the initial forward /sp/ rolls forwards on /r/, and then drops to the half-open, back vowel /aw/; which is lifted and released in the mobility of /l/, where the voice flows out over the sides of the tongue. The oral gestures "sprawl".

Dictionary definition:

to sit, lie or fall idly; to spread out loosely.

3.2.17. /st/ combination.

When /s/ is followed by /t/, the sustained forward movement direction of the tongue-tip is retracted to the teethridge, to shape the sudden voiceless plosive /t/.

Oral Connotation:

There is a sense of the forward movement:

- a) being stopped and suddenly arrested;
- b) or of being retrieved in order to be re-organized or reinforced.

Examples of initial /st/ combinations.

- a) stumble; stutter; stub; stagger; stammer; stun; stoop; stalk; stall; startle; stem; still; stifle; sting; stitch;
- b) stop; stab; stamp; sting; stir; stalk; stomp; start; stand; step; stare; steer; stay; stash; start; steal; steep; stick; stew; steam; stoke; stow.

We can clearly feel the "stumble" in the oral gestures which correlate with the action meaning of the word. The initial forward direction of /s/ is retracted to the teethridge for /t/. there is a gasp on the neutral /u/, the movement is blocked, closed and drawn inwards on /m/; followed by the intrusive jolt of the plosive /b/; which is followed by the mobility of /l/. Final mobile /l/, informs us that equilibrium has been re-gained.

3.2.18. /st/ in final positions.

Oral Connotation:

/st/ in this position, has connotations of a light, explosive end to an action or forward movement.

Examples of final /st/.

cast; burst; blast; gust; bust; thrust; list.

In "cast", the voiceless, back velar plosive /k/, initiates the movement; the open long /a/, propels the movement into space; the forward movement is extended further on /s/, and ends with the sudden, short /t/ plosive. The oral gestures make the movement gestures of the hand and arm during the action of cast.

Dictionary definition:

cast: to throw outwards.

3.2.19. /str/ combination.

When /st/ is followed by /r/, the voiced plosive /t/ is "stretched" into space as it rolls forwards and outwards on /r/.

Oral Connotation:

/s/ extends the movement into space, it reaches out; /tr/ lengthens the extension into space.

Examples of initial /str/ combinations.

stretch; stride; strew; strut; stroll; stress; strike; stream; streak; strive; stray; stroke; strain; straggle; straddle; strip; struggle; strum; strut.

The oral gestures of "stretch" are exactly those of the physical movement. On the initial /s/, the movement surges forward; on /tr/ it travels out into space; on the long vowel /e/ it extends further into space; the movement energy is released in the slow and gradual breath friction of /tch/.

In "struggle", the forward movements of /str/ are withdrawn to the short, back, open vowel /u/; dragged back to the guttural plosive closure of /g/; the movement is mobilized outwards in the sustained lateral /l/.

These are perfect examples of the oral gestures "enacting" the word-meaning; the action that the word signifies.

Dictionary definitions:

stretch; pull out and extend; thrust out (limbs.)

struggle; move with vigorous effort (to get free.)

3.2.20. /s/ combination.

In this combination, the sustained, forward flow of /s/, is retracted; the tongue tip moves back to contact the teethridge and the voiced sound flows over the sides of the tongue.

Oral Connotation:

Here, it is one of a "slip"; a sliding back of the action. The oral movement (and meaning) logic suggests:

- a) a slide or slip; a withdrawal of the forward movement;
- b) this could be to gather force.

Examples of initial /s/ combinations.

- a) slip; slobber; slurp; slump; slither; slide; slacken; slaver; slouch; slur; slink; sloop; slant; slope;
- b) slap; slog; slash; slam; slosh; sling; slit.

In "slump", the forward flow /s/ is withdrawn to short, close back /u/; lips close and the nasalised voice is released through the nose; movement stops on the sudden, voiceless /p/ plosive.

The shoulder/ spine action of "slump". Shoulders are braced and held up on /s/; the spine collapses on /um/, shoulders drop on /p/.

Dictionary definition:

slump: to flop down slackly.

3.2.21. Consonant /z/

The voiced equivalent of /s/, is /z/.

Oral Connotation:

We would expect /z/ to retain the forward and sustained connotations of /s/, but being voiced, there should be a stronger sound and energised force. In final positions, we should find the sustainability of /s/, with more strength.

Examples of initial /z/

zoom; zap; zip; zing.

3.2.22. Examples of final /z/ positions

gaze; graze; laze; ooze; snooze; blaze; seize; daze; prise.

buzz; browse; praise; arouse.

3.2.23. Consonant /f/.

The light voiceless quality of the following sound, /f/ is contrasted with the stronger voiced release /z/ in the following examples.

sniffle; snaffle; snuffle; ruffle; / razzle; dazzle; guzzle; frazzle.

Definition.

/f/ is a voiceless, labiodental fricative. It is sounded as the breath is released between the upper teeth and the lower lip. The sound is released as the jaw drops. It is a light breath sound, and can be sustained.

Oral Connotation:

/f/ suggests a) a light, flexible, airborne quality; However, the shape of /f/ in initial positions, also suggests:

b) a focusing of forward-propelled movement - an incisive quality.

Examples of initial /f/

a) faint; fag; fail; fade; falter; fawn; fan; fidget; fib; feel; fiddle; filch; fob; follow; fondle; fall; fuzz; fast; foam; fawn; feign; feint; fear; ferret; fuss.

b) fight; furl; force; forge; furrow; fill; form; find; follow; fetch; fan; fasten; fold; fell; fend; file; foil; furbish.

3.2.24. In final positions, /f/ retains its light air-borne Oral Connotations.

Examples of final /f/

whiff; tiff; cuff; quaff; rebuff; doff; sniff; laugh; biff; puff; cough; snuff (v); huff; buff.

3.2.25. /fl/ combination

When /f/ is followed by /l/, the forward breath flow of /f/ is withdrawn as the tongue tip recoils to the teethridge in preparation for the voiced breath release of /l/.

Oral Connotation:

There is a sense of the light breath sound /f/ being mobilised; of being lifted in order to:

- a) extend it into space; or
- b) reinforce it ; to prepare for action.

Examples of initial /fl/ combinations

- a) fling; flutter; flicker; flinch; flirt; fly; flow; float; fluster; flurry; flounder; flip; flit; flaunt; flap; flake; floss; flounce; flute; flower; fluff; flourish; flick; flash; flinch; flop; flitter.
- b) flail; flank; flare; flame; flash; flee; flay; flock; flog; flush; flood; flout.

In "fluff", /f/ is mobilised in /l/, propelled outwards on /u/, and extended further, lightly into space in /f/.

3.2.26. /ft/ combination

This does not occur initially in English words.

Oral Connotation:

In final positions, the Oral Connotation is of the light /f/ being raised to the short, voiceless plosive /t/, suggesting a "lifting" motion.

Examples of final /ft/.

waft; drift; sift; lift; soft; loft.

3.2.27. /fr/ combination

The forward "airborne" friction of voiceless /f/ is retracted to the teeth ridge for the /r/ sound to be shaped. There is a reinforced, rolling-forward vocalized movement.

Oral Connotation:

The forward extension of /f/ will have a broader spacial range, and be vocalised.

Examples of initial /fr/ combinations.

frisk; frolic; free; froth; freeze; fritter; frown; frizz; fray; fret; freak (out); fringe.

3.2.28. Consonant /v/

/v/ is the voiced equivalent of /f/.

The strong, direct and sudden elements of /v/ give an incisive strength and vitality to this sound - a thrust.

Oral Connotation:

Being a vocalized sound, /v/ will have greater strength in the vibration of the friction between the upper teeth and the lower lip, than /f/.

As with /f/, the sound is released as the jaw drops, and the teeth release contact with the lower lip.

It is interesting to note that "vibrate" which is what the vocal folds do to make voice; and many other words meaning some type of utterance, all use this labio-dental voiced consonant as their initial sound.

Examples of initial /v/

The words in the first three lines are all "vocal" and "mouth-associated" words.

vibrate; vent; violate; verbalize; vocalize; voice; vow; vomit; vouch; vituperate; vend; vilify; vociferate; vote; vaunt; versify; ventriloquist; venture; verbiage; voracious; vitriolic; vicious; virulent; vocalist; vocalic; vehement.

violate; vamp; vault; vie; view; vex; veer; vaunt; veil; venerate; ventilate.

/v/ has great verve, vigour and vitality, and occurs in many words which express strong and vital qualities in English.

e.g. vulgar; voyeur; vivify; vixen; volatile; volt; voodoo; voluptuous; vitalize; void; visualize; vivacious; victim; victor; vim; villain; virtue; virus; viscera; vigil; vermilion; vibrant; vice; venerate; vengeance; veneral; vascular; vivid; virile; vampire; vandal; vain; valiant; vanquish; ventricle; ventilate.

3.2.29. Consonant /ch/; (nch; tch) combination**Definition**

/ch/ is a voiceless palato-alveolar affricative.

The front of the tongue is pressed against the teethridge behind the upper teeth and the airstream is blocked (as for /t/ and /d/). However, unlike /t/ and /d/, the breath release is gradual and slow, and friction is heard as the jaw drops and the sound is released.

Oral Connotation:

In the initial position, the oral movement suggests a slower movement than the short plosive /t/, and as there is a larger area of tongue contacting the teethridge, the sound will be broader in space. The oral gestures are of contact and release; the lower jaw moves down on the release; a "jaw" movement. The connotation could indicate inner effort.

If one makes a "chewing" action, and vocalizes the release, you can hear where, and how, the word "chew" was made. As with "giggle", "chew" and "yawn" is the vocalised oral action of the meaning of the word.

In the following examples of initial and final positions, it can be seen that many words in which this combination occurs, signify:

a) jaw movements; eating, and talking, "chat" words.

The combination, in the initial position, can also:

b) precede a forceful release of action.

Examples of initial /ch/

a) chew; choke; chatter; chomp; champ; chat; chant; cheek; cheep; chirp; cheer; chime; chide; chirp; chirrup; chitchat; chivvy; chuckle; chug; chomp; cheer

b) charge; chase; churn; chop; chuck; chafe; chuck.

3.2.30. /ch/ in final positions

Oral Connotation:

In final positions, the oral gestures are again, of a contact and a release.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that we find a great many physical body-contact words with /ch/ in final positions, as well as words with eating; jaw and mouth connotations.

/ch/ endings

a) munch; crunch; belch; retch; quench; squelch.

b) touch; itch; scratch; crouch; lurch; perch; arch; hunch; punch; launch; bunch; twitch; flitch; slouch; reach; latch; flinch; filch; scrunch;

3.2.31. Consonant /dg/

/dg/ is the voiced version of the identical oral movement we have above in /ch/.

Oral Connotation:

Because the sound is vocalised, the release action should have a greater strength and energy than /ch/. In initial positions, we find the same Oral Connotations;

- a) the same "mouth" related usage, but with a stronger energy;
- b) the contact and release are stronger in the oral gestures, and the signification, of the "action" words.

Examples of initial /dg/

- a) jabber; jeer; gibe; gibber; jingle; jangle; joke; jaw; jowl.
- b) jab; jilt; jink; jog; jar; joggle; jump; gesture; gyrate; jolt; jitter; jumble; judder; jut; jostle; jerk; gesticulate.

In final positions, the oral gesture of contact and release is stronger in sound, and signification, than /ch/, because of the vocalized breath force.

3.2.32. Examples of final /dg/

nudge; dodge; budge; stodge; lounge; hedge; trudge; grudge; rage.

This /dg/ combination occurs in many words which signify a strong release; or a forceful ejection.

e.g. inject; eject; ejaculate; reject; suggest; subject (v); ingest; enjoy; digest; abject; joy; joyous; joyful; jolly; rejoice; rage, object; reject.

3.2.33. Consonant /w/

Definition

/w/ is a voiced bilabial semi-vowel: it is called a semi-vowel because it starts in the position of a close vowel; the lips are firmly rounded, and close together; but the air-stream is not interrupted.

/w/ is classified as a consonant, because it functions as such. The lips are well rounded, and the voiced sound is heard as the lips release this shape and move to another shape.

Oral Connotation:

It is one of a forceful, forward propulsion of movement.

Examples of initial /w/

warble; weave; wander; wallop; waddle; wobble; wallow; waggle; wave; wag; wing; wade; waft; wail; walk; waltz; weep; wangle; wiggle; wop; weld; win; wield; winch; wind; wipe; wish; wither.

There is no final /w/ sound in English.

3.2.34. Consonant /wh/

This combination is the voiceless version of the oral gestures of /w/.

Aspiration is heard as the sound is released and there is a breathy quality to the /w/.

The breathy sound is less forceful than /w/, but retains the forward propulsion and the closely rounded lips.

Oral Connotation:

We should have the same forward propulsion as /w/; however, it would be a breathy, voiceless sound. Many of the word examples pertain to the "whistling" sound which is a result of the oral shape.

Examples of initial /wh/.

whir; whimper; whine; whisper; whack; whistle; whang; wheel; wheedle; wheeze; whiff; whiffle; whinny; whip; whop; whap; whirl; whir; whisk; whoop; whelp; whizz; whittle.

3.2.35. Consonant /m/

Definition

/m/ is a voiced bilabial nasal consonant.

The voiced breath is released through the nasal passages; the lips are pressed together.

Oral Connotation:

The bilabial closure of /m/, and its withdrawal into the nasal passages, suggests a "drawing inwards" prior to outward release; the sound can be sustained.

Examples of initial /m/

The first line are mouth-related words. I propose that this is due to the fact that most of the time, when we are not talking or eating, the lips are in an /m/ position. We have to open and separate them to mutter, munch etc.

murmur; mutter; munch; mumble; mull; muzzle; muse; moan; mock.

muster; march; maim; make; mangle; mar; mark; marry; marvel; match; meet; melt; mend; merge; mince; muffle; mooch; mop; mould; massage; mess; mope.

In final positions, the sustained quality of /m/ is evident, e.g. hum; as is the sense of closure. e.g. slam.

3.2.36. Examples of final /m/

hum; dumb; numb; scream; dream; drum; slam; clam; boom; gleam; beam; steam; stream; strum; spasm.

3.2.37. Consonant /n/**Definition**

The lingu-alveolar contact of /n/ is a partial closure; being a nasal consonant, /n/ can be sustained.

Oral Connotation:

In initial positions /n/ has a resonant force in its release from the nasal passages. As the jaw moves down to release the sound, there is a strong jaw related oral connotation, as seen in the first two lines of verbs.

Examples of initial /n/

gnash; nosh; natter; nuzzle; natter; nip; nibble; neigh; nag; narrate; negate; nurse; niggle; nuzzle; natter; gnaw.

knick; knead; nest; kneel; knock; nod; knot;

In final positions, the sustainability of the continuant /n/, suggests a continuing action - a sustainable action.

3.2.38. Examples of final /n/

run; turn; spurn; drone; mourn; yearn; churn; burn; learn; spin; stun; moan; groan; whine; grin; fan.

3.2.39. Consonant /ng/

Definition

/ng/ is a nasal continuant. The /ng/ combination involves firm closure; the back of the tongue contacts the soft palate and the voiced sound moves through the nasal passages.

Oral Connotation:

There is a strong sense of sustained resonant flow and movement in the sound quality.

Examples of final /ng/

(/ng/ does not occur initially in English.)

sing; swing; fling; bring; cling; hang; bang; clang; gong; sting; wring; twang; hang; spring.

In creating his lyric, *The Cataract of Lodore*, Robert Southey, (1774-1843) who became English Poet Laureate, certainly enjoyed the sustained flow and movement inherent in this English sound combination.

This is an extract.

Retreating, and beating and meeting and sheeting,
 Delaying and straying and playing and straying,
 Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
 Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
 And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
 And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
 And flapping and rapping and slapping and clapping,
 And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
 And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,
 And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing,
 And so never ending, but always descending,
 Sounds and motions forever are blending,
 All at once, and all o'er, with a mighty uproar,

And this way the water comes down from Lodore.²

3.2.40. Consonant /t/

Definition

/t/ is a voiceless alveolar plosive. The /t/ sound is made as the tongue tip releases closed contact with the teethridge.

Oral Connotation:

The oral gesture is light, direct and sudden. In initial positions, the Oral Connotation is of a crisp, light and sudden forward movement-action. In final positions, the Oral Connotation is of an ending, a closure of movement or sound.

Examples of initial /t/

tug; toss; tap; tip; topple; turn; tug; tear; take; tell; talk; tilt; toil; tick; touch; tuck; tumble; totter; tack; tee; tie; tittle-tattle; tense(v); tippie; tootle; tousle; turn; tut-tut; tag; tango; taunt; taste; tease; tear; tell; tickle; tilt; toddle.

3.2.41. Examples of final /t/

lift; erupt; point; spurt; beat; bleat; burst; pout; sit; hit; taunt; gust; split; grunt; squirt; flaunt; flout; flit; slit.

3.2.42. /tw/ combination

The firm alveolar contact of the tongue tip, which shapes voiceless /t/, is narrowed, and blown through well-rounded lips into the voiced forward propulsion of /w/, which is only released when the lips move to a different vowel shape.

Oral Connotation:

This suggests a sudden, sharp contact which is "whirled" outwards and vocalised.

Examples of initial /tw/ combinations.

twirl; twist; twinge; twinkle; twitter; tweak; twitch; tweet; twiddle; twinkle; twang.

² Robert Southey, *The Cataract of Lodore*.

3.2.43. /tr/ combination

From the contact of the tongue tip with the teeth ridge, the tongue tip is retracted , and the vocalized sound is rolled forward with a greater force and from a wider lingual-alveolar contact area.

Oral Connotation:

This is one of a forward movement with a wider spacial range than /t/ or /tw/.

Examples of initial /tr/ combinations.

trot; tramp; trudge; tread; trump; troll; try; truss; trumpet; trick; trifle; trounce; truckle; trundle; track; trail; trap; trek; trickle; trill; troop; trump.

3.2.44. Consonant /d/

This is the voiced alveolar plosive version of /t/. It is strong, direct and sudden.

Oral Connotation:

We have the same forward-propelled, direct and sudden movement connotation, but it has a more forceful, stronger action of release because the sound is vocalised.

Compare the weakness and frailty of "totter" with the heaviness and clumsiness of "dodder".

Examples of initial /d/

dash; do; dart; dig; dive; dodge; dump; delve; dip; dab; dance; dare; daunt; dazzle; doodle; deck; die; douse; duck(v); doss; don; douse; dot; dote; doze; dwindle; divide; decide; defy.

In final positions, the sudden movement of closure of the plosive is firmer than that of /t/.

3.2.45. Examples of final /d/

bend; rend; tread; grind; blend; thud; skid; slide; wind; speed; ride; hide; wade; glide; send; plod.

3.2.46. /dr/ combination

As we have noted previously, when /r/ follows an initial consonant, the first sound-gesture is propelled forwards with a rolling action with increased force into a larger spacial area.

Oral Connotation:

It is of a forward-propelled, direct, sudden voiced /d/ rolled and projected forward into a spatially wider movement range.

Examples of initial /dr/ combinations.

drag; drawl; dredge; drop; drive; droop; drink; drift; drizzle; dread; drain; draw; drill; drip; drowse; drum; draft; dribble; drape; drench; drip; drool; drone; drudge; drown; dream; drub.

The next pair of sounds /th/, are identical, except that the first is voiced and the second, voiceless.

Definition

They are dental fricatives, made as the breath escapes through the tongue tip and the teeth. The tongue tip protrudes between the upper and lower teeth. The voiced sound is released as the jaw opens.

Oral Connotation:

The tongue is "trapped" between the teeth, so no movement will be possible. There is a "blocked" shape in the voiced sound, as friction does not actually escape until the sound is released. The Oral Connotation is one of a "static" shape.

(After the above analysis of Oral Connotations, I looked for verb examples - the Oral Connotations were correct!)

3.2.47. /th/ as in voiced "this and that."

This sound does not "activate" any action words in English.

3.2.48. Voiceless /th/ allows slight aspiration through the shape, before it is released.**Oral Connotation:**

It is one of a rather "thick" breathy friction and release.

Examples of initial voiceless /th/

In onomatopoeic words, as noted previously, the gradual onset of sounds begin with aspirants, whereas abrupt sounds begin with plosives. This breathy fricative is used initially for:

thud; thump; thunder; thwack; thaw; thresh; thud; thrum; think; thwart.

Examples of final voiceless /th/

The voiced sound has no English verb endings.

writhe; bathe;

Interestingly, mouth related words use this voiceless sound.

breathe; breath; mouth; teeth; throat; thirst; thank; soothe.

3.2.49. /thr/ combination

As we have noted, /r/ "rolls" the movement forward and outwards.

Oral Connotation:

The trapped tongue tip, making voiceless close friction, is released and lifts to the alveolar ridge where the sound is vocalised and propelled forwards.

Examples of initial /thr/ combinations.

throw; throttle; throb; thrash; thrust; thresh; thread; thrill; threaten.

3.2.50 & 3.2.51. Consonants: /g/; /k/**Description**

These are velar plosives.

In shaping the following velar plosive sounds /k/ (voiceless) and /g/ (voiced), the movement involves a firm closure of the back of the tongue against the soft palate. There is a strong forward propulsion of sound as the back oral plosive is released - a "gutsy" back-of-the-mouth vocal explosion.

Oral Connotation:

Initially and finally, there should be an almost guttural, forceful, strong release of action, /g/ being the stronger, voiced sound.

The velar contact and plosive release has connotations of inner effort in the production of these sounds.

Examples of initial /g/

Ejected, almost from the throat, as the sound is, we find that:

- a) many sounds are associated with the throat and mouth area.
- b) the shape and sounds are associated with a forcible movement of release, or attack.

a) guttural(adj); gulp; gurgle; giggle; gaffaw; grunt; grumble; gasp; growl; gabble; guzzle; gag; gargle; garble; gape; gobble; grin; grizzle; gripe; grouse; gossip; gush; gawp; grouch; gosh.

gorge; goitre; gobbledegook; gormandize.

b) gash; gallop; go; gash; get; goggle; gaze; gore; goof; gush; gust; goad; give; gather.

3.2.52. In final positions, /g/ has connotations of inner effort.

dig; tug; hug; gag; sag; flog; wag; nag; flag.

3.2.53. /gl/ combinations

The /g/ is released in a plosive at the back of the mouth, and the sound is then lifted upwards and forwards to the teeth ridge for the front of the tongue to shape /l/.

Oral Connotation:

In the movement from the guttural voiced plosive /g/ to the lifted, mobility of /l/, there is a sense of the forceful /g/, being:

a). spatially elevated;

b) activated.

Examples of initial /gl/ combinations

a) glimmer; gleam; glitter; glance; glimpse; glide; glint; glow; gloss; glaze; glisten; glorify; glean.

b) glare; glower; gloat; glut.

The following words also express the elevated connotation;

glamorous; glorious; glee; glory; glorify.

3.2.54. /gr/ combination

The guttural plosive /g/ is lifted upwards and forwards to the teeth ridge for /r/, where the forward movement is propelled out in a wider spacial range.

Oral Connotation:

This is of a "large" movement with a strong initial plosive, which is "rolled" outwards and forwards.

Examples of initial /gr/ combinations.

greet; grin; grip; gripe; grab; grapple; growl; graze; grasp; grant; grind; grate; groan; growl; grouse; grizzle; gripe; grow; grovel; grunt; grumble; grouch; grudge; grieve; grope.

3.2.55. /k/ is the voiceless equivalent of /g/

The oral movement of closure is identical; however the plosive release is a breath sound i.e. voiceless.

Oral Connotation:

Again, there is a guttural, release action; however, the oral release is aspirant; suggesting an "elevation" of the plosive; there would be a lighter, less "grounded" sound release in the plosive.

Again, due to the guttural action, we find word examples which are:

- a) connected with the mouth and oral sounds.
- b) a movement of forward release or attack.

Examples of initial /k/

- a) cough; cackle; coo; coax; call; keen; quack; quaff; quaver; quench; quip; quote; quibble; clench; cluck; kiss.
- b) caper; cavort; cascade; carry; catch; coil; cast; canter; career; carve; cut; caress; curb; kick; kill.

3.2.56. In final positions, there is a firm closure in the voiceless plosive /k/ endings.

We again find:

- a) the Oral Connotations which echo the oral movements.
- b) /k/ endings have connotations of inner effort releases.

a) choke; lick; smirk; croak; mock; cluck; suck;

b) sink; stick; buck; knock; pick; lock; mark; prick; flick; tweak; click; joke; clink; clonk; poke; prick; pluck; peck; nick; pick; snick; blink; jerk; perk; spank; yank; strike; stroke; shake; block; shock; shrink; pluck; flock; hack; whack; tick; hack; lurk; smack; crack; prick; poke; pick; wink; blink.

In initial and final positions; the velar plosive release is evident in the following examples.
kick; crack; crank; croak; click; clonk; clack; clink; kink.

The movement of the pendulum ends with /k/ in "tick-tock".

The oral movements in "click", with the initial and final /k/ plosives, shape the sound and meaning of the word.

The same applies to "flick": the initial air-borne breath fricative /f/, is lifted up and made mobile in /l/. It is then raised to the close front vowel /i/, (high small sound) from where it is "exploded" outwards in the aspirant plosive /k/. The oral action shapes the action (and meaning) of the word.

3.2.57. In the /ulk/ combination at the ends of words, there are interesting oral gestures. The open, back vowel /u/ is raised to the lifted forward flow of /l/. The movement then "falls", and is retracted to the velar voiceless plosive /k/.

Oral Connotation:

There is an Oral Connotation of:

- a) the movement being too heavy to sustain in elevation. e.g. bulk; hulk; or
- b) of the movement being retracted; e.g. sulk; skulk.

3.2.58. /cl/ combinations

The voiceless plosive /k/ is elevated to the mobility of voiced /l/.

Oral Connotation:

The oral connotation is that the plosive release is lifted and propelled out in a forward, elevated movement. The inner effort is re-inforced.

Examples of initial /cl/ combinations

claw; climb; cleave; clank; clap; clasp; clatter; clench; clang; clash; clip; close; clout; clop; cling; club; clobber; clutch; clink; clamp; clot; cloy; clump; club; click.

3.2.59. /k(w)/ combinations

The voiceless plosive release is directed outwards through the firmly rounded lips (w), and vocalised.

Oral Connotation:

Here, the forceful, narrow, forward direction of the vocalised /w/, is initiated by the velar plosive /k/. There is a sense of the plosive /k/ being squeezed into a narrow channel, to direct and focus the inner effort out for action.

Examples of initial /k(w)/

quash; quack; quake; quaff; quaver; quiver; quibble; quote; quail; quarrel; quench; quit; quell; quip; quicken.

3.2.60. /kr/;/cr/ combinations

When /(k)/ is followed by /r/, the vocalized sound is propelled forwards, in a rolling action, from the firm back closure of the plosive/k/.

Oral Connotation:

This is one of a forward-rolling movement to reinforce the initial back action from plosive /k/.

Examples of initial /(k)cr/ combinations

crawl; crackle; cringe; creep; crouch; crush; crunch; cry; croak; crash; crack; creak; cramp; cradle; crumble.

3.2.61. Consonant /r/

Definition

As we saw in the previous chapter, the English /r/ has lost its friction and can be sustained. In shaping and sounding /r/, the vocalized friction passes forward across the hard palate to the raised and turned back tongue tip resting below the teeth ridge.

Oral Connotation:

The Oral Connotation is one of a "preparation" for forward action. Propulsion of the movement and sound are indicated. Recurrence and rhythm are suggested by /r/ sounds.

Examples of initial /r/

race; raze; ram; rap; raise; reach; rear; reap; ride; rise; roam; rip; roar; roll; romp; rouse; rout; rub; ruffle; rumple; rumble; rustle; rush; run; wrap; wrangle; wriggle; wrinkle; wrestle;

wrench; writhe; wreck; rock; ravage; revolve; resist; root; roost; rifle; row; ravish; repel; remove; relax; rasp; rave; rail; rain; rap; rape; rescue; rampage; retch; regale; rumble; reach; rock; rein; rest; raid; reel; retort; romp; rise; rip; race; rage; rant; wring; wrap.

No English words end with /r/.

3.2.62. Consonant /l/

Definition

We have dealt with the only lateral consonant sound in English, /l/, in relation to other sound combinations.

/l/ is made by the tongue tip pressing against the teeth ridge; the back of the tongue drops down and the voiced sound flows sideways over the sides of the tongue. /l/ is associated with "flow" and fluidity, and is known as "liquid" /l/.

Oral Connotation:

The light lingua-alveolar contact of the oral gesture suggests a fluid-flowing flexibility, in the movement.

Examples of initial /l/

lift; lunge; linger; loiter; leer; lash; launch; lurch; limp; lick; lap; lag; lead; lean; leap; linger; lollop; lug; lurk; loom; leave; loll; lull; laze; look; lope; love; list; lop.

In the words "level"; "loll"; and "lull", we find clues to indicate their movement, direction and shape.

In "level" the oral movements shape the sound and meaning of the word. The close front vowel /e/ is level with the tongue tip in the mouth, and the slight oral movement is levelled by the initial movement being reversed at the end.

"loll" and "lull" have liquid, mobile beginnings and endings.

In "loll" the open, back vowel is shaped with a relaxed, open loose jaw.

Dictionary definition:

loll: stand, sit or rest lazily; hang loosely.

In "lull", the close (high) back vowel is shaped on the same level as /l/; the organs of articulation hardly move and the oral gesture is almost imperceivable.

Dictionary definition:

lull: verb: to soothe or send to sleep; to calm; to become quiet. noun: a period of quiet or inactivity.

In "limp", the forward-flowing mobility of /l/ is retracted and lifted to the short, close front vowel /i/; the oral movement is then halted, arrested and withdrawn, by the closure of the lips for bilabial /m/. However the closure of /m/ is released into the voiceless bilabial plosive /p/; movement and sound continues - very weakly.

The fluidity and mobility of the initial movement are lost, but the movement "limps" on. The oral gestures, and the broken rhythm, are identical to the broken rhythm of the action they "name"- the meaning of the word.

3.2.63. When /l/ is in a final word position, it's flowing liquidity and mobility are marked.

The sound, action or movement is sustained and "spills" over into space and time.

Examples of final /l/

yell; cuddle; roll; drool; howl; fiddle; muddle; huddle; hurdle; hurtle; fizzle; sprinkle; straddle; stroll; shuffle; wobble; amble; waggle; tumble; drizzle; waddle; shuffle; scramble; scrawl; sparkle rattle; ruffle; rustle; cackle; gargle; giggle; twinkle; whistle; spiral; smell; smile; swell; swirl; spill; tumble; fumble; paddle; nibble; mumble; drool; scrawl; crawl; sprawl; dawdle; trundle; babble; tumble; grapple; dribble; wobble; sozzle; trample; tattle; rumble; fumble; coil; curl; grumble; crumple; cackle; crackle; juggle; jangle; bristle; shrivel; yell; brawl; mingle; mangle; twirl; prow; swill; swell; snarl; roll; whirl; trill; wail; boil; furl; hurl; loll; stroll; smile; snuggle; gurgle; burble; bubble; dazzle; scuffle; sniffle; shuffle; nuzzle; cuddle; guzzle; niggle; twiddle; fiddle; tickle; tangle; amble; shamble; scrabble; struggle; grumble; rumble; jiggle; tingle; straddle; huddle; straddle; saddle; stifle; cradle;

mangle; bibble; scribble; trickle; tremble; fumble; crumble; bumble; topple; trample; shuffle; baffle; bungle; burble; gurgle; prattle; piddle; jingle; squiggle; dangle; startle; throttle; strangle; chuckle; gobble.

3.2.64. Consonant /p/

Definition

/p/ is a voiceless bi-labial plosive. It is a light, direct and sudden movement. The lip action of the sound involves complete blockage of the airstream by the closure of the lips, followed by the release of the blockage on which the sound /p/ is heard.

Oral Connotation:

In initial positions, the element of release, involves visible muscular effort with forward direction.

Examples of initial /p/

pierce; peck; pick; peep; peel; peer; push; punch; puff; pout; pucker; pinch; point; pull; pour; pounce; pose; poke; pad; pour; pat; perch; pant; purse; purr.

3.2.65. When /p/ is in final positions, it has a plosive finality; a closure.

Oral Connotation:

This is one of a sudden, direct and light end to the movement, action or sound.

Examples of final /p/

gasp; nip; drop; bump; leap; stop; drip; lisp; snap; tap; slap; slurp; lop; peep; lap; sip; tip; rip; flip; flop; pop; trip; lope; gulp; thump; gallop; yelp; trip; snip; nip; flip; tip; skimp; limp; droop; stoop; hiccup; pump; plump; snap; sip; grip; leap; slip; hop; bop; scoop; flap; clap; gawp; weep; whip; cheep; pop; gape. clamp; stamp; chomp.

Interesting examples of both initial and final plosives are:

pip (noun and verb); peep; pop; plop; pump; prop; primp; plump; pomp; pip; pep.

3.2.66. /ump/ word endings

In the combination, /ump/, there is a "roundness"; the gestures shaped by the organs of articulations make a "curve".

The central vowel /u/ is raised to the bilabial nasal resonant /m/; from here the breath is released into the voiceless plosive /p/.

Oral Connotation:

The speech gestures inflate and project. The "roundness" in the movements and the sounds, can be noted in the meanings of the following words.

thump; lump; bump; hump; stump; rump; clump; jump; pump; dump; trump; plump; slump.

3.2.67. /mp/ endings

The nasal resonant /m/, from closed lips, is released in the plosive, (in a puff of breath) /p/.

Oral Connotation:

The Oral Connotation is that a closed lip-action is released into a little explosion of finality.

This can be found in the meanings of words with this ending. In addition to the words above, we have:

stamp; stomp; romp; tramp; plump; primp; clamp; crimp; skimp; limp.

3.2.68. /pr/ combination

When the voiceless plosive /p/ is followed by /r/, it is elevated to the lingual-alveolar "rolling" action of the /r/ shape, and propelled forwards.

Oral Connotation:

The voiceless plosive /p/ is lifted and directed forwards from a wider vocal shape, into an extended spacial range.

Examples of initial /pr/

preen; prance; prate; prowl; praise; press; probe; prick; prod; proceed; progress; project; promote; prolong; prompt; propel; propose; prostrate; pry; primp; prop; prompt.

3.2.69. /pl/ combination

When /p/ is followed by /l/, the plosive is released into an elevation as the tongue tip contacts the teeth ridge, and the mobility of /l/ sends the sound forwards over the dropped sides of the tongue.

Oral Connotation:

When the light plosive /p/ is lifted and propelled forwards, there is a connotation of an elevation of the movement.

Examples of initial /pl/

pluck; plot; plug; plump; plunge; plunder; plough; placate; plume; plead; place; plait; ply; plague; play; pledge; plod; plop.

In "plod", the forward /p/ is lifted to /l/; the sound falls as the jaw and tongue movement drop, to the open, back, short vowel /o/, the lowest of the back-of-the-tongue vowels. There is a very large fall in the oral cavity; the voice moves forward and finalizes in the short, voiced plosive /d/. The Oral Connotation of the gestures is the meaning of the word; they "plod".

Dictionary definition

plod; to trudge; to walk, or work slowly but persistently.

In "plop", the final plosive is the short, voiceless bilabial /p/. The elevation of /pl/ again drops to /o/, but instead of the voiced alveolar plosive /d/, which directs action forwards, we have the sudden, direct and light plosive finality of /p/ which is a closure; the movement ends. The oral gestures, and the sounds, plop.

Dictionary definition

plop; a sound of something small dropping vertically into water with no splash.

(The oral gestures and sounds of "splash" definitely **do** splash.)

3.2.70. /b/ is the voiced gesture of /p/

It has the same visible bilabial action, suggestive again of muscular effort in the closure and release, but it is voiced. It is therefore strong, direct and sudden.

Oral Connotation:

Being voiced, the sudden plosive action is stronger than /p/. There is a connotation of a more intrusive quality in the action, sound or movement.

Examples of initial /b/

bang; bound; bump; bend; burst; bash; bask; bat; bawl; beat; bellow; belch; belt; billow; boost; boom; bounce; bound; bow; box; bowl; buck; buffet; burp; butt; buzz; batter; bolt; bulge; bark; bicker; biff.

3.2.71. /b/, in final positions has, as does /p/, an element of closure, but voiced /b/ has a firmer, stronger one.

Examples of final /b/

stab; jab; lob; sob; rub; dab; grab; nab; stub; snub.

Initial and final examples:

blob; bob; blub; boob; blab. (The stronger force is evident compared to the examples with initial and final /p/.)

3.2.72. /br/ combinations

As usual, the /r/ lifts and propels, in this case, the voiced and more energised plosive /b/, outwards.

Oral Connotation:

Here, the strong, voiced /b/ plosion is propelled and rolled forwards on voiced /r/, into a wider spacial range.

Examples of initial /br/ combinations

brighten; brake; brag; brace; brawl; brag; brood; bring; breathe; browse; brush; bruise; brim; bristle; breast (verb); brace; broach; break; brandish; bridge; branch.

The following adjectives show the strong plosive, and extended spacial connotations of this initial combination effectively:

bright; brilliant; brisk; brazen; brawny; brash; brassy.

3.2.73. /bl/ combination

/l/ elevates the strong plosive and directs it forward with mobility.

Oral Connotation:

The Oral Connotation is one of a strongly plosive initial sound, elevated to the mobility of a forward-flowing movement.

Examples of initial /bl/ combinations.

blurt; blaze; bloat; blab; bleep; blot; blow; blur; block; blame; blast; blush; bloom; bleat; blubber; blabber; blunder; blare; blow.

3.2.74. Consonant /h/

Definition

/h/ is a voiceless glottal fricative.

The aspirant sound is made as the breath passes through the open vocal cords. There is audible breathy friction, but no voice. The sound is released in the action of a "sigh"- an expulsion of breath.

In the action of a "sigh", the sounds emitted are (as we are not using phonetic symbols, I shall approximate the sounds in letters) - "s(h)ie".

The inhaled breath is directed forwards in the voiceless, sibilant fricative /s/; the breath is then completely released (h); the /ie/ is sounded by the breath released at the end of the action; as the jaw lifts and the lips close.

The oral gestures create the sounds - and meaning.

Oral Connotation:

The Oral Connotation of /h/, is one of the breath force being gathered or "galvanised", either in preparation for being released, or focussed towards action.

Examples of initial /h/

These include:

- a) many words connected with aspirant sounds emanating from the glottis and
- b) actions needing inner effort

a) hoot; howl; holloo; hail; hallo; hello; hallow; honk; hiccup; hum; hesitate; heckle; harass; hush; hint; hum; huff; hooray; hymn; hee-haw.

b) heave; haul; halt; hammer; hang; haggle; hold; hack; harass; hanker; harp; hassle; hit; hide; hitch; hobble; hoist; hop; hover; hurl; hurtle; hunt; hound; hunch; hijack; hinder; help.

In "heave", the breath force /h/, is directed into the long, close, front vowel /i/, which can be sustained. There is an Oral Connotation of great effort, which is directed forward to the voiced labio-dental friction of /v/, where the action is completed. The oral gestures shape the effort action.

Dictionary definition

heave; to lift with great effort.

In "hurl", the effort action is also very forceful; however the oral gestures express, in Laban terms, a "fighting" attitude to time. The breath force is directed firmly into /h/, which is then propelled into the long, central front vowel /er/.

This vowel is shaped with firmly rounded lip-projection. It is the most "fronted" of all the English vowels. This forward sound is then lifted to the // shape, and the movement continues out into space with the sustainable mobility of //.

When the tongue tip releases contact with the teeth ridge, the movement is complete. The oral gestures shape the action.

Dictionary definition

hurl; to throw violently.

The expression "hum and haw", is an apt reference to the hesitation heard in speech, when the speaker is trying to find the words to express (s)he wants to convey; or is unsure of what to say, or how to say it.

3.2.75. Consonant /y/ as in "yet"; "you".

This is a voiced, palatal semi-vowel.

Like /w/, it is classified as a consonant, because it functions as such. The centre of the tongue is raised close to the hard palate, and the sound is released as the tongue glides to the following shape/sound.

Oral Connotation:

The Oral Connotation is that of an initially elevated and close shape which can only be released by a movement of the tongue.

The best way to experience this shape and tongue movement is to yawn. This palatal sound does not "activate" verbs: it is mainly used to "glide through" and link sounds together. e.g. familiar; huge; pure.

It occurs initially in:

e.g. yellow; yawn; use; you; yes; year; yeast; yet.

3.2.76. The "neutral" vowel

In English, the neutral vowel (schwa), is used extensively. It is known as the neutral, because it is central, half-way between close and open vowel, and shaped in the middle of the mouth. It replaces pure vowels when they are in "unstressed" positions. It is the vowel heard in "(a) dog"; "butt(er)"; (a)gree.

We find the neutral vowel used extensively in final verb positions in English. It appears to fulfil the function of temporarily sustaining, and then completing, the action of verbs.

Examples of final neutral vowel

batter; linger; slobber; totter; gibber; flicker; wander; shudder; scatter; hover; ponder; suffer; stagger; saunter; scamper; meander; slither; clatter; chatter; stagger; mutter; totter; shudder; loiter; linger; flitter; glitter; splutter; jitter; hinder; flutter; stutter; twitter; quiver; dodder. leer; flare; blare; peer; sneer; glare; stair; fear; rear.

We have now analysed the English consonants, and consonantal combinations which commonly occur in English usage.

Vowel sounds were analysed in the previous section. As explained in the chapter on the classification and description of English vowels, diphthongs are made of two vowels shaped into a glide, and pronounced as one sound.

In varieties of Spoken English, the "versions" of English used by English speakers throughout the world, and in English dialects and accents, it is the vowels which commonly display distinguishing features.

Consonants, too can be distinguishing. However they are not as variable as vowels. Consonants are more specifically shaped, and even if they show some inaccuracies, their gestures are retained. (In lip-reading, consonants are known as the "movement" sounds.)

The gestures of the organs of articulation shape the most distinguishing features of languages. They shape the breath stream into separate and distinct units.

For this reason I have made a detailed analysis of the English consonants, and the combinations of consonants which are in common English usage. These have been analysed only in initial and final (when they occur) positions.

Obviously, the preceding and succeeding sound / gestures affect the end-result of the sounds and meaning of the action-words I have used as examples.

That is why I have, throughout this chapter, analysed all of the gestures in various word examples, to show how the oral gestures, which shape the sounds of English words correlate with the signification of words.

The evidence is that, despite historical changes and various other factors that effect language changes, the oral gestures and their resultant sounds i.e. audible movements, retain and display, remarkable correlation with the meanings of the words they shape i.e. with signification.

CHAPTER 4

SOUND USAGE IN ENGLISH POETRY

A group of syllables which are as sweet as honey in the mouth, an expression of fresh, evocative solace, a beautiful verse where the supple rhythms dance, a phrase whose balancings bow to the movement of the whole body: those are the primordial elements with which human genius has created its truly eternal moments.¹

Jousse, in the above quotation, shows how acutely aware he is of the physiological tissue of living sound and its inter-connection with the whole of man's organism.

Jousse was saddened by the fact that "education" has diminished our intuitive contact with reality - with our ability to be vibrantly aware of, and alive to, our physicality and our union with the physical world.

It is certain...that conventional education and the refinements of polite behaviour, or perhaps modern civilisation itself, tend to attenuate the intensity, amplitude and frequency of spontaneous expressive gestures.²

The poet D J Enright concurs:

The thing that makes a blue umbrella with its tail -
How do you call it?" you ask. Poorly and pale
Comes my answer. For all I can call it is peacock.

Now that you go to school, you will learn how we say all
sort of things;
How we mar great works by our mean recital.

The dictionary is opening, the gay umbrellas close.

Oh, our mistaken teachers! -
It was not a proper respect for words that we need,
But a decent regard for things, those older creatures and more real.³

It is an undeniable fact that in modern life, speech has been "ventriloquized". With broadcasting and recorded speech, sounds have been amplified and given an independent life; the binding relationship between the sound and the person making it has been dissolved.

¹ Marcel Jousse, *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*, p50.

² Marcel Jousse, *The Oral Style*, p.25.

³ D J Enright, *Blue Umbrellas*.

The printed word has encouraged this dichotomy - the long straight line of print has flattened the human voice which developed as an instrument of human expression. Speech and song, which were originally emphatically tied to sense and sonority and which were alive and full of vitality, are now bound up in a print sargophagus. Speech has lost its physical expression - its emotional physiological basis - its "red-bloodedness".

Civilized man appears to be afraid of expressing or possessing emotions; they appear to be associated with irrationality.

Anything that moves, vibrates air, and makes a sound of varying intensity (loudness) and duration (length in time), e.g. rustling leaves; raindrops.

The vocalised movements of audible gesture, in addition to intensity and duration, have timbre (tone qualities): each sound has an inherent tone quality, e.g. bid; bed; bead; bide.

Sounds also employ various pitches (frequencies) - the tones move up and down in vocal inflexions as the vocal pattern rises and falls.

All these factors combine to create the melody and rhythm of spoken language; and they are all a result of the vocal expression of feelings and ideas.

We cannot, with any justification, separate the intensity, duration, and pitch of a sound from its dynamic shape, its tone colour, and its rhythmic texture.

Our perception of the rhythm of speech is a result of the degree of prominent stresses, and their duration, and the pauses we hear: these sounds, or their cessations, are the result of articulatory movements.

Speech rhythms can be regarded as part of our movement system; like the bodily movements of walking, gesture, and patterns of changing posture. Like physical

movements, they can be flowing or jerky, and be accorded attributes such as graceful, clumsy, etc.

Rhythmizing is an active process, not only for the speaker, but for the listener or reader as well; it is a process of perceiving a unit, a section that stands on its own, in a sequence.

Differences of stress are evident even in whispered conversation...stress is not a matter of properties of sounds, it is a matter of the coordination and culmination of a movement...As we listen to the sounds of speech, we perceive them not simply as sounds, but as clues to the movements. It is, moreover, because speech rhythm is primarily muscular rhythm, that "verse can be immediately recognized and felt as verse in silent reading, which otherwise would be easy to explain"...rhythm in speech forms part of the extensive and intimate patterns of bodily movement, including incipient movement and posture, in which the speaker's emotional attitudes express themselves (in which, at least to a great extent, they actually consist).⁴

Differences in the length of rhythm units; differences between rhythm units composed of heavy stresses, and those containing a quick succession of rapid, light stresses, etc., all these differences give clues to convey qualities of the speaker's action; such as surprise; joy; conviction; hesitancy, etc.

Our expressive movements, including our speech rhythms, reflect levels of energy and the ways in which it is being deployed - explosively, hesitantly, restlessly, smoothly and steadily, with strong determination, etc.

Rhythm conveys clues as to movement performed or described, e.g. bouncy, bouncy baby; and to the speaker's emotional mood and attitude, i.e. the states of mind and feelings the poet is expressing. This will be obvious in the poetry extracts which follow.

Rhythm, in poetry, is like the language of poetry, "heightened", i.e. it is richly endowed and unprosaic.

In *The Appreciation of Poetry*, Gurrey says that the printed word has no meaning or virtue in itself. Meaning is only given to printed words when they are embodied with human

⁴ D W Harding, *Words into Rhythm*, pp.92-93.

thought and infused with life. The rich and varied meanings that mind is capable of, are fused by the poet's words into glowing thought and imagery; thought and expression cannot exist without sound, emotion, rhythm and form.

It appears that the essential equipment for appreciating poetry is "awareness to words"...in addition, thought has to be heightened in significance by the imagination.⁵

Gurrey says that it is only when words are combined with their sounds that they can awaken vital sensuous experiences.

Savouring of the words, tasting them as it were, to get their full flavour of meaning, sound, rhythm, aptness, can be the most conscious part of the experience.⁶

Poets respond to emotions which evoke thought, sound, rhythm and imagery to give their words vitality, exactness and richness. However, we can only imaginatively experience that which has come to us through the senses, so we find sense impressions of all sorts suggested in poetry; the qualities of things, their shapes, movements, colours and textures. All sounds carry some suggestion of weight or size or shape. We find, for example, sense impressions of cold; heat; dryness; moisture; tension; pressure; weights and sounds. These are suggested by the sounds and rhythms of words, and by the use of imagery to express sensuous experiences. The poet chooses words for their appropriateness of sound to the experience, thought, feeling and imagery.

The rhythm of poetry, for Gurrey, is the rhythm of our thinking, and the accompanying activities of perception, imagination and emotion. Rhythm is an intrinsic part of our recreation of the poem.

The appreciation of a poem consists of knowing the full meaning of the words. It is an experience which unifies thought, emotion and imagination, and which is given a real existence in the mind.

⁵ P. Gurrey, *The Appreciation of Poetry*, p.29.

⁶ *Ibid*, p.107.

In phonetic experiments, it has been proved that people associate sounds, be they vocal sounds or the timbre of musical instruments, with colours. In the ascending chromatic colour chart, we can observe how vowels depict colour.

The back and low (open) vowels are associated with dark and gloom; e.g. black; brown; khaki; grey; purple. The front, high (close) vowels are associated with light and bright: e.g. blue; white; green; pink; red; silver; gold; crimson.

In *Vocal Sounds in Poetry*, M M McDermont says that high frequency vowels (from “i” to “e”) are preferred in English poetry to suggest pale, light or dim colours, whereas low frequency vowels (from “u” to “a”) refer to rich, dark colours.

The following examples are full of colours:

i thank you God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirit of trees
and a blue true dream of sky...⁷

Had I the heaven’s embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light;
I would spread the cloths under your feet...⁸

Bavarian gentians, big and dark, only dark
darkening the day-time torch-like with the smoking
blueness of Pluto’s gloom,
ribbed and torch-like, with their blaze of darkness spread blue
down flattening into points, flattened under the sweep of white day
torch-flower of the blue-smoking darkness, Pluto’s
black lamps from the halls of Dio, burning dark blue,
giving off darkness, as Demeter’s pale lamps give off light...⁹

The light/dark vowel relationship differentiates not only colour, but movement and mood (inner attitude).

⁷ Extract from “i thank you God for most this amazing”, E E Cummings.

⁸ Extract from “He wishes for the cloths of heaven”, W B Yeats.

⁹ Extract from “Bavarian Gentians”, Gerard Manley Hopkins.

In the following extracts, it can be seen that, in indicating movement, the dark vowels correspond to heavy or large movements, and dark moods; the light vowels, to elevated and small movements, and elevated moods.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil
 It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
 Crushed...¹⁰

Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs
 About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green
 The night above the dingle starry,
 Time let me hail and climb
 Golden in the heydays of his eyes...¹¹

Where whatever's prized and passes of us everything that's
 fresh and fast flying of us, seems to us sweet of us and
 swiftly away with, done away with, undone,
 Undone, done with, soon done with, and yet dearly and
 dangerously sweet
 Of us, the wimpled-water-dimpled, not-by-morning-matched face,
 The flower of beauty, fleece of beauty, too too apt to, ah!
 to fleet...

O then, weary then, why should we tread? O why are we so
 haggard at the heart, so care-coiled, care-killed, so fagged,
 so fashed, so cogged, so cumbered...¹²

Let's touch the sky:
 with a to and a fro
 (and a here there where) and away we go

Let's touch the sky:
 with a great (and a gay
 and a steep) deep rush through amazing day.

- let's touch the sky:
 with a strange (and a true)
 and a climbing fall into far near blue.¹³

My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief
 Woe, world-sorrow, on an age-old anvil wince and sing -
 Then lull, then leave off.¹⁴

¹⁰ Extract from "God's Grandeur", Gerard Manley Hopkins.

¹¹ Extract from "Fern Hill", Dylan Thomas.

¹² Extract from "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo", Gerard Manley Hopkins.

¹³ Extract from "If up's the word and a world grows greener", E E Cummings.

As tendrils reach out yearningly,
 Slowly rotate till they touch the tree
 That they cleave unto, and up which they climb
 Up to their lives - so they to me.
 I feel them cling and cleave to me
 As vines going eagerly up; they twine
 My life with other leaves...¹⁵

In the final analysis, vowels and consonants combine to express colour, movement, mood and meaning; the physical audible movements of speech create and communicate the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual content of the poet's feelings and thoughts.

Poetry needs the sensuous expression of the voice, and the speaker's visualisation of the poet's intention, thoughts and emotions to do it any justice. However, even if we read poetry, we have to use our inner, internal speech to say the words before we can interpret it.

The following sonnet and lyric contain dynamic and rich vocal sounds to convey emotions and thoughts.

When in disgrace with fortune, and men's eyes,
 I, all alone bewep my outcast state,
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
 And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
 Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,
 Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
 With all I most enjoy contented least;
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
 Haply I think on thee, - and then my state,
 Like to the lark at break of day arising
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
 For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.¹⁶

In the first three stanzas of the poem following, the description of the scene, the "meaning", is created by the sounds and rhythms of the words.

¹⁴ Extract from "No Worst; There is None", Gerard Manley Hopkins.

¹⁵ D H Lawrence, "The Best of School".

¹⁶ William Shakespeare, *When in Disgrace with Fortune*.

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
 His roll-rock highroad roaring down,
 In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
 Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth
 Turns and twindles over the broth
 Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning,
 It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
 Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,
 Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern,
 And the beadbonny Ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
 Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left;
 O let them be left, wildness and wet;
 Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.¹⁷

In these examples, we can see how powerfully and magically poets use sounds, sound combinations and rhythm to capture and evoke the essences of reality; experiences, impressions, movements, colours, textures, sensations, emotions, moods and ideas.

Words are not used in terms of their dictionary definitions; indeed many of Hopkins' words would not be found in a dictionary. However, the sounds of words and their rhythms are intertwined, intermingled and juxtaposed, so as to create a "soundscape" full of the intended emotions and meanings.

Rhythm is one of the dominant features in the poetic craft. It is a very important creative impulse for the Russian poet Mayakovsky. It is fascinating to hear how he perceives his poetry's physical genesis. He says:

I walk along, swinging my arms and mumbling almost wordlessly, now shortening my steps so as not to interrupt my mumbling, now mumbling more rapidly in time with my steps. So the rhythm is trimmed and takes shape - and rhythm is the basis of any poetic work, resounding through the whole thing. Gradually individual words begin to ease themselves free of this dull roar...When the fundamentals are already there, one has a sudden sensation that the rhythm is strained: there's some little syllable or sound missing. You begin to shape all the words anew, and the work drives you to

¹⁷ "Inversnaid", Gerard Manley Hopkins.

distraction....Where this dull roar of rhythm comes from is a mystery. In my case, it's all kinds of repetitions in my mind, of noises, rocking motions or in fact, of any phenomenon with which I can associate a sound. The sound of the sea, endlessly repeated, can provide my rhythm, or a servant who slams the door every morning, recurring and intertwining with itself, trailing through my consciousness; or even the rotation of the earth which, in my case, as in a shop full of visual aids, gives way to, and inextricably connects with, the whistle of a high wind.¹⁸

We see how Mayakovsky, like Jousse, relates creativity and the linguistic process back to "organics": rocking movements which are associated with sound.

4.1 Inventive Orality and Nomenclature: The Magic of Words

Poetry Examples

The nonsense poem...the delight in strange or invented words...condemnation of these...misses one very important, though non-utilitarian, point about language. All art springs from delight in raw material; to play with the raw material of literature is a natural pleasure linking us with a remote era that had speech but no language, and was perhaps finding language through delight in speech.¹⁹

Lewis Carroll (the Reverend Charles Dodgson: 1844 - 1924), the author of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, enjoyed words and word-play:

"Must a name mean something?" Alice asked doubtfully.

"Of course it must", Humpty Dumpty said with a short laugh: "My name means the shape I am..."²⁰

In his preface to *Mischmasch*, Carroll says:

The name is German, and means in English "midge-madge" which we need not inform any intelligent reader is equivalent to "hodge-podge".²¹

In *Rhyme? and Reason?* he advises:

Next when you are describing a shape, or sound, or tint:

¹⁸ Quoted by Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, p.28.

¹⁹ Anthony Burgess; *Language made Plain*. p.24

²⁰ John Fisher; *The Magic of Lewis Carroll*. p.262.

²¹ *Ibid.* p.143.

Don't state the matter plainly,
 But put it in a hint;
 And learn to look at all things
 With a sort of mental squint.²²

In *The Hunting of the Snark*, we have:

And chanted in mimsiest tones...

The Bellman looked uffish...

The Beaver went simply galumphing about...

...while those frumious jaws
 Went savagely snapping around...

Lewis Carroll explains the making of the word "frumious":

For instance, take the two words "fuming" and "furious"...open your mouth and speak...if you have that rarest of gifts, a perfectly balanced mind, you will say "frumious".²³

In Carroll's probably most famous poem, *Jabberwocky*, where many of the words are "invented", the sound combinations and the rhythms convey the meaning.

Jabberwocky is, perhaps, unfairly termed a nonsense poem : the first stanza is full of foreboding; and of the unknown. Then come the warnings, inculcating fears of violence; the fears are faced and overcome; there is a sense of successful achievement; the triumph of having conquered that which was dangerous and fearful.

The last stanza reminds us that we must remain aware: life will present other threats and fears, still to be conquered.

'Twas brillig and the slithy toves
 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
 All mimsy were the borogoves,
 And the mome raths outrabe.

Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
 The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
 Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun

²² *Ibid.* p. 46.

²³ John Fisher; *The Magic of Lewis Carroll*. p. 75.

The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
 Long time the manxome foe he sought -
 So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
 And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
 The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
 Came whiffling through the wood
 And burbled as it came.

One, two! One, two! And through and through
 The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
 He left it dead and with its head
 He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
 Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
 O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!
 He chortled in his joy.

Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
 All mimsy were the borogoves,
 And the mome raths outrabe.²⁴

Edward Lear's *Book of Nonsense* (1846) is a collection of 'rhymes-without-reason' which was an instantaneous success.

In his preface to *The Complete Nonsense of Edward Lear*, Holbrook Jackson gives interesting insights from Lear's diaries, as to his whimsical invective and unusual prose style; and his sensitivity to noise!

Paris: "all the Devils in or out of Hell! four hundred and seventy-three cats at least are all at once making an infernal row in the garden close to my window. Therefore, being mentally decomposed, I shall write no more."²⁵

Switzerland: " the row of forty ill-conducted little beasts (children) is simply frightening".²⁶

²⁴ Lewis Carroll; *The Jabberwocky*.

²⁵ Holbrook Jackson, *The Complete Nonsense of Edward Lear*; p.xxi.

Rome: "a vile beastly rottenheaded foolbegotten pernicious priggish screaming, tearing, roaring, perplexing, splitmecrackle, crashimecriggle insane ass of a woman is practicing howling belowstairs with a brute of a singing master so horribly, that my head is nearly off".²⁷

In Rome, he met: "Madame Pul-itz-neck-off and Count Bigenouf - Baron Polysuky, and Mons. Pig".²⁸

Corfu: "much distressed by next door people who had twin babies and played the violin: but one of the twins died, and the other has eaten the fiddle - so all is peace".²⁹

He compensates himself with the thought of peace: "under a lotus tree a eating of ice creams and pelican pie, with our feet in a hazure coloured stream with the birds and the beasts of Paradise a sporting around us".³⁰

Nice: "This place is so wonderfully dry that nothing can be kept wet. I never was in so dry a place in all my life. When the little children cry, they cry dust and not tears. There is some water in the sea, but not much: - all the wet nurses cease to be so immediately upon arriving: - Dryden is the only book read... and weterinary surgeons are quite unknown".³¹

A proposed trip to Egypt makes him "quite crazy about Memphis and On and Isis and crocodiles and ophthalmia and nubians and simoons and sorcerers and sphingidos".³²

Phonetic spelling plays a considerable part in many of his nonsense words: e.g. "yot" - yacht; "rox" - rocks; "toppix" - topics; "pollygise" - apologize; "omejutly" - immediately. 'a narmchair'.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p.xxi..

²⁷ *Ibid*, p.xxiv.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p.xxi.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p.xxi.

³⁰ *Ibid*, p.xxv.

³¹ *Ibid*. p.xxv.

³² *Ibid*. p.xxiv

Lear's world is fantastic and surrealist. We meet:

The Dong with a Luminous Nose who fell in love with a Jumbly Girl.

"Playing a pipe with silvery squeaks,
Since then his Jumbly Girl he seeks,
And because by night he could not see,
He gathered the bark of the Twangum Tree..."

The Pobble who has No Toes; who:

"has gone to fish, for his Aunt Jobiska's
Runcible Cat with crimson whiskers!"
and who eats "eggs and buttercups fried with fish".

The Quangle Wangle who lived in a Crumpetty Tree:

"And at night by the light of the Mulberry moon
They danced to the Flute of the Blue Babboon".

The Clangle-Wangle who lived in Lake Pipple-popple;

People who are :

globular; ombliferous; borascible; umbrageous; mendacious; dolorous.

A monkey with lollipop paws;

the Fimble Fowl with a Corkscrew leg;

rivers that roll with "soft meloobious sounds";

Tiniskoop-hills, and Nicodemus Pills;

birds: which include Green Ayahs, silvery Goreewallahs and "little Bheesties" with twittering cries;

Mrs. Discobolos with a "fiddledum head";

people who fall down "flumpetty";

cats who set off on a journey with rapacity;

a mouse that says "Squeaky-peeky-weeky";

a Plum-pudding Flea, who "was of the most interesting and obese appearance, having a perfectly round body, resembling a boiled plum-pudding, with two little wings, and a beak, and three feathers growing out of its head, and only one leg" who "began to hop and skip on his one leg with the most dreadful velocity", and then "stopped and looked about him in a vacant and voluminous way".

Seven young Storks who "stood still and made a himmel-tanious chatter-clatter-blattery noise with their bills";

Seven young Parrots who "lived in the Soffsky-Poffsky trees" and who :

"huffled and ruffled, and shuffled, and puffed, and muffled, and buffled, and duffed, and fluffed, and guffed, and bruffled, and screamed, and shrieked, and squealed, and squeaked, and clawed, and snapped, and bit, and bumped, and thumped, and dumped, and flumped each other, till they were all torn into little bits";

Blue-Bottle-Flies who live in blue bottles and eat "mainly Oyster-patties, and when these are scarce, Raspberry Vinegar and Russian leather boiled down to a jelly";

a large Frog, spotted with green, and with a sky-blue stripe under each ear;

little mice that run "Flippity flup";

a Soup-ladle that "squeaks with a ladle-like scream of surprise";

hives of silvery Bees;

A Pelican Chorus: Ploffskin; Pluffskin; Pelican jee; Plumpskin; Ploshskin and Pelican jill, who stamp their "feet with a flumpy sound";

The Owl and the Pussy-cat who "dined on mince, and slices of quince, which they ate with a runcible spoon".

4.2 Prose Examples

From the "magical" verse worlds of Carroll and Lear, we move into magical prose worlds:

...the World of the Jesters, the World of the Decorators, the World of the Fantasticks.³³

... the expressive value of prose rhythm depends on viewing the movement of prose as analogous to gait and gesture and other bodily movements, with the constant transition from one posture to another, that everyday activity presents... like these it can be described in terms of broad characteristics - flowing, jerky etc. Speech rhythm continues permanently to be a part of a much wider...system of bodily movement.³⁴

Harding sees rhythm as a unit of sensory expressions, which is apprehended not only from sounds, but a consciousness of the movements involved in making the sounds. Rhythms

³³ Hugh Walpole: *(Introduction to) Jorgen*; by James Brach Cabell.

³⁴ D.W. Harding; *Words into Rhythm*. p.153.

arise from the state of mind, especially from the nature of the movement and energy discharge it is attuned to, and it is through this that the external movement is interpreted.

Jousse, as we saw earlier, said that the sense of rhythm was most important in its role as a learning tool and as an aid to memorisation.

We can see rhythmization, then, as a form of unifying activity. A number of separate sensory impressions in a rhythmic sequence, will be perceived as a unit; as an immediate sensory perception.

Francois Rabelais (1495-1553) prefaces his first book *Gargantua*, with a verse to his readers. This is an extract:

Let not my book your indignation raise:
It means no harm, no poison it conveys.
Except in point of laughing, it is true,
Twont teach you much: It being all my view
To inspire with mirth the hearts of those that moan,
And change to laughter the afflictive groan:
For laughter is man's property alone.³⁵

Rabelais is supreme in the world of jesters, decorators and fantasticks. His rollicking, bawdy humour is indeed an excellent tonic for the maudlin. The following are quotations from Rabelais' *Complete Works* - 640 pages, (all quotable).

Some country shepherds "courteously entreated" the cake-bakers if they could purchase some cakes.

The cake-bakers were in nothing inclinable to their request: but which was worse, did injure them most outrageously, calling them prating gabblers, lickorous gluttons, freckled bittors, mangy rascles, shite-a-bed scoundrels, drunken roysters, sly knaves, drowsy loiterers, slapsauce fellows, slabberdegullion druggels, lubbardly louts, cousening foxes, sychophant varlets, drawlatch hoydons, flouting milk-sops, ninny lobcocks, scurvy sneaksbies, fondling fips, base loons, saucy coxcombs, idle lusks, noddy meacocks, blockish

³⁵ *The Works of Rabelais*. Preface.

grutnols, doddipol joltheads, jobbermol goosecaps, slutch calf-lollies, grout-head gnatsnappers, lob-dotterels, codshead loobies, woodcock slangams, ninny-hammer flycatchers, noddipeak simpletons, turgy gut, shitten shepherds, and other such defamatory epithets...³⁶

Gargantua's early years

Gargantua's colours were white and blue...by which his father would give us to understand, that his son to him was a heavenly joy, for the white did signify gladness, pleasure, delight, and rejoicing, and the blue, celestial things...

Gargantua, from three years upwards until five,...spent that time like other little children of the country; in drinking, eating and sleeping; in eating, sleeping and drinking; and in sleeping, eating and drinking.

He was continually wallowing, and rolling in the mire and the dirt: he blurred and sullied his nose with filth; he blotted and smutted his face with any kind of nasty stuff...he pissed in his shoes, shit in his shirt, and wiped his nose on his sleeve; he did let his snot and snivel fall in his potage, and dabbled, paddled, and slabbered everywhere...

This little lecher was always groping his nurses and governesses upside down, arsy versy, topsy turvy, handeling them very rudely in jumbling and tumbling them...for he had already began to exercise the tools, and put his codpiece in practice; which codpiece his govenesses did every day deck up and adorn with fair nosegays, curious ribbons, sweet flowers, and fine silken tufts... one of them would call it her fiddle-diddle, her staff-of-love, her tickle-gizzard, her gentle-titler. Another, her sugar-plum, her kimgo, her old rowley, her touch-tripe, her flap-dowdle. Another again, her branch of coral, her placket-racket, her Cyrian sceptre, her tit-bit, her bob-lady. And some of the other women did give these names - my Roger, my cockatoo, my nimble-wimble, bush-beater, claw-buttock, eves-dropper, pick-lock, pioneer, bully-ruffin, smell-smock, trouble-gusset, my lusty live sausage, my crimson chitterlin, rump-splitter, shove-devil, downright to it, stiff and stout, in and to, at her again, my cony-borrow-ferret, wily-beguiley, my pretty rogue.³⁷

Gargantua's wife, Babedec, died giving birth to Pantagruel.

Ah! Babedec, Babadec, my minion, my dear heart, my pigsney, my duck, my honey, my little coney...my cod-piece darling, my bob and hit, my slip-shoe-lovy, never shall I see thee. Ah! poor Pantagruel... with these words he did cry like a cow; but on a sudden fell a laughing like a calf, when Pentagruel came into his mind. "Ha! my little son", said he, "my childilolly, fedilyfondly, dandlichucky, my ballocky, my pretty rogue...Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho, How glad I am! let us drink and put away melancholy.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p55.

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp26-28.

Gargantua decides he must look for a new wife; and he composes an epitaph to Badebec, which begins:

Dead is the noble Badebec,
Who had a face like a rebec;
A Spanish body, and a belly
Of Swisserland;³⁸

When Gargantua asks the monk, Friar Tuck why he has such a "goodly nose", the friar explains:

it is because my nurse had soft teats, by virtue whereof, whilst she gave me suck, my nose did sink in, as in so much butter. The hard breasts of nurses make children short nosed.³⁹

Rabelais was one of the first to invent nomenclature to indicate character. Gargantua's cooks were Snap-sauce, Hotch-potch and Braverjuice; his wine-pourers were Jenken, Trudge-a-pace and Cleanglass.

We meet the Dukes of Turnebank, Lowbuttock, and Small-trash; the Prince of Itches (Scrubbado); the Viscount of Snatchbit; Lords Suckfist, Kissbreech and Brindlegoose, and Earl Swashbuckler.

Other cooks we meet are; Crisp-pig; Slipslop; Greasy-slouch; Slabber-chops; Scum-pot; Shitbreech; Big-snout; Lick-finger; Snapgobbet; Smutty-face; Greedy-gut; Whim-wham.

Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) and Samuel Richardson (1689-1761) are accredited as being the fathers of the English novel. Richardson's novel about a moral serving-girl "Pamela" was a best-seller, and was translated into four languages. Pamela was lusted after by her employer, but all his attempts at seduction and rape were staunchly rebuffed, and he eventually married her.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p128.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p84.

This moral hypocrisy so infuriated Henry Fielding (1707-1754), that he wrote a rollicking parody, *Shamela*- "In which the many notorious Falsehoods and Misrepresentations of a Book called *Pamela* are exposed and refuted."

The virtuous Pamela has become a slut who had already had a child by a Parson, and was scheming to marry her stupid employer. She is writing to her mother, an ex-whore; having "pulled down my stays, to shew as much as I could of my bosom", ..."down goes I into the parlour to him" and her employer tells her of his passion. She replies:

"...do not ruin a poor maiden, who is resolved to carry her virtue to the grave with her."

"Hussey", says he "don't provoke me...if you won't let me lie with you by fair means, I will, by force."

"O la, Sir", says I, "I don't understand your paw [obscene] words."

"Very pretty treatment indeed", says he, "to say I use paw words: Hussey, Gipsie, Hypocrite, Saucebox, Boldface..."⁴⁰

In Fielding's *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, Joseph is employed by the lecherous Mrs Booby, who is bent on seducing him: as is the amorous housekeeper, Mrs Slipslop, who was

very short, and rather corpulent in body, and somewhat red; nor did she resemble a cow so much in her breath, as in two brown globes which she carried before her; one of her legs was also a little shorter than the other, which occasioned her to limp as she walked.⁴¹

Fielding's comical misuse of words in Mrs Slipslop's speech proved so popular that "the practice was given Mrs Slipslop's name (see Grouse's *Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785): "Slip-slopping". Misnaming and misapplying and hard word: from the character of Mrs Slipslop, in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*."⁴²

Mrs Slipslop to Joseph:

"Do you intend to RESULT my passion? Is it not enough, ungrateful as you are, to make no return to all the favours I have done you, but you must treat me with IRONING? Barbarous monster, how have I deserved that my passion should be RESULTED and treated with IRONING?... do you ASSINUATE that I am old enough to be your mother?... I believe that a man would REFER me to any

⁴⁰ Frank Muir, *The Oxford Book of Humorous Verse*. p.69

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.69.

⁴² *Ibid*. p.70.

Green-Sickness silly girl...for I am CONVICTED you must see the value I have for you."⁴³

Fielding also invented nomenclatures to suit his characters; apart from Lady Booby and Mrs Slipslop, we have hen-pecked Mr Tow-wouse, and a lecherous rake named Beau Didapper.

Johnathan Swift (1667-1745) is one of the great satirists of man's folly and self-interest. *Gulliver's Travels* is packed with comic irony. Swift takes Gulliver on an imaginary voyage in which he is forced to explore a number of societies. In most, he is a hopeless outsider.

Swift's inventive nomenclature also gives clues to signification. The people of Lilliput, as we can guess by the name, were little - six inches high. The strange horse-like animals, the Houyhnhnms, possess the noblest human qualities and aspirations; however, human beings are Yahoos.

Of living amongst the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver says:

I enjoyed perfect Health of Body, and Tranquility of Mind; I did not feel the Treachery or Inconstancy of a Friend, nor the Injuries of a secret or open Enemy... Here was neither Physician to destroy my Body, nor Lawyer to ruin my Fortune: Here were no Fops, Bullies, Drunkards, strolling whores, or Poxes: no ranting, lewd, expensive Wive:...no importune, over-bearing, quarrelsome, noisy, roaring, empty, conceited Companions...

When I thought of my Family, my Friends, my Countrymen, of the human Race in general, I considered them as they really were, Yahoos in Shape and Disposition.⁴⁴

Swift's invented words are interesting in their construction and signification. "a grultrud" is a town. With its much larger vowels and mobile consonants, a "lorbrulgrud" is a metropolis. The small sound and short vowel of "drurr" means a fourteenth part of an inch. A "sprug" is the Lilliputians' greatest Gold Coin - about the Bigness of a Spangle. The Island of magicians is "Glubbudrib", which sounds like a magical spell.

Gulliver toured the Academy of Projectors in Lagado.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p.70.

⁴⁴ Johnathan Swift; *Gullivers Travels*. p.226.

The first man I saw...had been eight years upon a project for extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers, which were to be put into vials hermetically sealed, and let out to warm the air in raw inclement summers. He told me, he did not doubt, in eight years more, that he should be able to supply the Governor's gardens with sunshine at a reasonable rate...

I was complaining of a small fit of the colic, upon which my conductor let me into a room, where a great physician resided, who was famous for curing that disease by contrary operations from the same instrument. He had a large pair of bellows with a long slender muzzle of ivory. This he conveyed eight inches up the anus, and drawing in the wind, he affirmed he would make the guts as lank as a dried bladder. But when the disease was more stubborn and violent, he let in the muzzle while the bellows was full of wind, which he discharged into the body of the patient, then withdrew the instrument to replenish it, clapping his thumb strongly against the orifice of the fundament; and this being repeated three or four times, the adventitious wind would rush out, bringing the noxious along with it and the patient would recover.⁴⁵

Laurence Stern (1713-1768) had a great influence on the development of the novel: his writings were eccentric, richly imaginative and full of bawdy humour. His first novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, was the first English novel to involve itself with unromantic domestic affairs. In addition, it had no apparent shape: strange punctuation, lines of asterisks and dashes, blank pages, and chapters of varying lengths: also, many found it to be indecent.

Sterne based the circumstances of Tristram's absent-minded conception on John Locke's theory of the association of ideas. Mr Shandy, on the first Sunday night of every month, wound the clock and "serviced" Mrs Shandy. These events became associated in Mrs Shandy's mind.

"Pray, my dear", quoth my mother, "have you not forgotten to wind up the clock? - "Good G-" cried my father, making an exclamation...- "Did ever woman, since the creation of the world, interrupt a man with such a silly question?"⁴⁶

Tristram's Uncle Toby had been wounded in the groin at the siege of Namur, and spent his retirement restaging sieges in miniature on his bowling-green. Widow Wadman's bower adjoins Uncle Toby's bowling-green. She is in pursuit of him.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, pp.143-144.

⁴⁶ Frank Muir, *The Oxford Book of Humorous Verse*, p.86..

I am half-distracted, Captain Shandy, said Mrs Wadman, holding up her cambric handkerchief to her left eye, as she approached the door of my Uncle Toby's sentry-box - a mote - or sand - or something - I know not what, has got into this eye of mine - do look into it - it is not in the white.

In saying which, Mrs Wadman edged herself close in beside my Uncle Toby, and squeezing herself down upon a corner of the bench, she gave him an opportunity of doing it without rising up - do look into it - said she.

...I see him yonder, with his pipe pendulous in his hand, and the ashes falling out of it - looking - and looking - then rubbing his eyes - and looking again...In vain! for by all the powers which animate the organ - Widow Wadman's left eye shines as bright as her right - there is neither mote, or sand, or dust, or chaff, or speck, or particle of opaque matter floating in it - There is nothing my dear paternal uncle! but one lambent delicious fire, furtively shooting out from every part of it, in all directions, into thine.-

I protest, Madam, said my Uncle Toby, I can see nothing whatever in your eye.

It is not in the white; said Mrs Wadman: my Uncle Toby looked with might and main into the pupil -

Now of all the eyes, which ever were created - from your own, Madam, up to those of Venus herself, which certainly were as venereal a pair of eyes as ever stood in a head - there never was an eye of them all, so fitted to rob my Uncle Toby of his repose, as the very eye, at which he was looking - it was not, Madam, a rolling eye, - a romping or a wanton one - nor was it an eye sparkling - petulant or imperious - of high claims and high exactions, that would have curdled at once that milk of human nature, of which my Uncle Toby was made up - but twas an eye full of gentle salutations - and soft responses - speaking - not like the trumpet stop of some ill-made organ, in which many an eye I talk to holds coarse converse - but whispering soft - like the last low accents of an expiring saint - "How can you live comfortless, Captain Shandy, and alone, without a bosom to lean your head on - or trust your cares to?"

It was an eye - ⁴⁷

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) was a very theatrical novelist (he had been an actor) and he introduced most of his comic characters as if they were actors in a play. He would describe the scene, the character, their clothes and what they looked like. They often had comical linguistic eccentricities. Dickens' humour was mighty and mature; as was his compassion.

The names of his characters usually relate to their characteristics.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p91.

In *The Pickwick Papers*, Mr Pickwick meets, in the market town of Eatanswill (eat and swill), Mr and Mrs Leo Hunter. Mrs Leo Hunter (predator and lionizer) is Eatanswill's cultural and literary leader, and collects visiting celebrities to attend her poetry-reading fancy-dress breakfasts. Mr Leo Hunter is so proud of his wife, that he always presents her calling card.

He presents one to Mr Pickwick with an invitation to a fancy-dress breakfast the following morning, at which Mrs Leo Hunter will be reading her poetry. He gives Mr Pickwick a taste of the feast which awaits him.

...You may have met with her "Ode to an Expiring Frog", sir".

"I don't think I have," said Mr Pickwick.

"You astonish me, sir," said Mr Leo Hunter. "It created an immense sensation. It was signed with an "L" and eight stars, and appeared originally in a Lady's Magazine. It commenced

"Can I see thee panting, lying
On they stomach, without sighing;
Can I, unmoved, see thee dying
On a log
Expiring frog."

"Beautiful", said Mr Pickwick.

"Fine," said Mr Leo Hunter, "so simple".

"Very", said Mr Pickwick.

"The next verse is still more touching. Shall I repeat it?"

"If you please", said Mr Pickwick.

"It runs thus", said the man, still more gravely.

"Say, have fiends in shape of boys,
With wild halloo, and brutal noise,
Hunted thee from marshy joys,
With a dog,
Expiring frog."⁴⁸

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p178.

Examples of Dickens' nomenclature

Dickens' names are significant and appropriate. Usually names, or part of the name, indicates the character, or a characteristic, of the bearer of the name.

Mr Murdstone; a petty tyrant, whose religion is wrathful.

Mr Bounderby; a rich and powerful banker, big and loud.

Mr Pecksniff; a swindling hypocrite.

Mr Micawber; an orator of flowing circumlocutions. (notice the large open mouth-shape of the second vowel).

Mr Vincent Crummels; a pretentious, old theatrical ham.

Lord Lancaster Stiltstalking; "a noble refrigerator"

Sir Leicester Dedlock; "a magnificent refrigerator"

Mr Gradgrind; a schoolteacher, only interested in facts

Mr Dowler; a happy, howling absurdity

Miss Knag; has a torrent of discourse

Mr Twemlow; an idle chap who lives a life of luxury

Mr McChoakumchild; an unimaginative schoolmaster

Mr and Mrs Veneering; all affectation (vener)

Mrs Pipchin; a mean and bitter old woman

Miss Fanny Squeers; squint and queer

Mr Crispsparkle; has connotations of crisp and sparkle

Samson Brass; an unscrupulous lawyer

Rogue Riderhood; an unscrupulous rogue

Silas Wegg; has a wooden leg (rhyme-name)

Mr Gusher; a fervid, impassioned speaker

Count Smorltork; has nothing important to say

Lord Frederick Verisopht; weak, soft and self-indulgent

Colonel Fitz-Sordust; of no substance, dry and empty

Edmund Sparkle; called so because he had no sparkle at all

Mr Jelleby; spinelessly acquiescent

Mr Cheerybyle; a cheerful chap with an infectious enthusiasm

Slurk; sly and lurking

Tinkler; answers the bell

Chevy Slyme; a slimy, unattractive character

Peg Sliderskew; has connotations of sly, slide and askew

Scrooge; mean and selfish

Sophoronia Akersham; a social pretence (sham)

After the first world war, the arts in England were concerned with breaking away from pre-war naturalism. Freud's psychological explanations about human behaviour had their effect too. Writers began experimenting with non-traditional techniques, such as stream-of-consciousness writing and these new styles came to be known as Modernism.

James Joyce's *Ulysses*, first appeared in 1922, but was banned in the USA and Britain, because of obscenities. It was unbanned over a decade later.

Joyce writes in a stream of consciousness, with ever-shifting impressions, not only of what is observable around him, but of past associations in the subconscious, encompassing the vast sweep and depth of his imagination.

Joyce was Irish, and very conscious of his Irishness in the English language medium. He sought to perceive reality and capture the world by means of words, by which we access reality. Joyce felt that real objects have an inconstancy, and can only be made permanent when they are tied to language.

The impotent Bloom is watching the romantically-inclined Gertie at a fireworks display.

The eyes that fastened upon her set her pulses tingling. She looked at him a moment, meeting his glance, and a light broke in on her. Whitehot passion was in that face, passion silent as the grave, and it made her his...She leaned back far to look up at where the fireworks were and she caught her knee in her hand so as not to fall back looking up and there was no-one to see, only him and her when she revealed all her gracefull beautifully shaped legs like that, supple soft and delicately rounded, and she seemed to hear the panting of his heart, his hoarse breathing,...she could almost feel him draw her face to his and the first quick hot touch of his handsome lips...and she leaned back ever so far to see the

fireworks...and she saw a long Roman candle going up over the trees up, up, and, in the dense hush they were all breathless with excitement as it went higher and higher and she had to lean back more and more to look up after it, high, high, almost out of sight, and her face was suffused with a divine, and entrancing blush from straining back and he could see her other things too, nainsook knickers, the fabric that creases the skin...and she let him and she saw that he saw and then it went so high it went out of sight a moment and she was trembling in every limb from being bent so far back he had a full view high up above her knee...and then a rocket sprang and bang shot blind and O! then the Roman candle burst and it was like a sigh of O! and everyone cried O! O! in raptures and it gushed out of it a stream of rain gold hair threads and they shed and ah! they were all greeny dewy stars falling with golden, O so lovely! O so soft, sweet, soft!⁴⁹

Joyce understood the inter-relationship of sound and meaning. He "creates" words which, having no dictionary definition, engage oral/aural connections which evoke their meaning.

His "wordcraft" encompasses both subtle and striking images of movement, colour, motion and gesture.

This sensuous and sonorous use of sound, combined with Joyce's individual style of rhythm and intonation, his deeply rooted emotions and highly perceptive intellectual powers, place him amongst the greatest novelists writing in English.

In an article entitled *Beyond the Orality/Literacy Dichotomy: James Joyce and the Pre-History of Cyberspace*, (1996) by Donald Theall of McGill University, Canada, it is fascinating to discover how greatly influenced Joyce was by Marcel Jousse.

The article also discusses Joyce's influence on Marshall McLuhan, with whom Theall worked in the early 1950's. This was when McLuhan first began exploring areas concerning the effect and future impact that the technological era (technoculture) would have on global communication.

As this dissertation is about communication, it is of interest to briefly consider its present global status.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* pp.1014-1015.

McLuhan was greatly impressed by Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* which, prior to our present state of technoculture, Joyce explored with vivid insight.

Theall analyses Joyce's and McLuhan's concern about the global effects which would be brought about as a result of electromechanical communication. This involves what is now known as:

Cyberspace (which) is the simultaneous experience of time, space ... All the data in the world stacked up...so you could cruise around and have a kind of grip on it ...data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system...⁵⁰

In terms of the accessing and transmitting of data, the world has become a global village, with a new electric cosmos.

Theall says that *Finnegans Wake* is:

the most comprehensive exploration, prior to the 1960s or 70s, of the ways in which these new modes created a dramatic crisis for the arts of language and the privileged position of the printed book. The WAKE dramatises the necessary deconstruction and reconstruction of language in a world... with entirely new modes for organizing and transmitting information and knowledge...(Joyce) underscores how his interest in the contemporary transformation of the book requires grounding the evolution of civilization in the poetics of communication, especially gesture and language...⁵¹

In the extract from *Ulysses* quoted earlier in this chapter, it is clear that Joyce was acutely aware of the inseparable involvement of speech (and its scripted print) with the visual, the auditory, the kinaesthetic; in fact with all of man's senses.

In a personal communication with Professor Sienaert, who has translated Jousse's works into English, Theall says that he first encountered Jousse as a result of Jousse's relationship with, and impact on, Joyce's latter writings.

⁵⁰ Donald F. Theall; *Beyond the Orality/Literacy Dichotomy: James Joyce and the Pre-History of Cyberspace*, p.1.

Joyce roots all communication in gesture.

"In the beginning was the gest he jousstly says".

Here the ordinary nature of gesture...is linked with the mechanics of humour (i.e. jest)...Gestures, like signals and flashing lights...provide elementary mechanical systems for communications, (and) are

"words of silent power"... "Where flash becomes word and silents selflout."

Since gestures, and ultimately all acts of communication, are generated from the body, the "gest" as "flesh without word" is "a flash" that becomes word and "communicake(s) with the original sinse" (original sin)...

"Communicake" parallels eating to speaking, and speaking is linked in turn to the act of communion as participation in, and consumption of, the Word...the title of one of Marcel Jousse's groundbreaking books on gesture as the origin of language (is, translated) *The Mastication of the Word*.⁵²

The above quotations are of interest for two striking reasons.

Firstly, Joyce's synonymous use of "flash" and "silent-word-communication" is evident in the *Ulysses* extract quoted previously.

In this extract, Joyce uses the "flashing" images of the fireworks display, with Roman candles bursting, rockets springing and a gushing stream of rain gold threads shedding dewy stars, to "wordlessly" communicate the "whitehot" passion in Bloom's and Gertie's encounter.

Secondly, although Theall may be right in connecting "jousstly" with "jest", I would think, due to the profound impact Jousse had on him, that Joyce was referring to Jousse's own quote:

"In the beginning was the geste".⁵³

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.3.

⁵² *Ibid*, p.4.

⁵³ Marcel Jousse, *The Oral Tradition*, p.13.

hence, "jousstly says". Perhaps Theall was not aware that this is a Joussean quote.

The analogy between the "gest" and "chew", an eating action, echoes Jousse's belief in the fact that word, speech and orality are rooted not only in laryngo-buccal gestes, but gestes involving the entire, total *Anthropos*.

For Jousse, words must be experienced as sensuous, sonorous, living, oral gestes, filling the mouth: their "flavours" must be tasted and savoured.

For both Jousse and Joyce, orality, particularly song, "Singalingalying" is rooted in the rhythms and workings of the body's organs.

As we have seen, for Joyce, words, are crafted in relation to sound and sense; "wordcraft".

Hieroglyphics and early scripts based on drawings, Joyce termed "woodwordings". This communicative form is a result of the extension of the hand and of bodily gesture language.

"Woodwordings" are transformations of "wordcraft" into manuscript form. They are more durable than the orality of "wordcraft". Both are based on the body's use of gesture.

In *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce, beginning with gesture, words and hieroglyphics:

traces human communication through its complex, labyrinthine development, right down to the TV and what it bodes for the future...Like the cinema, "wordloosed", all such media are engaged in a "crowdblast" of existing languages and cultures, producing an interplay between local cultures and a pan-international hyperculture.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Donald F Theall; *Beyond the Orality/Literacy Dichotomy: James Joyce and the Pre-History of Cyberspace*, p.8.

Joyce's prophetic vision of cyberspace was not uncritical. He foresees, and strongly disapproves, of the demise of orality, and with it, the loss of the physical, sensuous "geste".

He says of the printing press:

Gutenmorg with his cromagnon charter, tintingfast and great primer must once for omniboss step rubrickredd out of the wordpress...For that (the rapt one warns) is what papyr is meed of, made of, hides and hints and misses in prints. Till ye finally...meet with the acquaintance of Mister Typus, Mistress Tope and all the little typtopies. Fillstup.⁵⁵

Printing eliminates real things like vocal sounds, intonations, rhythms, movements and gestures.

Jousse and Joyce both considered communicative "gestes" to be crucial to humanity's genesis and balanced existence.

Sadly and poignantly, Joyce terms the technological transmissions of technoculture:

endspeaking nots for yestures.⁵⁶

"From the first "In the beginning ..." words have been thought to have magical properties. They can, we are assured by the authorities, persuade, snare, frighten, bless. They can stimulate, damn, anger, kill, caress...Words are properties of thoughts, and thoughts cannot be thought without them. We are truly "in the Blue", if we try to think "blue" without thinking "blue".⁵⁷

In his sometimes light-hearted philosophical enquiry *On Being Blue*, William Gass, Professor of Philosophy in the USA, is concerned that words have lost their role of being containers of consciousness. Words are an essential element of consciousness.

Contrary to those romantic myths which glorify the speech of mountain men and working people, Irish elves and Phoenician sailors, the words which in our language are the worst off, are the ones which the worst off use. Poverty and isolation produce impoverished and isolated minds, small vocabularies, a real but fickle passion for slang...there is a dominance of cliché and verbal stereotype, an abundance of expletives and stammer words. Our vocabularies have become thin in content, few in number and constantly abused. In fact our entire vocabulary for states of consciousness is critically impoverished.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.7.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*. p.9.

⁵⁷ William Gass; *On Being BLue; A Philosophical Enquiry*. p.21

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p24.

Gass says that sentences should be containers of consciousness; of emotions moving through the space of imagination and the mind in gleeful aliveness. Each says, means, implies, reveals, connects, titillates, invites, conceals, suggests. He says that if we were looked after as well as Joyce's sentences we would never stray.

Gass says we must fill the word in the mouth with consciousness and emotion. Emotions are integrations of complex and inter-related feelings, e.g. the sorrow contains the flame, the pain, the revengeful person, disappointment about the past, guilt, horror, anger, awe, grief, fear of the future, shame, apprehension, pity, disbelief, and again pain.

Our tongues need to feel and be sensuous again - to feel the connection with consciousness and sensation. Language needs to fill the mouth as it was meant to; with physical qualities.

Gass ends with a stream-of-consciousness advice to the writers:

So to the wretched writer I should like to say...give up the things of this world in favor of the words which say them...chant and pray, since the day may begin badly, in a foggy light that moistens the soul before consciousness has cracked so every thought is damp...consequently speak and praise for the fall of the spirit is marked by increasing darkness... so shout and celebrate before the shade conceals the window...wait for that miraculous moment when in your mouth, teeth turn into dragons and you do what Demosthenes did by the Aegean; shape pebbles into syllables and make stones sound...⁵⁹

⁵⁹ *Ibid* p.89-90.

CHAPTER 5

MAN'S RECORDED HISTORY; OUR LEGACY THROUGH THE WRITTEN WORD

A Summarized History of the Gestural Origins of Alphabetical Systems

An alphabet is a highly developed, artificial form of writing. The connection between sound and character is conventional and not essential. This is not the case with all forms of written communication. Pictographs, ideographs, and hieroglyphics are forms of writing, where the characters bear an essential relationship to what they are intended to represent. However, it's important to recognize that these methods constitute the earlier stage in the development of writing syllabaries and alphabets; which have now passed into the conventionalized stage.

Groups of written or printed letters spell out words, and convey the thoughts of the writer to the reader. This mode of transmission, the use of symbols to convey thoughts and ideas, and to record the facts and preserve them for future generations, has been a major factor in man's intellectual and spiritual development. Little is left in the twenty six letters of our alphabet to remind us of the pictorial and gestural origins of their earlier stages, before they reached the conventionalized stage.

Our alphabet has evolved from many countries and past civilizations; the major influences being the Egyptians; the Semitics, the Phoenicians, the Greeks and the Romans. They all had practical systems of recording, and contributed to the idea and substance of our present alphabet. The early Egyptians had their beginnings in the Neolithic Age, and their hieroglyphics provide a perfect record of the beginnings of our alphabet. The Egyptians invented it; the Semitics, and particularly the Phoenicians, traded "on" and with it; the Greeks cultivated it; and from them, and the Romans, their conquerors, we received our alphabet.

In this chapter, I will review available evidence which throws light on the origins of our alphabetic characters. The purpose of this investigation is to show that man's communication

systems, both oral and written, are rooted in his physiognomy, and stem from man's movement capacity and repertoire.

Originally, memory was the means of storing, and passing on, cultural traditions. Whatever laws of nature and survival had been gained by the experience of one generation, was related to the next, and survived in their memories. Medicine men and storytellers were chosen for their memory ability; at religious ceremonies, the young were initiated and instructed in the mystic rituals and taught the great epics.

The Homeric epics, the Iliad and the Odyssey, are evidence of such compositions. Homer was a wandering "minstrel" who gathered the knowledge of his time, and in his poetry, inspired the youth of Greece with valour and virtue. Other examples of the survival of oral communication are Aesop's fables, and the books of the Bible, which survived as legends for hundreds of years throughout the Jews' wanderings, before they were committed to writing.

Some of the first records of mankind's history, were left by cave-dwellers. As survival depended greatly on the success of the hunt, Palaeolithic man first drew pictures of the animals around him, which he hunted, perhaps as a form of magical control. Drawings and paintings on the rock cave walls were painted with coloured earths and vegetable dyes. Man cut with flints, and carved with crude stone implements etched on bones and tusks. These depict many extinct animals. He copied the natural forms about him and painted them in graphic expression. When man drew ideas into his pictures, ideas which could be conveyed to others, he had begun to write; to leave a record upon which man's store of knowledge could expand.

The successive stages of writing may be simply grouped as:

- A. Pictographic.
- B. Idiographic.
- C. Phonetic.

A. Pictographic

These were mainly drawings of natural objects. Fragmentary pictures could be linked in a "story"- the picture recalled the "thing" in mind, not it's name.

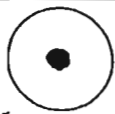








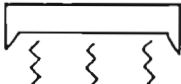








Presumably, as various tribal groups came into contact with each other, mutually enlarging, expanding and enhancing their scope of activity ,and sharing experiences, verbal speech became inadequate as a means of communication, and a primary sign- language based on gestures and hand signals was used.

Gestures and hand signalling may be likened to "writing" in the air, and it was the picture made by these movements, which eventually became the written sign.











There is no doubt that sign language is a universal primary language, and the following written signs, prove that the same applies to early written sign language.

The early Egyptians, ancient Babylonians, Chinese, and North American Indians (to name only a few) all used similar symbols for the same meaning in their early writings, although they were far removed from each other geographically.

PICTURE WRITING

	Egypt	Mesopotamia	China
Sun			
Mountain			
Man			
Rain			
Fish			
Stars			

EARLY SUMERIAN PICTOGRAMS

	Head + Body = Man		Stream of Water
	Indicates Mouth		Head with indicated Mouth ÷ Water = Drink
	Bowl = Food		Fish
	Head with indicated Mouth + Bowl = Eating		Bird
	Spikelets of Barley		Ass' Head

Source: T Thompson, *The ABC of our Alphabet*

Pictorial epitaphs on Indian graveposts were common in the early days of the New World. Painted on wood, most have perished, but knowledge of the Indians' practice and art of picture writing is recorded. One such record is found in Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*.

From his pouch he took his colours,
Took his paints of different colours,
On the smooth bark of a birch- tree,
Painted many shapes and figures,
Wonderful and mystic figures,
And each figure had a meaning,
Each some word or thought suggested.

Life and death he drew as circles,
Life was white but Death was darkened;
Sun and moon and stars he painted,
Man and beast, and fish and reptile,
Forests, mountains, lakes and rivers.
For the earth he drew a straight line,
For the sky a bow above it;
White the space between for daytime,
Filled with little stars for night-time;
On the left a point for sunrise,
On the right a point for sunset,

On the top a point for noontide,
 And for rain and cloudy weather
 Waving lines descending from it.

Thus it was that Hiawatha,
 In his wisdom, taught the people
 All the mysteries of painting,
 All the Art of Picture-Writing.

Writing developed from gestures. Gestures depicting universally understood objects and actions, were taken out of the realm of space, and transposed to a written form, where they could be recorded as symbols for meaning.

These are more examples:

If a North American Indian wanted to say that you were not truthful, he would touch his tongue with one finger and hold up two fingers toward you, signifying that you were two-tongued.

If he wanted to tell you that a place was a number of days distance in travel, he would signify travel with the first two fingers of his hand moving one ahead of the other (as legs walking), then incline his head as if in sleep, and hold up as many fingers as there were sleeps.

When these signs were "written", a foot or legs became symbols for walking; the mouth for eating; the eye for seeing; the ear for hearing. A moon meant a month; a sun, a day. Three suns, or a sun with three marks, meant three days etc. So we see that by combining pictographs, the picture-writer was able to express ideas and information, and we reach the stage known as:

B. Ideographic

Ideograms developed about two thousand years BC, amongst peoples in many different parts of the world. Sometimes, the same ideogram was used by people who were geographically very remote.

For example:

An eye, with a tear dropping from it:



was the symbol for sorrow amongst the Mayas and Aztecs of Central America, and the ancient Chinese.

The ability to make an idea or message visible, was a very important development in the history of writing. The following is an interesting example of this stage. Eskimos who live on an isolated coast of the Bering Sea and Pacific Ocean, still practise a form of ideographic writing. The following was drawn on wood by an Eskimo and left at his habitation to inform visitors and friends of his departure and his intention to hunt.



A linear translation of the Aigaluxamu dialect in which the message would be read, follows.

"I there (to that place) go (with boat) that island on, sleep there, then I go another island there two sleeps (nights) I catch one sea lion return to (place) mine.

The ideographic stage was the starting point of institutionalized writing. We have a definite picture, conventional and simplified, which has become a fixed pictorial symbol of it's meaning. The meaning, therefore, is denoted by the picture or it's action. Writing, in all languages has passed through , or halted at this stage.

An example to illustrate how pictography developed into ideography is:

A circle, showing the sun, gradually became to mean, not only the sun, or a day, but also heat or light.

The following diagram shows how the pictogram developed into an ideogram. The examples are Egyptian, Cuneiform and Chinese.

IDEOGRAMS

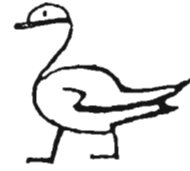
Egyptian



Eye + Tears
= Weep




Split Reed + Vial
= Writing

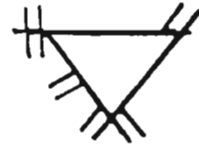


Goose = Precious Possession = Child

Cuneiform



 = Sun < = 10 Days
= Month



Bird = Fate

Chinese



Sun Above
Horizon = Dawn







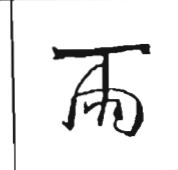




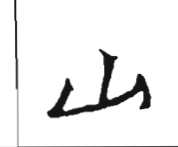
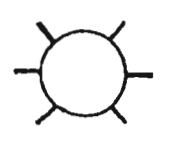
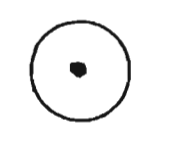






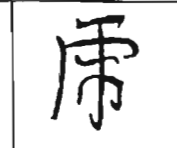
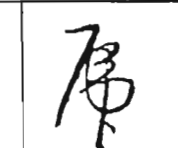
Rectangle (Mouth)
+ Vapor
= Word or Speech



Wife + Child
= Happiness

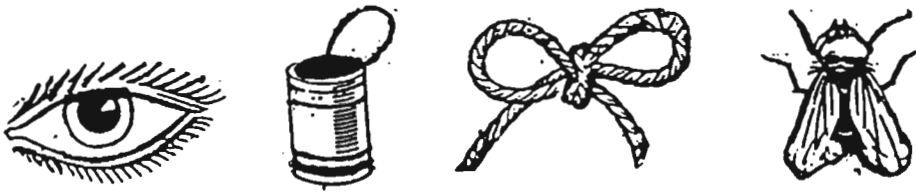
The Chinese written language, clearly illustrates a pictographic and ideographic form of writing; there has been little change in the style in over two thousand years.

Ancient Chinese ideographs and modern Chinese characters into which they developed, are shown side by side, below.

Rain					
Mountain					
Sun					
Tiger					

Although there are many different dialects in China, writing, being addressed to the eye, can be nationally understood. Although Chinese never went beyond the combination of pictographic and ideographic writing methods, they expanded their use, by making pictures stand for other words pronounced the same way. e.g. the noun, bear, would be used to denote the verb, bear, and the adjective, bare. Chinese is a tonal language, and the pitch used in speaking the word, indicates the contextual meaning.

Pictures were therefore not only used to represent objects, but sounds, as well. This brings us to "sound symbolism", where pictures are used to represent sounds; these are also known as phonograms. This is similar to the rebus in which objects do not stand for the objects themselves, but the sounds they recall ; the pictures shown have names sounding like the word intended. A simple English example is; (I can not fly)



The rebus still survives e.g. in English pub signs, and tradesmen's signs. The fact that Egyptian hieroglyphics also used pictures to represent sounds, indicates that the rebus form was an elementary form of syllabic writing, and may be called the first stage of phoneticism.

In Egyptian hieroglyphics, pictograms, ideograms, syllabic rebuses and characters, are used side by side.

But if a language has only one word for any given idea, then the ideogram, the symbol representing the idea, would, in time, be connected to the sound of the word. When this happens; when the symbol is used to represent the same sound in different words, the symbol is no longer ideographic, but phonetic;(from the Greek "phone" = sound).

Ancient ideographic scripts which include phonetic elements are termed "analytic", indicating that the basic units are words.

The oldest known analytic script is Sumerian. In southern Mesopotamia, over five thousand years ago, the Sumerians developed pictography, then ideography with phoneticism. Their scribes produced a style that used short, wedge-shaped lines, pressed into the surface of wet clay tablets which were baked or dried in the sun: the style known as cuneiform. This written style and script, spread to the major peoples of the ancient Western Asia, including the Babylonians, Assyrians, Hittites and Persians.

These ancient systems, though largely phonetic, were encumbered with ideographs, and it was not until the sixth century BC, that the Persians developed a script, written in the cuneiform style in which the number of ideographs was reduced. Thereby, the system gradually became closer to the alphabet on which all Western languages have been based.

The Sumerian cuneiform and the Egyptian hieroglyphic systems are the earliest complete systems of writing known to us. The oldest surviving example of the hieroglyphic system is approximately about two thousand nine hundred BC

Had the Egyptians discontinued using ideograms as their determinative signs, they would have reached the final stage in the development of the alphabet. Perhaps, like the Chinese, they did not want to sever their connection with reality.

C. Phonetic

This involves using syllabic signs and symbols: true alphabetical characters have become conventional symbols representing primary oral sounds. The North Semitic alphabet was a twenty two letter script of which there are surviving examples from the eleventh century BC. It is said to be the source of modern alphabets.

Earlier examples of writing indicate that the original alphabet was used around one thousand, seven hundred BC. Some of the letters were similar in appearance to Egyptian pictographs; the vital difference was that each letter stood for a separate consonant, not a word. A version of the North Semitic alphabetic script, known as Canaanite, was adopted and transformed by the Greeks in tenth century BC.

The name lapis lazuli in the Egyptian language is "khesfteb." "khesf" means "to stop"; "teb" means " a pig". Lapis lazuli is represented in an inscription of Ptolemy at Edfu by a picture of a man holding a pig by the tail.



From the use of a picture to represent the name of the object, it was a simple step to use the objects to represent the primary sounds for their names.

An English example of this would be a picture of a cat, used in words containing the sound. e.g. cat a log; cat a comb etc.

In English, it would be impossible to draw pictures for all of the sounds, but the Egyptians ignored the vowels; so the picture of a cat could have meant e.g. cat; cut; kite; kit; etc.; the intention of the word would be guessed from its' context.

For problem words, those for which no picture could be found, the Egyptians selected words containing a single consonant, e.g. in English bee; B., and drew pictures of those words. The pictures were now identified as a sound, not an object : pictograms had now become alphabetical characters.

However, the Egyptians, like the Chinese, were reluctant to discard their inherited pictograms, and used them as the determinative sign alongside the alphabetical characters.



The above illustration, contains two Egyptian alphabetical letters; AB, their word for "thirst. Two ideograms are added, the symbol for water, and a man pointing to his mouth. It is clear that the scribe meant to signify "a thirst for water". Had he meant "a thirst for knowledge", he would have pictured the materials for writing, a split reed and a hanging ink bottle, or a papyrus roll, as the determinative signs.

In the above example, we can see that ideography does not convey particular sounds or words.

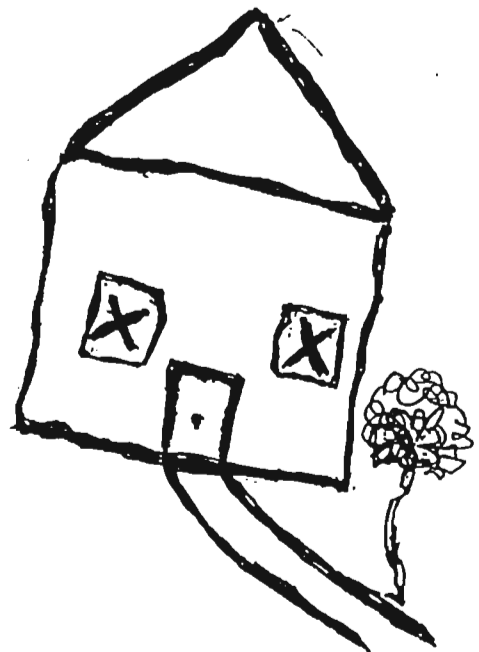
The Semitic script contained no vowels, but the Greeks transformed five Semitic consonant symbols for which they had no need in Greek, into vowel symbols. This alphabet has been the basis of all modern European languages.

So, we can see that the characters, or letters in our alphabet, are the simplified renderings of their pictorial beginnings; and although most original resemblance has disappeared, each letter in our alphabet may be seen to have had its' origins in pictures and sounds.

Being closer in time to the origins of writing than of speech, we can find interesting evidence of movement/sound associations used by the Egyptians in their choice of symbols for the characters, or the letters of their alphabet. e.g. the letter "z", was originally a picture of a serpent; and the word for "serpent" was "zst", which is full of the hissing connotations we associate with snakes.

Ontogenetically, in a child's drawing and writing progress, we can trace the identical stages of development, which took man thousands of years to reach phylogenetically. At first, children's pictures depict simplified versions of the objects around them; e.g. a mother's face (pictographic); then they incorporate actions and movement into the picture-stories; e.g. mother putting on lipstick; (ideographic) and as they gradually learn to write phonetically, they do not discard picture-making, but for some time includes it alongside the alphabetical writing, e.g. "This is my house" with a picture; just as the ancient Egyptians did.

this is
my
house



5.1 The English Alphabet: Spelling and Sounding Inconsistencies

From this brief pre-history of the alphabetical system, it is obvious that it has truly been one of mankind's greatest and remarkable achievements. The English alphabet, however, is an extremely confusing one in terms of its spelling system's relationship to the sounding system. This dichotomy causes serious complications, particularly for English second language students learning to read and speak English.

The following are examples of English spelling/sound inconsistencies.

The numbered sound example is, in each instance, also spelt in the manners which follow.

The English Monophthongs

1. /ɑr/ as in car;
 /ɛr/ as in sergeant
 /ɑl/ as in calm
 /ɛər/ as in heart
 /ɑ/ as in father
 /aʊgħ/ as in laugh

2. /ɑw/ as in jaw;
 /ɑ/ as in ball
 /ɔʊgħ/ as in thought
 /aʊgħ/ as in daughter
 /oo/ as in door
 /ɑw/ as in laundry
 /ɔr/ as in born
 /ɔre/ as in sore

3. /oo/ as in room;
 /o/ as in to
 /oo/ as in too
 /ew/ as in few
 /ui/ as in cruise
 /ɔʊgħ/ as in through
 /ou/ as in you
 /ue/ as in blue
 /wo/ as in two

4. /ɛr/ as in her
 /ɛər/ as in heard

- /ɪr/ as in bird
 /ʊr/ as in curl
 /ɔr/ as in worm
5. /ee/ as in see
 /e/ as in me
 /ey/ as in key
 /ea/ as in eat
 /ie/ as in mealie
 /ei/ as in ceiling
6. /e/ as in set
 /ea/ as in head
 /ai/ as in said
 /ue/ as in guess
 /ie/ as in friend
7. /i/ as in sit
 /e/ as in English
 /ui/ as in build
 /y/ as in syrup
 /u/ as in busy
 /ee/ as in been
 /o/ as in women
8. /u/ as in hut
 /o/ as in brother
 /ou/ as in tough
9. /o/ as in hot
 /a/ as in what
10. /u/ as in put
 /oo/ as in book
 /ou/ as in would
11. /a/ as in about (the neutral vowel)
 /er/ as in better
 /u/ as in up
 /e/ (the second) as in elephant
 /o/ as in connect
 /i/ as in university

(The substitution of the neutral vowel for vowels in unstressed positions in spoken English, presents a noticeable problem for second language speakers.)

The English Diphthongs

12. /ow/ as in now
/ou/ as in shout
13. /a/ as in day
/e/ as in grey
/ay/ as in pay
/ai/ as in train
/ei/ as in eight
/ea/ as in break
/ee/ as in matinee
14. /i/ as in ice
/igh/ as in fight
/ie/ as in tried
/y/ as in dry
/uy/ as in buy
/eigh/ as in height
15. /o/ as in sold
/ow/ as in blow
/oa/ as in oats
/ough/ as in dough
/ew/ as in sew
/oe/ as in toe
/ou/ as in soul
16. /oi/ as in noise
/oy/ as in toy
/uo/ as in buoy
17. /air/ as in hair
/ere/ as in where
/are/ as in care
/ar/ as in Mary
/ear/ as in wear
18. /ear/ as in fear
/ee/ as in beer
/ere/ as in here
/ie/ as in fierce
/e/ and /iou/ as in serious
19. /oor/ as in poor
/ue/ as in truer
/ou/ as in tour

/ewa/ as in steward

/ure/ as in lure

20. */ore/* as in more
/ou/ as in four
/oa/ as in oar
/oo/ as in door

The English Consonants

21. */p/* as in pipe
/pp/ as in happy

22. */b/* as in bed
/bb/ as in rubber

23. */f/* as in fat
/ff/ as in affair
/gh/ as in cough
/ph/ as in phone
/lf/ as in half

24. */v/* as in wave
/f/ as in of

25. */t/* as in tea
/tw/ as in two
/ed/ as in liked
/ght/ as in tight
/tt/ as in tatoo
/pt/ as in ptomaine

26. */d/* as in dog
/dd/ as in ladder
/ed/ as in poured
/de/ as in ride

27. */s/* as in sing
/ss/ as in grass
/sc/ as in scent
/c/ as in cent
/ps/ as in psychology
/tz/ as in waltz
/ce/ as in race
/se/ as in use (noun)

28. */z/* as in zoo
/ows/ as in knows

- /x/ as in xerox
 /sy/ as in easy
 /ies/ as in spies
 /s/ as in animals
 /se/ as in use (verb)
29. /sh/ as in she
 /s/ as in tension
 /ss/ as in fissure
 /t/ as in nation
 /sch/ as in schnapps
30. /ge/ as in beige
 /z/ as in azure
 /su/ as in leisure
31. /ch/ as in chop
 /ch/ as in church
 /tch/ as in stretch
 /tu/ as in natural
 /tio/ as in question
 /c/ as in cello
32. /j/ as in jump
 /g/ as in gypsy
 /dier/ as in soldier
 /dg/ as in edge
 /dj/ as in adjective
 /ge/ as in advantage
33. /k/ as in king
 /c/ as in car
 /ck/ as in duck
 /k/ as in key
 /ck/ as in lock
 /ch/ as in echo
 /cc/ as in occur
 /qu/ as in queen
 /que/ as in plaque
34. /g/ as in go
 /gg/ as in giggle
35. /wh/ as in when
 after /t/ in twelve;
 after /s/ in swim;
 after /q/ in quit

36. /w/ as in wet
/o/ as in one
/u/ as in liquid
37. /l/ as in let
/ll/ as in pillow
38. /m/ as in more
/mm/ as in hammer
/mb/ as in thumb
/gm/ as in diaphragm
/mn/ as in column
39. /n/ as in no
/kn/ as in knit
/gn/ as in gnat
/pn/ as in pneumonia
/mn/ as in mnemonic
40. /ng/ as in sing
/in/ as in think
/ngue/ as in tongue
/nc/ as in anchor
/nx/ as in anxious
41. /h/ as in hot
/wh/ as in whole
42. /y/ as in yet
/io/ as in onion
/ie/ as in view
/u/ as in use
/ew/ as in few
/iar/ as in familiar
/ew/ as in ewe
43. /r/ as in red
/rr/ as in ferry
/rh/ as in rhyme
/wr/ as in wrong

Unfortunately, I find myself having to agree with George Bernard Shaw, who said of the English alphabet:

...this alphabet is reduced to absurdity by a foolish orthography based on the notion that the business of spelling is to represent the origin and history of a word instead of its sound and meaning.¹

¹ Quoted by R.A. Wilson, *The Miraculous Birth of Language*, Preface.

CONCLUSION

To say more than human things with human voice,
 That cannot be; to say human things with more
 Than human voice, that, also, cannot be;
 To speak humanely from the height or from the depth
 Of human things, that is acutest speech.¹

In our technological era, the printed word, the television and the computer screen, have de-humanised and de-voiced the organic vitality and orality of human speech.

In the past, social communities communicated commonalities which fostered their survival: their aims, aspirations, beliefs, knowledge etc. In a society, children are physically fostered and culturally initiated through the communication of habits of doing, thinking and feeling, by the older generations - a communication which secures similar emotional and intellectual dispositions and insures participation in a common understanding. By living together in a society, humans educated each other; experiences could be enlarged and enlightened, and imagination enriched.

Speech acquisition is a critical part of this socialization and educational process; the spoken word enables us to express and be conscious of thoughts. Speech mirrors the society's view and structure of Reality.

With the advent of industrialization, the development of complex social structures and the demise of rural community life, this transmission of cultural and social norms was taken over by educational systems - schools.

But there are conspicuous dangers attendant upon the transition from indirect to formal education. Sharing in actual pursuit, whether directly or vicariously in play, is at least personal and vital...Formal instruction, on the contrary, easily becomes remote and dead - abstract and bookish...In an advanced culture much which has to be learned is stored in symbols. It is far from translation into familiar acts and objects. Such material is relatively technical and superficial. Taking the ordinary

¹ Wallace Stevens; *Chocorua to It's Neighbour*, XIX.

standard of reality as a measure it is artificial... isolated from the subject matter of life-experience, from human association that affects conscious life... (Education) has become associated with imparting information about remote matters and the conveying of learning through verbal signs: the acquisition of literacy.²

Another advent which deflated the organic vitality of the articulated word, was the discovery of "structural linguistics" which decided on the "arbitrary" nature of the relationship between signifier and the signified.

However, if the organic nature of human speech and language systems can be scientifically related to the human organism, and the organic nature of emotion and thought, we need to re-evaluate our educational methodologies.

In order to facilitate effective, non-mechanical learning processes, we need to concentrate on real life activities and experiences and oral communication: living words, rather than the synthetic world of print; fossilized words.

In the teaching of English as a first, second or foreign language, English words must be shown to be full of dynamic energy, vitality and sound. They are not reproductions of arbitrary symbols on a page.

This is where the incorporation of educational drama can be a valuable teaching tool. Students employ and explore the dynamic activity of speech in real-life action-situations. The teacher acts as a facilitator, and students improvise, "pretend or play out", little "happenings" or scenes which are relevant to their practical every-day experiences.

This method is particularly effective in English second language teaching and learning. Language learning should be actively involved with, and useful in, the given social environment.

² John Dewey; *Democracy and Education*. p.8.

For example: the facilitator is teaching a vocabulary class involving human body **locomotion** words. Instead of saying the words to learn them, the students **move** and say them: they stride; run; stagger; limp; march; trudge etc.

In groups, the students then enact situations where appropriate word usage would occur.

Feedback group discussion follows: students will have personally **experienced** the learning (understanding) processes.

By engaging students in creative, social activities, they learn to experience how language **functions**; word meanings are learned through **experiencing** the meaning in appropriate situations.

This facilitates communicative competence in a much more creative and holistic way than the teacher-desk-blackboard-book method of literacy learning based on present, practice, and reinforce.

In the latter situation, the possible lack of relevance to the (passive) learner can easily lead to boredom, or if he "gets it wrong" embarrassment and humiliation.

A facilitator may present, for example the following scenario, to be played out in small groups.

It is your first day at University : how you get on at registration: who you meet: what you talk about. What problem(s) you or the group encounter: how they are resolved.

This creates a real-life learning experience which is meaningful. Learning-by-doing activity involves the whole personality, and it stimulates the imagination and creativity innate in every person.

Professor Sneddon quotes Eric Linklater.

Teach language in such a way that he will learn the spirit of it; not only because words are the principal condition of social life, but for this reason: whenever a man makes one of those lonely journeys into his own mind, or the secret places of his will, he takes with him, like a lamp to explore them, his native language. And so if he is to see anything it must be bright and strong. Language, among other things is an instrument of the senses. Your finger tips are blunt, and your eyes are a blur, and your tongue's a flap of dead rubber that won't taste anything unless you have words to translate what they feel and see and relish, to your understanding.³

In education, the teaching process must stimulate the learning process, which should be an active, personal experience of discovery.

In his book *How We Think; A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educative Process*, Professor Dewey discusses the different meanings of thought, in relation to education. He emphasises that the ability to think reflectively is a necessary pre-condition for learning processes.

There is automatic, unregulated "stream of consciousness" thinking - a random coursing of ideas through our heads; "things through the mind."

A second meaning of thinking, involves picturing or imagining things not directly perceived or sensed; things not seen, heard, touched, smelt or tasted. This thinking is a succession of imaginary pictures in the mind.

Reflective thinking is similar to both the random coursing of the unconscious and the succession of pictures, but whereas these are sequences of ideas, reflective thought is consequential; successive portions of a reflective thought grow out of one another; the stream of thought is a chain of thoughts, each one linked to the previous thought. Reflective thought is vital for learning.

³ Elizabeth Sneddon; *Speech Training for You*. Preface.

Dewey defines reflective thought as a conscious and voluntary effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality.

(It) involves (1) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and (2) an act of searching, hunting, enquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity.⁴

Thinking then, is evoked, not spontaneous.

Dewey says that education must stimulate, must evoke and involve the thinking processes, and not simply supply facts to be assimilated. Learning is not learning things, but the meaning of things: knowledge aims at investing experiences, things and events with meaning; at understanding them. Through experience, an established meaning is formed: a conception, a standardized meaning.

A concept becomes a standard of reference and allows us to identify and generalize; to extend and carry over our understanding from one thing to another.

For Dewey, a correct educational method will preserve and employ the organic experimental curiosity of the young, and focus it into intellectual, thinking channels.

Abstract thought is imagination seeing familiar objects in a new light, thereby opening new vistas in experience.

Dewey says that the history of culture shows that human knowledge has developed out of problems experienced, and solved, in life experiences.

Like Jousse, Dewey believes that active involvement is an essential part of the learning process. He advocates physical involvement in practical learning projects, instead of routine book-learning.

⁴ John Dewey; *How We Think*. p.12.

Advanced as he was for his time, Dewey appears to have failed to realize the dynamically important role of speech in the thinking and learning involved in educative processes.

In *Thinking and Speaking*, Water and Scott emphasise the importance of speech in education, not only for its communicative role, but for its equally important expressive role. Expression is an innately human need and no man can realize his potentialities without satisfying this need.

Education is largely a matter of coming to understand the phenomena of the world, which surround us, and of relating ourselves to them.

Speaking is the way in which people learn to question and find answers: speech is the chief instrument we have for grasping, examining and discovering - of understanding.

The principles and teaching of rhetoric... have persisted because the conditions that make ours a rhetorical world are the innate results of man's need to communicate with his fellows. Recognizing the world in which he lived, Aristotle said it was absurd for any man to be ashamed of defending himself with his limbs, and not be unashamed of not being able to defend himself with his mind and tongue since the use of rational speech is more distinctive to a human being than the use of his limbs.⁵

Epsom emphasises the importance of clarity in education and teaching:

Every word that is left unknown, misunderstood or confused in meaning, will leave a gap in the mind and a blank in the concept. The whole becomes impoverished and an incomplete experience.⁶

Confucius, when asked for advice on forming a wise government, said he would have all men learn to speak accurately. If you can't speak accurately, you can not get at the truth. Where there is no truth, there is no justice. Where there is no justice, there is no freedom.

⁵ N. Walter and R. Scott; *Thinking and Speaking*. p.6.

⁶ Epsom; *Seven Types of Ambiguity*. p.236.

Professor Elizabeth Sneddon met Rudolf Laban, at an International Conference on Movement in London in 1951. She subsequently spent three weeks with him at his teaching centre in Manchester. Laban and Sneddon shared a common passionate belief: movement is the essence of life.

Basic to Laban's philosophy, is his belief that man's movements are motivated by two goals: work; which is about survival on the physical level in the material world: and: worship; (not in the conventionalized sense). For Laban, worship is a cherishing and fostering of the life-force itself. This life-force has different names in different cultures (e.g. God). This force is manifested through mankind's expressive skills in the creative arts.

Professor Sneddon's teaching and philosophy of communication skills, and Rudolf Laban's philosophy are synonymous.

Sneddon was so impressed by Laban's teachings that she "imported" a Laban specialist to teach in her Department of Speech and Drama at the University of Natal. I was one of the students who enjoyed the privilege of this training in 1958.

Laban's influence is evident in Professor Sneddon's *A Philosophy of Education*, which I summarise.

A human being is a dynamo of energy which is not compartmented, but comprises three basic aspects of "being": the physical, emotional and intellectual.

The body is the instrument of physical movement; it also houses the apparatus which makes brain/mind activity (movement) possible.

This body is also equipped with the five senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. These five senses are essential equipment for human survival: they convey experiences from the world outside. It is through the stimulus of one or more of the five senses that messages are conveyed

along the nerves to the brain. The message triggers off an emotional response/reaction, and/or physical action/activity.

For Sneddon, the human being retains a primordial built-in survival kit - fear. The message will evoke, therefore, fear or non-fear: trust.

What is feared will be distrusted, and the human being will consequently move to destroy, immunize or exclude it: the road to death, from the knife to the atomic bomb.

What the human does not fear, i.e. trusts, he will like, nurture, foster, cherish, love: the road to rich and inclusive life experiences.

The human being has to learn to acquire the skills and knowledge that will enable him to survive in his physical (material), emotional and intellectual environments. A lack of skill or knowledge at any of these levels, creates an imbalance in the integration of the personality, and denies the realization of human potential; of freedom, self-worth and confidence.

Lack of skill and knowledge on these survival levels induces fear, which will induce destructive anti-life behaviour. The challenge in education is to channel human creative energy into acquiring these skills and this knowledge.

For Sneddon, this is the role that the creative arts have played in life, throughout the Ages.

None of the Arts is a status symbol. Every one is an exercise in the struggle to understand some aspect of human experience, and to externalise it in movement terms, whether dynamic (eg dance), or static (eg sculpture), so that our understanding may be more accurate, more efficient, more complete and less chaotic.⁷

Music

⁷ Elizabeth Sneddon; *A Philosophy of Education*.

Focus on the sense of sound and you will perceive the infinite gradations of sound: the musician, singer or composer, has learnt to focus, to visualise his experience of sound in order to shape an efficient externalisation of his personal experience of sound.

Dance

This involves the body's mastery and control of its spatial environment. Historically dance is a form of worship. It is a celebration, an externalisation of the joy of being part of the rhythm of life, of being alive. Dance also encompasses the sorrow of human existence; of death or defeat. This art form also involves the integration of the physical, emotional and intellectual aspects of being.

Fine Arts

Here, the artist develops skill in handling hammer and chisel, or brush, pigment, canvas, board etc. He grapples intellectually to find a shape for his idea, and emotionally, to find a shape that will express his total response to the experience which has captured his interest, admiration or love.

Drama

The drama is the tool man has created to understand the motivation of human action, and consequently, of human character. In the drama, the protagonists find themselves in a situation where they have to make a choice of action. This choice of action reveals the individual's values and integrity.

Speech

Speech is a movement phenomenon involving breathing, resonating, shaping permutations and combinations of vowel sounds and consonants. It embodies the individuals' total expression; physical, emotional and intellectual. Speech has made man "man".

Sneddon quotes Julian Huxley, who was a guest speaker at an international Conference on Communication in Action, hosted by Sneddon at the University of Natal in 1958.

"Speech is to thought, what protoplasm is to life."

Speech has provided humanity with power and control. Speech can influence the thinking and actions of other men. It can inform, destroy, terrify, curse. Speech can also deceive, cajole, influence e.g. political oratory, propaganda and advertising.

Architecture

Earlier in this thesis, we recorded Laban's definition of architecture as being the architect's vision, which embodies his attitudes to weight, space and time, externalized into a shape and form, and "frozen" in space (static).

Training in the creative arts is essential for developing the individual's skill to focus, to concentrate, to visualise...they are an indispensable training for life... In South Africa, where it looks as though we could make a new beginning, in an Education that would be genuinely democratic, it is essential that an understanding of the role and the function of the Creative Arts must cease to be regarded as trivial and peripheral in Education... it must be included as fundamental and central in the education of young people...from the pre-primary to the tertiary level.

Only then shall we produce a nation free from fear, skilful, knowledgeable, balanced, self-reliant and independent in spirit. Unless these qualities are developed in every individual there can be no such thing as Democracy.⁸

As we have seen, Jousse also strongly disapproved of inert, inactive teaching methods - of sitting at a desk and being "taught" from blackboards and books. Children taught this way can only know how books speak about the world, they cannot experience the reality personally.

Jousse said that "facts" were dead lumps superimposed artificially on living organisms.

He advocated that the reality of spontaneous experience was the best teacher - active learning.

The cost of wisdom is not compatible with life's exuberance.⁹

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Marcel Jousse; *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*. p.50.

Jousse said that to take the spontaneous play out of understanding and learning in a child's education, deprives him of the essence which differentiates him from the animal. The child's imaginative and creative processes and powers must be stimulated and encouraged.

Jousse saw a child as the spring and source of surging life and new science, which our paedagogies cripple with parroting and old knowledge, instead of guiding to new and fresh life experiences. The psychology of our teaching methods, Jousse said, is the psychology of the white man, adult, "cultivated" and educated - it is not the psychology of the Anthropos. Children should be made aware of the energized melody of living words, and develop a sensual awareness to the primary experience of rhythm which runs through them.

Let us encourage our children to make use of their living and concrete experience with its potential for surging energy into omnipresent living and self creating thought.¹⁰

Like Laban and Sneddon, we can see that Jousse was very much aware of the need to develop imaginative and creative processes and activities in education.

He was also very much aware of, and sensitive to, the empirical difference between the living vitality of the spoken (oral style) and the lifelessness of the printed, literary style. He describes the differences between the media.

The Oral Style is a living, literally breathing, dynamic, spontaneous and, inevitably...transitory process. Writing, on the other hand, once written by the recorder continues to exist independently of the recorded. The written record takes on a life of its own and needs no other further performance"...The Oral and Written Styles of recording cannot be equated. They are intrinsically and elementally different, and yet in the popular mind, at any rate, they are perceived as being closely related: why else would we believe that the printed version of a play is "the play", and use it as the primary text in the teaching of the genre?...The essentially Oral Style features cannot be properly expressed in writing, and in this latter medium they lose their form and with it their function... the significance of alliterative sounds, onomatopoeic effects and throbbing rhythms simply fade and

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.53.

disappear into the letters of the page... Rhythm, written down, loses its intrinsic purpose and disappears.¹¹

I hope to have shown that we need to re-evaluate the organic, non-arbitrary role of speech in education and in human consciousness. We need to reinstate vitality, emotion and feeling, back into thinking, learning and living. That man can record his thoughts, feelings and aspirations, is a tremendous achievement: but it is far more important that he live and experience them to the full.

...because written words subsist, and persist, they are nothing but an anonymous trace. Because they fly, spoken words are living and filled with meaning... Written language has closed the mind. Like a fist grasping over a diamond, it has closed its grammatical and structural trap over a vanishing whisper that it tries to translate through enclosing and containment. But instead, writing snuffs it out, and we must open the straight-jacket of writing so that it becomes a freshly spoken word. That way the whisper can be perceived and received again. Then the word can start the listener off anew in the quest for truth.¹²

¹¹ Joan Conolly; *From Mimism to Music in the Child*. p.49.

¹² J Ellul; quoted by S. Frielick; *Winged Words/Caged Texts. Oral Tradition and Education*, p.210.

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The information in Chapter 2 is taken from my publication *The Power of English*, 1994.

The diagrams and illustrations in Chapter 5 are taken from T. Thompson, *The ABC of our Alphabet*.

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