

Animated globe spins while the audience is getting ready.

SOURCE: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Animated\\_Wikipedia\\_logos](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Animated_Wikipedia_logos)

Greeting.



Thai – Muay Thai boxing shorts – tourists often have their name in Thai (or Thai-influenced English) put on the front.

Chinese “chops” – always a favourite.

Tattoos - Angelina Jolie – said to have 16 different languages/scripts tattooed.

Familiar brands with different logos in different markets.

Jewellery – pendants, brooches, Egyptian ‘cartouch’, ear rings etc.

My own fascination with Hieroglyphics since childhood.

## 1. How many scripts can you recognise?

- Look at the scripts on the handout.
- How many do you recognise?
- What features did you rely on?

### DISCUSSION ONE

1. Burmese 2. Tamil 3. Russian 4. Japanese 5. Simplified Chinese 6. Khmer 7. Traditional Chinese 8. Ge'ez (Ethiopia)  
9. Armenian 10. Arabic 11. Tibetan 12. Korean 13. Kurdish 14. *Elvish (Tolkein's invented script)* 15. Mongolian 16. Persian / Farsi

ARABIC

KURDISH – extra letters

FARSI – extra letters



My name, Pauline, in 8 different scripts. BUT – I CANNOT IDENTIFY WITH ANY OF THEM.

We have all been writing our names since we were infants – experimenting with signatures, fonts etc.

We have invested a lot in our handwriting, especially our names.

We can find our own names really quickly on long lists and diagrams – it “jumps out” at us.

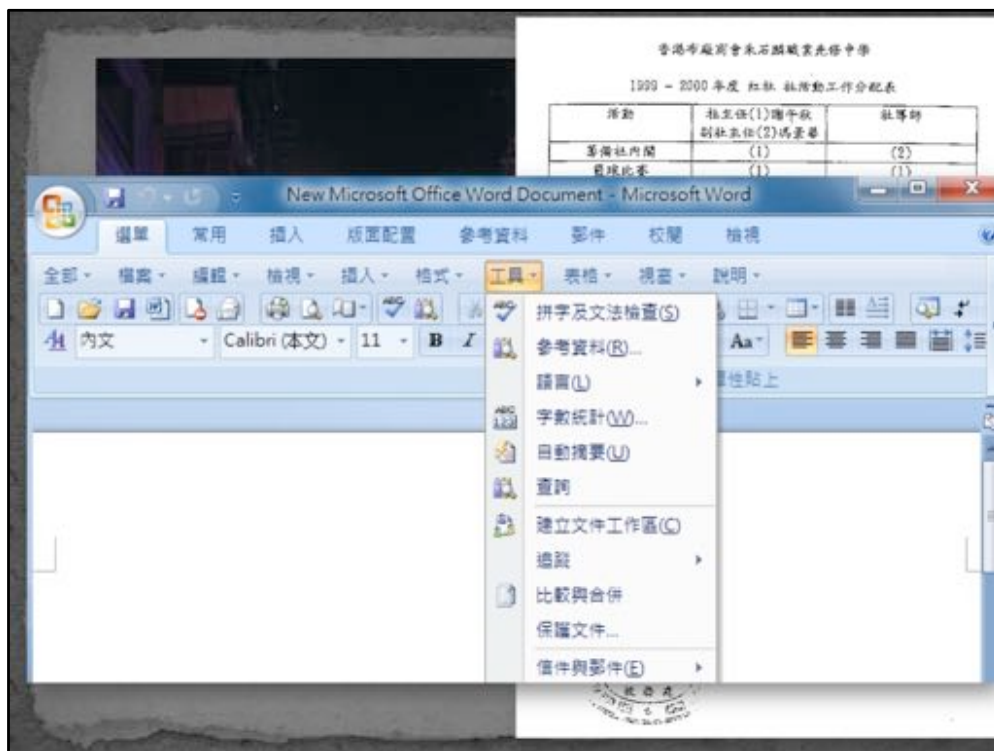
Now – imagine writing one of these on all my papers, belongings etc.

“It doesn’t look like me”. “Where am I?”

L → R: Hindi, Arabic, Tamil, Hebrew, Traditional Chinese, Kazakh, Russian, Greek.

These are copied from GOOGLE TRANSLATE – and may not be totally accurate.

Try it!



Hong Kong – I lived for 12 years in Hong Kong – at first the neon signs used to “shout” at me – and I wished that I knew what they all said.

My school – issued all administrative materials in Chinese (traditional characters) –

This one – duties at a Sports Carnival (me = Red House)

Microsoft Word in Chinese – so frustrating – memorising menus

**2. If you had to learn to live with a  
completely new written script**

**...**

**what would you like to know about it?**

DISCUSSION TWO





This map from Wikipedia clearly shows the broad swathe of countries that use non-Latin alphabets. **\*\*This is where MOST of the current learners of English are based.** [North and South America have pockets of syllabaries – Inuit and Cherokee - but otherwise, they are overwhelmingly “Latin alphabet” users.]

1. The ARABIC family of scripts are called **ABJADS** – they are a type of alphabet that emphasises consonants – vowels can be indicated by diacritics, but usually are not. (This group includes Persian, Hebrew and Urdu.)
2. The INDIAN family of scripts are called **ABUGIDAS** – scripts that are based on (usually) consonant-dominated syllables. These include Thai and some other scripts in SE Asia, such as Balinese. This group also includes Ge'ez, an Ethiopic script.
3. Chinese scripts have many labels – “logographic” is inadequate – a better term is **MORPHOSYLLABIC**, as each character represents a syllable and a unit of meaning.
4. Japan uses a **mixture** of three scripts: some of the Chinese script (Kanji), and two syllabaries (one for borrowed words and one for grammatical words).
5. Korea has its own unique script, **Hangeul**, based on blocks of 2-5 letters that represent syllables.
6. To the north and north-west are the Cyrillic alphabets and other alphabet-type scripts.
7. A close look at the map reveals pockets of other scripts, many of which have been developed locally (often by missionaries).

**MAP:** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:WritingSystemsoftheWorld.png>

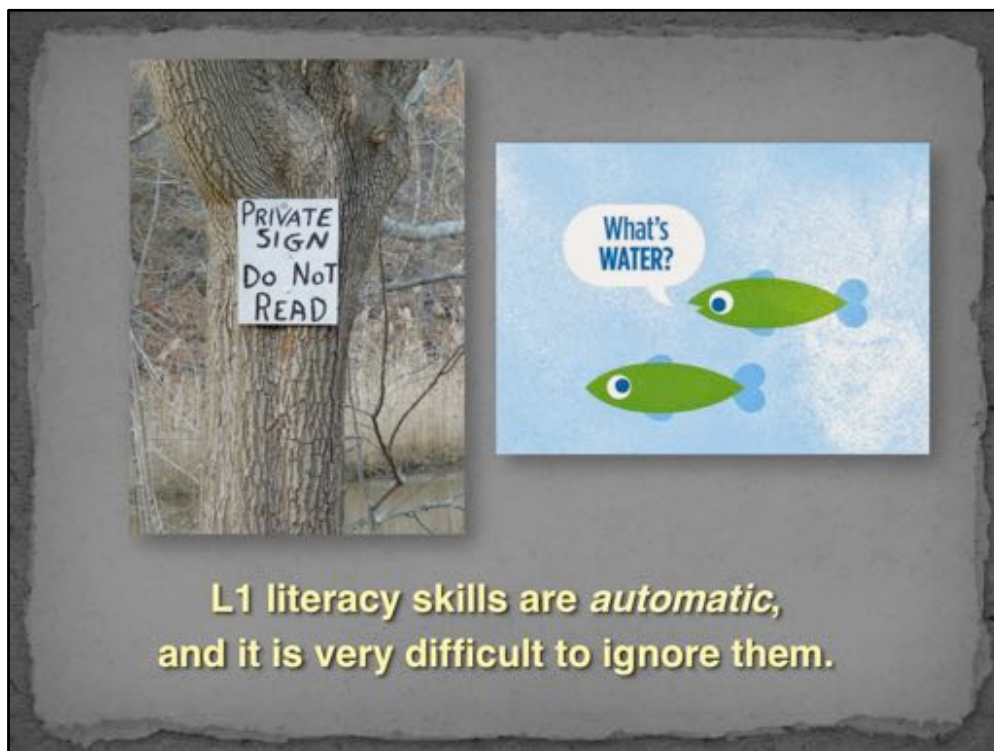
|                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Different writing systems vary in the ways that they:</b>                                                                                                 | <b>represent linguistic units</b><br><br>meaning<br>syllables<br>consonants<br>vowels                                       | <b>are laid out on the page</b><br><br>vertically<br>horizontally<br>directionality<br>spaces between 'words'                       | <b>make use of symbols</b><br><br>26 letters<br>3,000 characters<br><br>mixed systems<br>e.g. Japanese                       |
| <b>are taught in national schools</b><br><br>memorisation<br>role of classics<br>large classes<br>testing regimes<br>competition<br>textbook-use<br>teachers | <b>represent syntactical differences</b><br><br>verb tenses<br>contextual clues<br>cause and effect<br>gender<br>word order | <b>represent vowels and consonants (alphabetic scripts)</b><br><br>e.g.<br>Arabic, Persian & Hebrew scripts<br>emphasise consonants | <b>vary in their 'transparency' (alphabetic scripts)</b><br><br>e.g.<br>Cyrillic scripts<br>Italian<br>Indonesian<br>English |

Here are some of the many ways in which different scripts can operate.

**\*\*Each script sets up 'expectations' in the minds of its readers.**

[We do the same thing when we erroneously refer to "letters" and "words" in other scripts.]





TREE SIGN -- We can't help but read a script that we have learned.  
If this message had been written in an unfamiliar script, we would have no idea of its absurdity.  
We are unaware of our own context.  
A parallel – everyone else has an accent, not us.

We tend to assume that switching writing systems will only take *a period of adjustment* for English learners who are already literate in another script.

**HOWEVER –**

Learning to read and write in the English alphabetic script poses many *deep and long-term challenges* for learners who are already literate in other scripts.

MY THESIS – we make so many assumptions – we do not fully realise the huge challenges a new script poses ....

Not the least of which is IDENTITY – and recognising our own name.

The old adage – that “you only learn to read once” – is now out-dated in this new era of biscriptal learners.

Krashen and Cummins – take note.

Biscriptal learners of English face three main

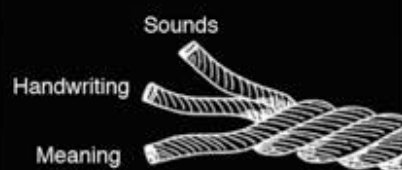
- long-term -

challenges in mastering this new script:

- Sounds
- Handwriting
- Meaning

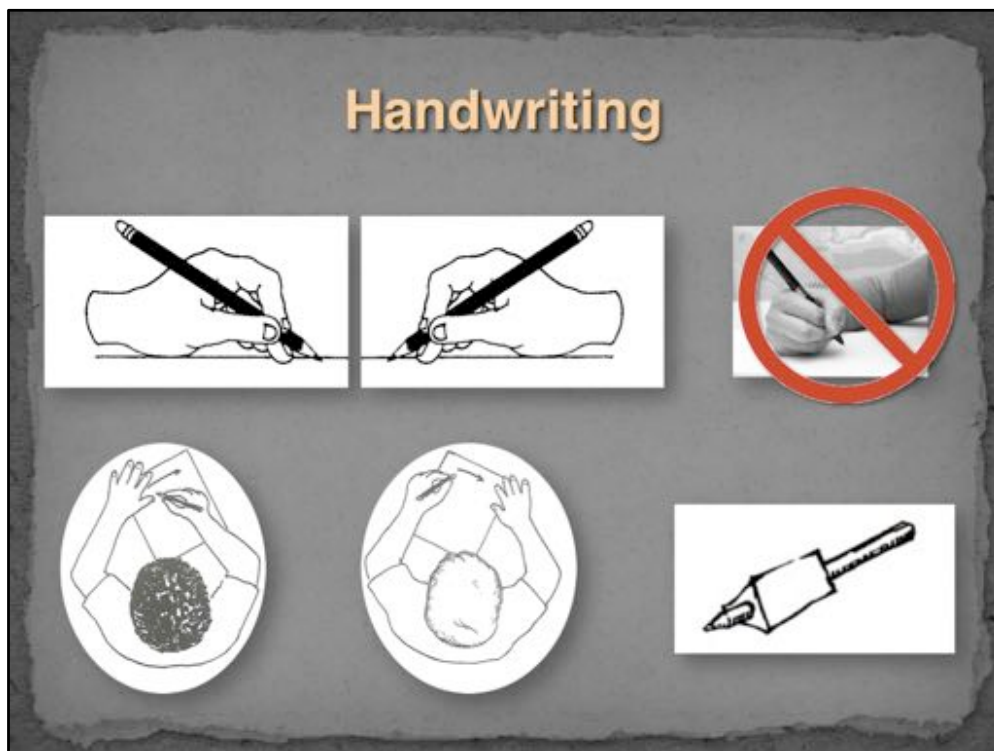
## According to the Script

a handbook for  
*biscriptal* learners of  
English



Pauline Bunce





Basics first – don't assume them

Posture - Paper placement - Grip

Try – triangular pencils and pens – or even special “grips”

When is it appropriate to write in PENCIL/PEN? This may vary across ‘school cultures’. (Americans still use pencils in high school writing.)

Forms may even require a BLACK PEN and BLOCK LETTERS.

IMAGES:

Sassoon, R. (1995). *The Acquisition of a Second Writing System*. Oxford: Intellect Books.

Sassoon, R. (2012). *Improve Your Handwriting*. London: Teach Yourself Books.

### 3. Handwriting - Discussion

- How important is handwriting?
- How much time do you give it?

*Students will certainly notice whether we value it  
– as their former teachers surely did –*

DISCUSSION THREE  
2 – 3 mins





## Haptic Dissonance

*"It doesn't feel quite right."*

**Haptic dissonance** is that uncertain feeling you get when you have to change a touching or a manipulating skill.

**Writing a word** – last letter first

**Writing with your non-preferred hand**

**Mirror writing** – à la Leonardo da Vinci

*It feels weird - and it's tiring -  
- visually, cognitively and physically.*



We have all had to use our non-preferred hand at some stage. It takes a while to adapt.

Our brains may need to make new connections and forge new pathways.

We feel a kind of frustration in knowing what to do, but not being able to do it easily – or neatly.

Some say that this is good for us – e.g. the proponents of "Brain Gym".

## Directionality and word boundaries

- **Direction:** Left-to-right? Right-to-left? Vertical?
- **'Word' boundaries:** Not always marked directly, e.g.

Burmese  
Karen  
Chinese  
Japanese  
Lao  
Thai

*These L1 factors will influence  
the readers' habitual eye  
movements – and their  
approaches to punctuation.*

Khmer – spaces act as punctuation

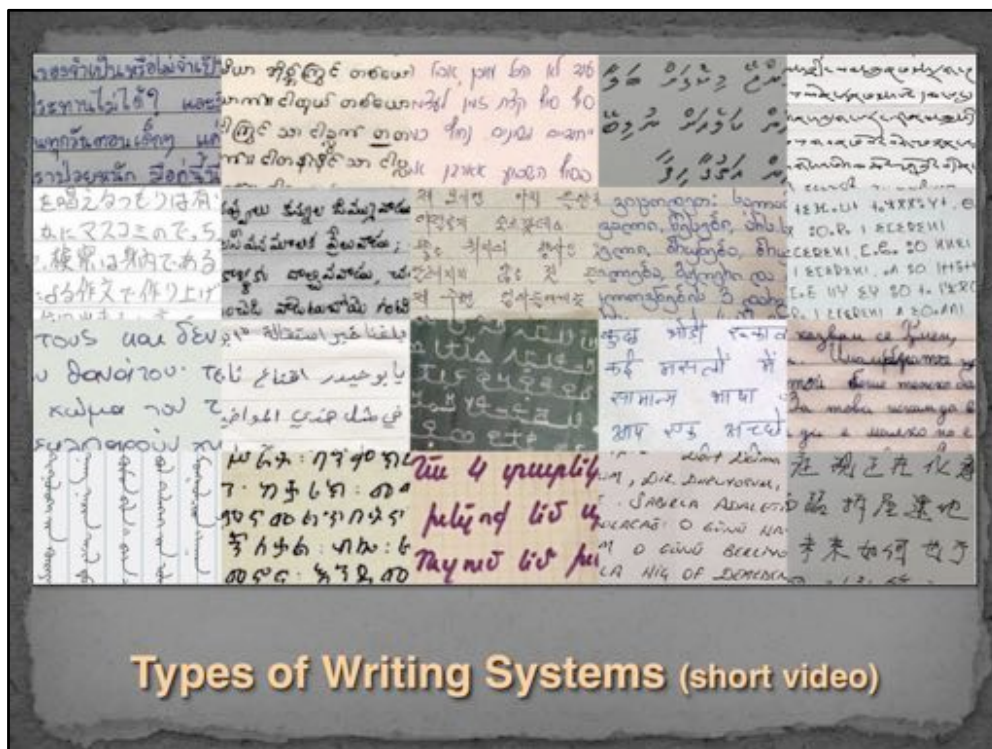
Ge'ez – uses a dot system to separate phrases

What is a WORD?

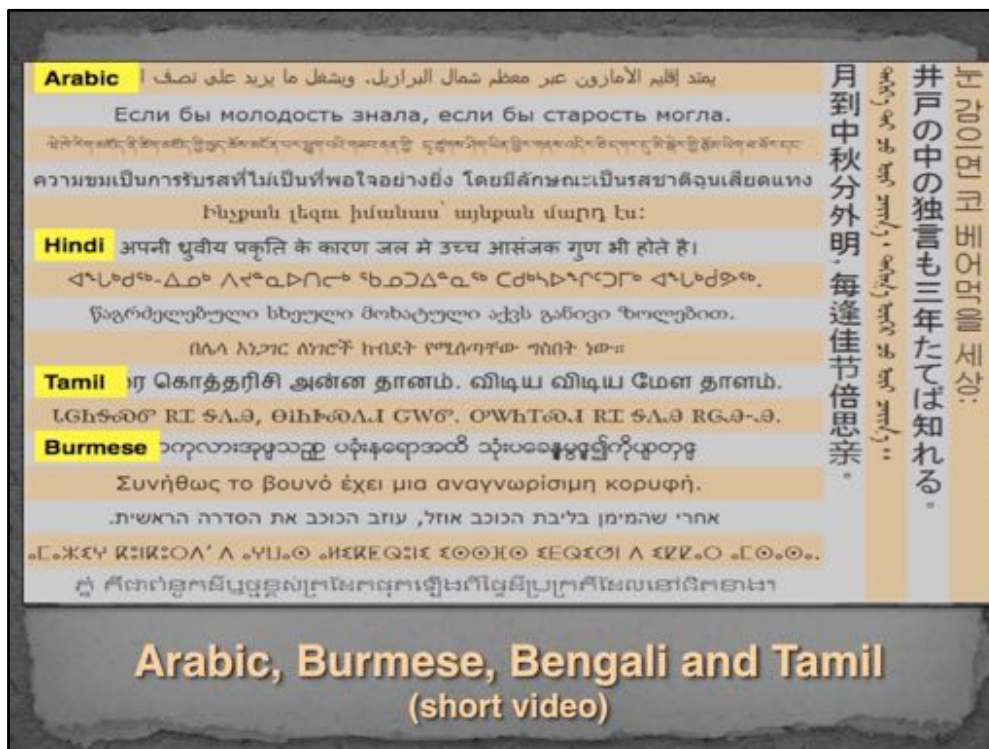
In English – words exist between the spaces.

Spaces are used differently in other scripts.

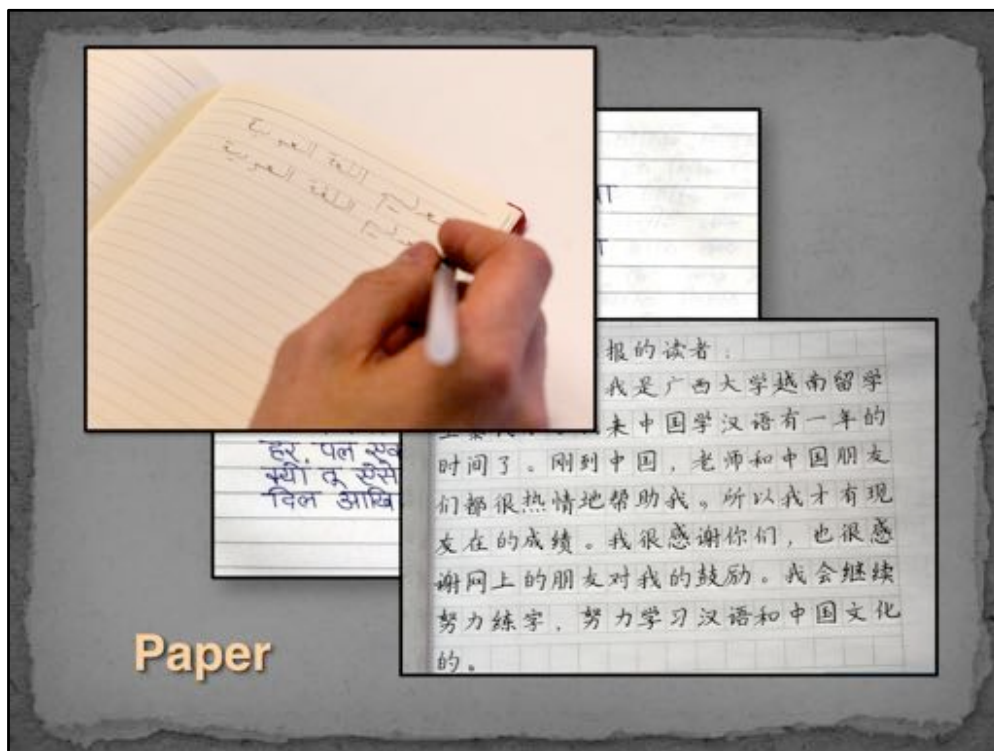
SPACING influences EYE MOVEMENTS. NEW eye movements will be required.



A very FAST video – abjads, alphabets, abugidas, syllabaries, logographs etc.  
 Excerpt from YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ab9tGLyJBRw>  
 [Creating a Writing System, Artifexian, 17 Aug. 2016]



IMAGES: <http://scripts.sil.org>  
(excerpt from animations on this website that show the formation of these scripts)



Other writing systems may use different forms of notepaper – and use lines / boxes differently.

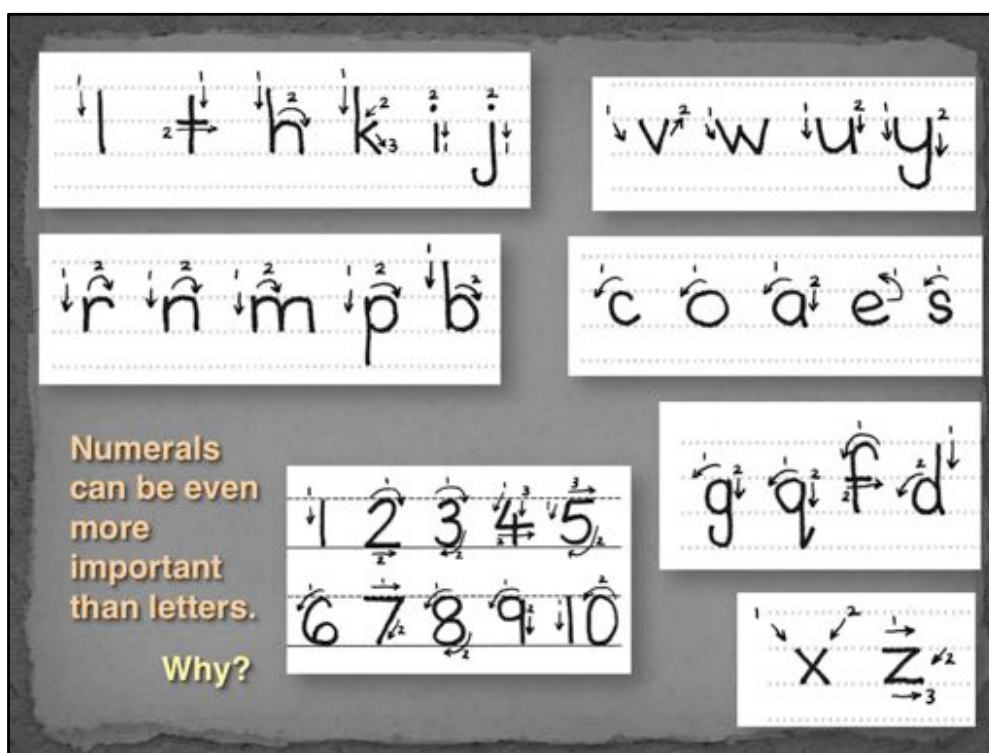
Arabic – from the “back”

This affects students’ FILING behaviour and COMFORT.



LEFT: Character for WINE.  
Right: ALWAYS, FOREVER.





Learners: Are they aware of on-the-line, above-the-line and below-the-line strokes? “Families” of similarly constructed letters?

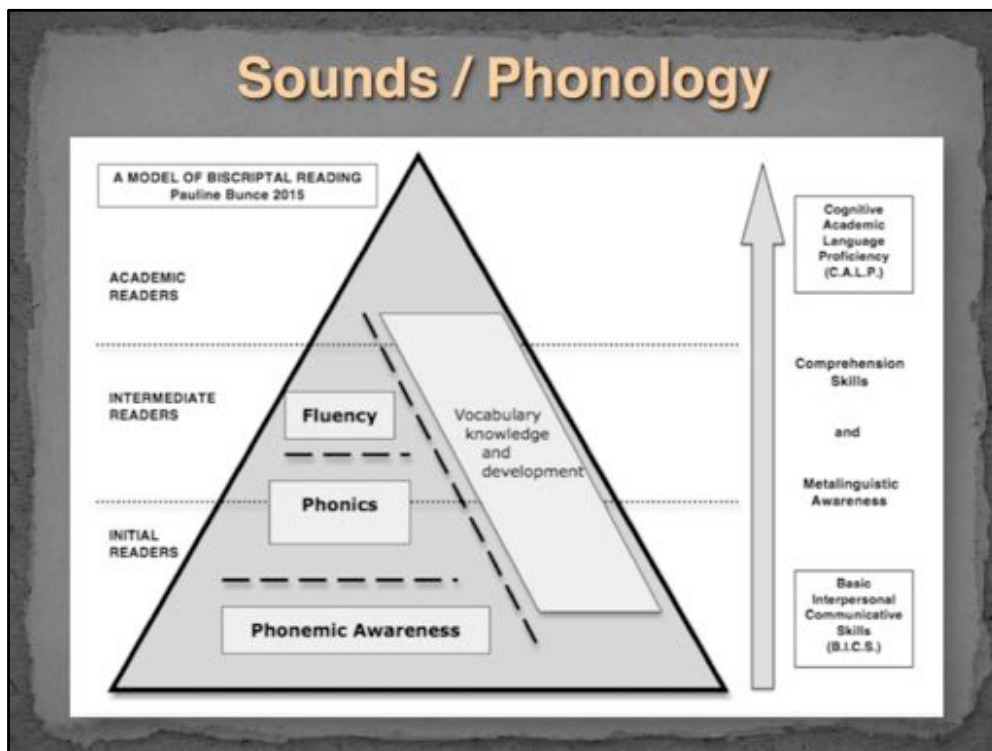
Look for opportunities to “write well” – write something to another class, send Congratulations/Thank You notes to someone. Invite them to write in BIG letters on the board. Copy something you’ve written. Read the handwriting of OTHER STUDENTS.

[In Arabic, 5 looks like a zero, 4 looks like a three, and 0 is a dot. Decimal points and commas for thousands may be different as well.

Too many 4s look like a U. Fives may lack the vertical stroke. One may look like seven. HK students write 9 backwards.]

Numbers can be even more critical than letters – if they are misread. They are frequently required on forms – in small spaces.

IMAGE: P.Bunce



My model

EALD learners doing “everything at once”.

Impossible to quarantine each skill-set.

P. Bunce (2016). According to the Script.

**Phonemic Awareness**  
is the ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds, or phonemes, in *spoken words*.

**ay**  
**day**  
**play**

**Phonics**  
involves learning the relationships between sounds and *written symbols, or graphemes*.

**PHONeMiC AWAreNeSS**  
You cAN do it  
IN the dArK

PHONEMIC AWARENESS – has been found by numerous researchers to be the best **predictor of future reading success**.

Unless our learners **have fine-tuned their listening skills** to the tiny, minute level of distinguishing between phonemes, they will struggle to **read and spell** in an alphabetic system.

Such fine tuning is especially important (and often difficult) for speakers (and writers) of **syllable-based languages (and scripts)**.

\*\*\* This is a particular challenge for Chinese-language speakers.

## English operates at the level of the *phoneme*

*He endured the holiday - vs - He enjoyed the holiday*  
*Fourteen dollars - vs - Forty dollars*  
*She didn't - vs - She did it*

### **BUT - biscriptal English language learners**

- may have come from syllabic-language backgrounds
- do not have the vocabularies of L1 English-speakers

*∴ are not ready for phonics instruction ... Not yet.*

Small differences can change meanings markedly.

Phonemic Awareness – the best predictor of later reading skills.

When mis-hearing occurs – stop and examine closely – e.g. pupil / purple / people – “normal clothes” vs. “no more clothes” (my recent examples)

## A Phonemic Awareness Quiz

1. How many syllables are there in *reading* ? 2
2. How many syllables are there in *education* ? 4
3. How many syllables are there in *instruction* ? 3
4. How many sounds are there in *church* ? 3
5. How many sounds are there in *catch* ? 3
6. How many sounds are there in *box* ? 4
7. What is the 2<sup>nd</sup> sound in *queen* ? / w /
8. What is the 3<sup>rd</sup> sound in *season* ? / z /
9. What is the word '*think*' without the /k/ ? thing
10. Is there an /l/ sound in the word '*walk*' ? No

IDEALLY – this should be completely AURAL / ORAL – not printed like this.  
Phonemic Awareness – the ABSENCE of print.  
Answers revealed, Q by Q.

## Phonemic Awareness

= oral and aural skills

An instructional sequence -

1. Syllable awareness



2. Isolating single sounds

3. S-e-g-m-e-n-t-i-n-g and *blending* sounds

4. Manipulating sounds



5. Introduce print:

44 sounds and 26 letters → Phonics

Steps in Awareness building – counting – isolating – pulling apart – putting together – substituting.

ALL BEFORE PRINT. (ideally)





Now – let's try to work out the pronunciation of these "new words".

[Names revealed one-by-one.]

DISCUSSION \_ HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

Chunking – words inside words – familiar elements – related words – Latin awareness/knowledge

## A sequence for Phonics instruction

1. Present the “big picture”
  - a chart of all 44 sounds
2. Consonants and short vowels first
  - voiced and unvoiced pairs + rimes
  - other consonants
  - short vowels, CVC words
  - consonant digraphs - *ch-, sh-, th-*
  - consonant blends - *fr-, gl-, str-, -nt, -sk*
3. Vowels – longer ones
  - the role of final ‘e’
  - short- long vowel pairs
  - the schwa
  - diphthongs
  - spelling options



|     |      |
|-----|------|
| bĭt | bĭte |
| căp | căpe |

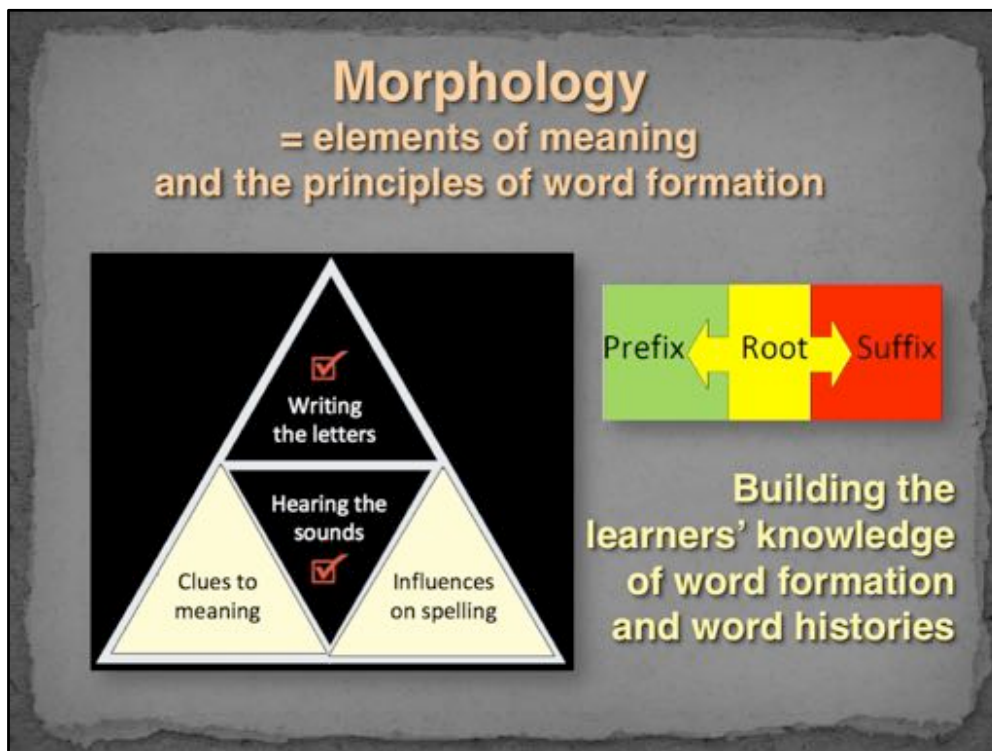
The “big picture” is important for biscriptal learners – it is reassuring.  
Have charts available in the room.  
THRASS? Other?

I discourage using the IPA.  
Why? IT’S ANOTHER ALPHABET!

## 4. DISCUSSION

- How much time and space do you give to Phonemic Awareness and Phonics work ... especially with students who are educated and highly literate in different scripts?
- What are some constraints?

DISCUSSION FOUR  
3 – 5 mins



Morphology – elements of meaning – principles of word formation  
Word knowledge – how to “dissect” words – word detectives

English words are *not* 'one offs'

**WORD ROOT OF THE DAY:**  
**RUPT** (break)  
 ORIGIN: Latin, *rumpere*, *ruptus* ("break")

**corrupt:** crooked; immoral  
**erupt:** to burst forth  
**rupture:** to break or burst  
**disrupt:** to cause disorder  
**abrupt:** sudden  
**bankrupt:** having no money; "broke"  
**interrupt:** to cause a break in the flow

tract  
pull, drag, draw

abstract


protract

retract

en - courage - ment  
 dis - - ous - ly

transportation  
 transporting  
 transported  
 transports  
 transport

port

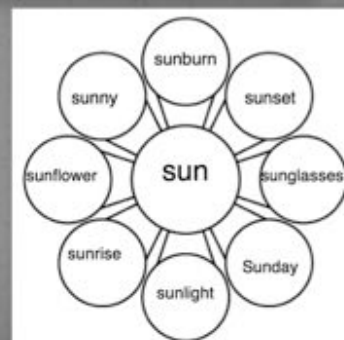
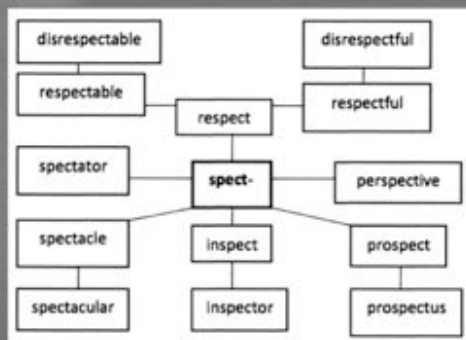


Especially for CHINESE learners – they need to know that ALL WORDS HAVE FAMILIES.

Families – grammatical endings, Root words, affixes, compounds

IMAGES: <http://www.theyuniversity.net>

| NOUN                                                                                                               | VERB                                                                                   | ADJECTIVE                                                                                                    | ADVERB                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| e.g. <i>finalist</i><br><i>construction</i><br><i>happiness</i><br><i>friend</i><br><i>child</i><br><i>sadness</i> | e.g. <i>finalise</i><br><i>construct</i><br>-<br><i>befriend</i><br>-<br><i>sadden</i> | e.g. <i>final</i><br><i>constructive</i><br><i>happy</i><br><i>friendly</i><br><i>childish</i><br><i>sad</i> | e.g. <i>finally</i><br><i>constructively</i><br><i>happily</i><br>-<br><i>childishly</i><br><i>sadly</i> |
| -ance    -ist                                                                                                      | -en    -es                                                                             | -able    -istic                                                                                              | -ly    -ically                                                                                           |
| -ancy    -ion                                                                                                      | -ify    -ed                                                                            | -ible    -y                                                                                                  | -wise    -edly                                                                                           |
| -ence    -er                                                                                                       | -ise    -ivate                                                                         | -al    -ual                                                                                                  | -ently    -ably                                                                                          |
| -ation    -ment                                                                                                    | -ate    -ed                                                                            | -ful    -less                                                                                                | -fully    -ibly                                                                                          |
| -ian    -ship                                                                                                      | en-                                                                                    | -ive    -ed                                                                                                  | -lessly    -ually                                                                                        |
| -ism    -ness                                                                                                      | be-                                                                                    | -ish    -ous                                                                                                 |                                                                                                          |



FAMILIES of words.

IMAGES:

Henry, m. (2006). *Unlocking Literacy: Effective Decoding and Spelling Instruction*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

P. Bunce



## Academic vocabulary – too often assumed

1. analyze approach area assess assume  
authority available benefit concept consist  
context constitute contract data define  
derive distribute economy environment  
establish estimate evident factor finance  
formula function income indicate individual  
interpret involve issue labor legal legislate  
major method occur percent period  
principle proceed process policy require  
research respond role section sector  
significant similar source specific  
structure theory vary



**Learners need  
to become 'word  
detectives' -  
- taking the time  
to look *closely*  
into new words**

**This is Set One (of ten) from the  
"570 Academic Word List"**

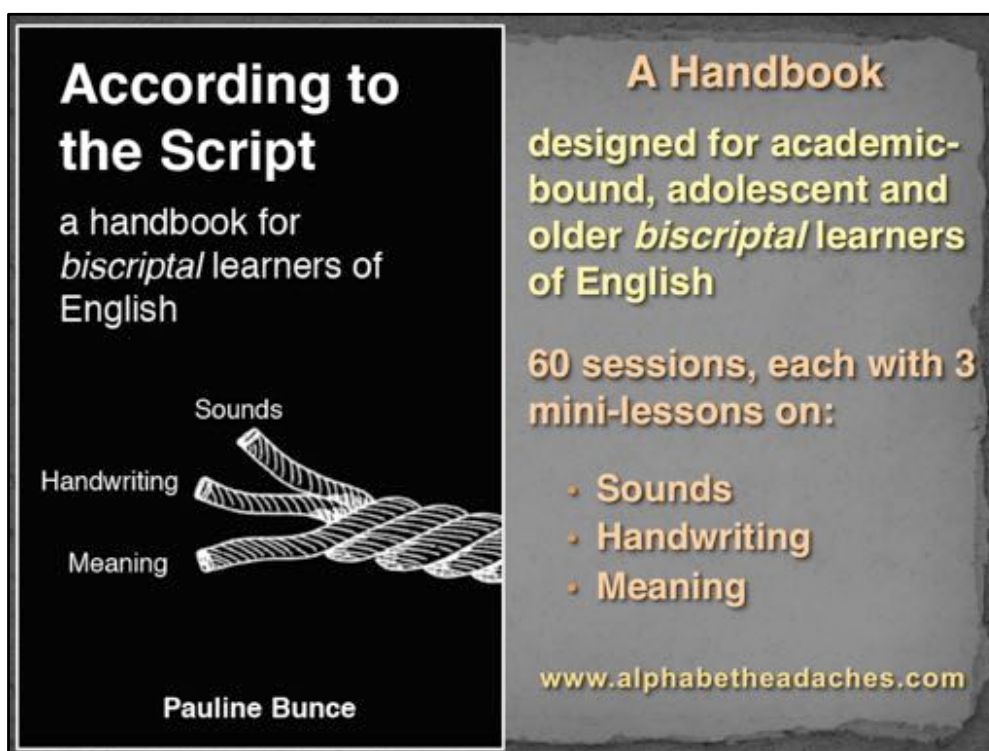
570 Academic Words –

Available from:

THIS LIST: taken from: <http://www.monet.k12.ca.us/curriculum/EnglishLA/teachers/AcademicWordFamilyList.pdf>

ALL BASED ON:

Coxhead, Averil. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 213-238.



This project has grown out of my doctoral research in Hong Kong with secondary-level Chinese students, and their teachers.

I have called this publication a HANDBOOK – because it is not really a PROGRAMME or a TEXTBOOK or a WORKBOOK.

While it has aspects of each of these, it is a collection of activities that are designed to provide adult-level awareness of three aspects of the English ALPHABETIC SCRIPT. It is designed to be “dipped into”, judiciously ---

Bunce, P. (2016). According to the Script. Online publication. Available at:  
[www.alphabetheheadaches.com/bookstore.html](http://www.alphabetheheadaches.com/bookstore.html)  
ISBN: 9780646953328 AUD 15.00.

## Further reading

- Adoniou, M. 2016. *Spell it Out: How words work and how to teach them*. Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Bassetti, B. 2013. Bilingualism and writing systems. In Bhatia, T.K. & Ritchie, W.C. (eds). *The Handbook of Bilingualism and Multilingualism*. Blackwell.
- Birch, B. 2002. *English L2 Reading: Getting to the Bottom*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bunce, P. 2016. The English Alphabet: Alpha-best or Alpha-beast? In Bunce, P., Phillipson, R., Rapatahana, V. & Tupas, R. (eds). *Why English? Confronting the Hydra*. Multilingual Matters.
- Bunce, P. 2017. Biscrptal English Learners: A 'blindspot' in global English language teaching. In Borjian, M. (ed.). *Perspectives on Language and Globalization: An Autoethnographical Approach*. Routledge.
- Sassoon, R. 1995. *The Acquisition of a Second Writing System*. Intellect.

Bassetti – many articles, but not often picked up by ‘mainstream’ TESOL journals  
Sassoon – only PRACTICAL book on biscrptal writers  
Bunce (2017) – biscrptals as a “blindspot” in ELT.



DISCUSSION – copies of “According to the Script” on tables.