

12/6/33

MEMORANDUM

The following selection of research proposals is related to the general statement of the Basic English Project which accompanies them and provides an explanatory setting. References are given to the pages in question.

I BASIC ENGLISH*

Though the linguistic principles which made the Basic system possible were fully established more than six years ago, the process of development has necessarily been slow. Until such a system had been tested in detail over a lengthy period it would have been unreasonable to expect support from outside sources. What might have been accomplished in two years with an adequate staff has therefore occupied three times that period; but it is hoped that the research still awaiting completion may now be sufficiently accelerated to render it of value to the different University departments and educational organizations which have already applied to us for assistance. In particular the work on which we must next be engaged has an important bearing on the requirements of the African Department of the School of Oriental Studies.

A grant of \$5,000 a year for a period of three years would enable us to concentrate on essentials of grammatical analysis and classification which might otherwise be postponed indefinitely. Total \$15,000.

*General Statement, pp.16-17

II THE LANGUAGE BARRIER IN THE FAR EAST *

The events of the past year have brought home to the entire world the direct bearing on World Peace of the lack of adequate means of communication between East and West.

The acceptance of the Basic solution by many of the most eminent educationists of Japan is a hopeful sign. English is already compulsory in all the higher schools of Japan, but the present five-year course to which over 2,000,000 of the Japanese youth have been subjected has failed lamentably. Professor ^{Y.}Okakura, who worked with Basil Hall Chamberlain in the early days of the movement in favour of English, has now adopted the Basic plan, and is the official representative of the Orthological Institute in Tokyo. The support of Professor Ichikawa, of the Imperial University of Tokyo, has also been secured; and Professor Doi of Sendai has already based his new texts on the 850-word vocabulary. In Kyoto, Dr. Nakaseko of Doshisha University has started a "Basic English Monthly", and is producing supplements in Basic to the journals which he edits; and Professor Okamoto of the College of Commerce has written a Basic course for his own students.

The movement will therefore proceed largely on its own momentum at the ordinary educational level, even against the anticipated opposition of professional English teachers trained in the orthodox grammatical and literary traditions.

Meanwhile the chief need is the preparation of adequate Dictionary material.

During the last ten years the Japanese have succeeded in producing some fairly reliable English-Japanese lexicography; notably the Ichikawa equivalent of the smaller Oxford volumes. The parallel Japanese-English material is still lacking, for the simple reason (which respect for the hard-working Japanese scholars, who are naturally sensitive on such a

point, has generally concealed), that no one is capable of undertaking this very much more difficult task without English assistance.

Co-operation between the older generation of linguists and educationists is precluded by the natural Japanese resentment of advisory experts - in which capacity most English and American teachers have hitherto been imported by the rigid official administration. Basic English, however, affords the necessary opportunity for a rapprochement, since it is legitimate, in adapting a new system, to seek the advice of foreign experts - particularly those of the younger generation who have studied it chiefly from a sense of its value for international understanding.

The experience of the American Branch of the Institute of Pacific Relations would here be of the greatest value, and every opportunity would be taken of co-operating with the New York office of the Institute. In particular, it would be desirable for those engaged on the task of translation and adaptation to visit New York, during the summer of 1933, prior to the Banff Conference in order to take advantage of the personal contacts available and to carry forward the work in accordance with a joint program for 1934.

Throughout the present winter, Professor Takata of Tokyo is working at the Orthological Institute at the request of Professor Okakura; and the services of our translation department have been placed at his disposal.

Mr. A. P. Rossiter, who was Instructor in English at the Imperial Naval College, Etajima, from 1928 to summer of 1932, will be available for full-time research as at January 1, 1933. During his five years in Japan he made a thorough study of Basic in relation to Japanese requirements; and while still at Etajima completed the translation of Poe's 'Gold Bug' to serve as a Reader in Japanese schools. He is a scholar of first class attainments with a scientific background; and while in Japan he acquired a knowledge of colloquial Japanese which is invaluable for purposes of interpretation. He

is at present closely in touch with Dr. I. A. Richards at Cambridge, and has collaborated in Tokyo with Mr. Daniels, while the latter was at the British Embassy.

For Dictionary purposes the assistance of Mr. Daniels would be essential; and when he passed through New York on his return to England in October of this year, it was ascertained that he too would be prepared to continue his researches. Mr. Daniels was employed in the British Embassy as an expert on the Japanese language with special reference to economic technicalities. His wife being Japanese, he is willing to return in due course to Japan to collaborate with Professor Okakura if required. Before leaving Japan, he discussed with the Japanese advocates of Basic a scheme for a Japanese Basic Dictionary which gained their entire approval; and his method of treating multiple definitions in Japanese is also in harmony with that adopted by Dr. Richards and Mr. Rossiter in Cambridge.

With the addition of these two researchers to our staff we would therefore be in a position to assist the many Japanese students now working at English Universities, under the general supervision of our various associates in Japan, to acquire an adequate mastery of Basic; and so to build up an association of younger teachers whose influence will work steadily for the reform of English teaching.

Furthermore, by enlisting the interest of Dr. Richards, it will be possible to keep in view the application of the work at a later date to the more intricate problems of interpretation presented by Chinese; and to secure from Dr. Richards himself at least a ground plan of his own project for a Chinese Dictionary on modern lines.

The expert advice of two other persons with special knowledge of the problems of Far Eastern Communication would be necessary to complete the initial survey before the end of 1933. These are Mr. C. L. T. Griffiths who has made a study of the problems connected with Chinese typewriters

and other means of simplifying communication; and Mr. S. L. Salzedo, one of the official interpreters to the London Law Courts who has a working knowledge of more than twenty languages. Both have frequently been consulted by the Orthological Institute during the past four years, and it would be desirable again to avail ourselves of their collaboration.

The cost of carrying out the above project would be as follows.

To enable Professor Takata, of Tokyo, to continue his work in conjunction with Professor Okakura in Japan	\$ 2,500	
Services of an assistant	500	
To enable Mr. A. P. Rossiter to continue his work (in collaboration with Professor Okakura of St. Paul's University, Tokyo, and Mr. Daniels of the British Embassy, Tokyo) on the simplification of English teaching in the Far East; with special reference to Japan	2,500	
Travel expenses to New York (1933)		500*
To enable Mr. Daniels to continue his work on a Basic-Japanese Dictionary and other problems of Interpretation (in collaboration with A. P. Rossiter, and Dr. I. S. Richards (1933))	2,000	
Travel expenses to New York (1933)		500*
Advice of Dr. Richards (1933)		1,500*
To enable Mr. S. L. Salzedo to complete his work on international terms necessary for communication with Russia and the Far East		500*
To enable Mr. C. L. T. Griffith to continue his work on methods of simplifying communication with the East (1933)		500*
To enable Dr. I. A. Richards, Mr. C. K. Ogden, and Miss L. W. Lockhart to visit New York at the same time as Mr. Rossiter and Mr. Daniels, to confer with the Institute of Pacific Relations (1933)		1,500*
Services of a Research Assistant for the correlation of these various inquiries	2,000	
Secretarial work, postage, etc.	500	
	10,000	
Additional for 1933		5,000
TOTAL FOR THREE YEAR RESEARCH	\$35,000	

III INTERNATIONAL STANDARDIZATION *

Parallel with this work on the language of everyday life should go the investigation of the borderland scientific vocabularies which depend on international standardization. The absence of international terminologies and nomenclatures in so many branches of science is hardly less disastrous for communication between Eastern and Western peoples than for the progress of science itself. The European scientist may still be able to master the three or four languages in which research in his own special line is chiefly recorded, though in some fields at least twenty languages are now involved. There are many American institutions which are forced to waste upwards of \$100,000 a year on translating for abstracts alone.

To the student of science in Japan or China, this preoccupation with languages has no redeeming feature. He can seldom profit by his linguistic virtuosity as a visitor to Europe; and it is still not easy to decide which of the three leading languages of science will place him at the least disadvantage. For whatever language he uses a vocabulary of at least 20,000 words, below the level of international terminology, is necessary before he can master the contents of a normal scientific journal; and even then, the technical terms of one language will generally differ fundamentally from those of a colleague who has selected a different European medium. Hence the tendency to create yet other technical vocabularies, special to each of the great Eastern languages. And so the barriers between peoples, even in the realm of 'international' science grow yearly more formidable, and the problem of standardization yearly more insoluble.

That a start should be made somewhere is essential. And it is equally urgent that it should be made soon in the interests of Western science. Those who know European conditions from within know that the impetus is not likely to come from Europe. In Europe, the English-speaking peoples

*General statement p. 21

are a minority; but in the world at large the language of England and America combined is already the second language of more than 60% of all who actually attempt to communicate with other nationals. It is to America that English owes its position as more than a mere European dialect. It is from America that the first move must come toward the standardization of English, and thereby of European, scientific terminology. Any move in this direction will be welcomed by all men of good will in Europe; and in the East, where Basic can solve the entire problem of communication for those whose interest is chiefly in science (rather than in literature or travel) it will be still more welcome.

A preliminary inquiry has revealed an unexpected field of opportunity in America. In every branch of science covered by the inquiry, the urgency of the need has been emphasized by the most active and influential workers, and co-operation has been promised if skeleton machinery could be brought into being.

The first essential is a Basic English office in New York to take the initial steps and to correlate the material, during a two year period in the first instance.

A comprehensive survey of the forces and agencies working in favour of International Communication would first be necessary. This could be undertaken during 1933 with two objects:

- (a) The formation of an Anglo-American Committee to make recommendations on points where English and American usage diverge.

The primary objective would here be to reach some measure of agreement for purposes of Radio news and announcements; and it would be necessary to constitute a provisional Committee in New York to co-operate with the Language Advisory Committee of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

With the assurance that such co-operation would be forthcoming on the American side, it would be possible to consult Mr. Lloyd-James as to the next moves.

The suggestion arose out of a conference at the Orthological Institute in the spring of 1932, between Professor Okakura, of Tokyo, Mr. Lloyd-James of the School of Oriental Studies, and the advocates of Basic English for Radio News. Professor Okakura pointed out the difficulties encountered in a country like Japan when confronted by deviations in the usage of English and American teachers in the same school or university. The absence of any authoritative pronouncement (even to the effect that either of two conflicting locutions is permissible) militates against the spread of English as a World language in every country. The absence of rulings as to the forms to be adopted for foreign titles, as to the pronunciation of place names, or as to the standard of intelligibility desirable in Radio, militate against the diffusion of English in foreign countries at the present time; and will result in hasty improvizations when short-wave transmission puts England and America more closely in touch. The Orthological Institute has recently embarked on an elaborate study of the titles and descriptions most frequent in European Radio news; and has also issued a world-wide questionnaire on the subject of the present status of English and the intelligibility of certain presumably international terms, in conjunction with the New Education Fellowship. The generalization of such inquiries to cover America, by consultation with American Radio educators, is highly desirable.

- (b) The international standardization of scientific terminology at the level above that at which the Basic vocabulary is effective.

The inquiry would here be concerned chiefly with Medicine, Engineering, Aeronautics, and Legal Codification.

In Medicine, advice and support has been offered by Dr. Linsly Williams, President of the New York Academy of Medicine, and by Dr. Morris Fishbein at the American Medical Association Publications office in Chicago. In conjunction with Dr. George H. Simmons, Dr. Fishbein has already published a study of the Art and Practice of Medical Writing which lacks only the technique of standardization to render it of international value. With the aid of the collaborators of the Orthological Institute among members of the Royal College of Physicians in London, and the Public Health Department of the League of Nations, a lead could be given at a comparatively early date to the great variety of Medical Congresses now faced by difficult problems of standardization and nomenclature.

For Engineering, generous assistance has been given by Mr. O. C. Merrill, Chairman of the American Committee of the World Power Congress, Mr. Calvin Rice of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and other valuable contacts. More than thirty useful sources of information have been indicated, and Professor Matsawo Kamo, of the Imperial University, Tokyo, Vice-President of the World Power Conference 1936, has promised his assistance for enlisting the support of scientists in the Far East.

The dangers of air-travel in the absence of any common means of communication have been emphasized by Dr. Walter Angermund of the Deutsche Lufthansa, in advocating English as the international language of the Air. British and American organizations interested in the development of Aeronautics should be encouraged to make some tangible response to this generous gesture.

The word 'international' was itself invented for the science of international Law by Jeremy Bentham, whose attention was occupied by researches on the principles of Codification for nearly sixty years. Most of this work is quite unknown to those now engaged on the revision of American Law; and the work of the American lawyers who have added to our knowledge of the linguistic problems involved in any modern attempt at Codification are equally neglected in Europe. Basic English developed in part out of Bentham's linguistic analysis, and increasingly supported by legal reformers in America -- provides a via media for further research; and it also opens the way to that popular understanding of legal enactments on which any rational system of civics must ultimately be based. The expenses under this head would be approximately as follows:

To American office, rent	\$1,000	
Secretary	4,000	
Other expenses	<u>1,500</u>	\$ 6,500
To survey of forces and agencies making for International Communication	5,000	
Travelling Expenses	<u>1,500</u>	6,500
Special liaison work		
(a) in Medicine	2,000	
(b) in Engineering	2,000	
(c) in Aeronautics	1,500	
(d) in Law	<u>1,500</u>	<u>7,000</u>
Total 1933		20,000
Total 1934		<u>10,000</u>
		\$30,000

IV ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF LANGUAGES *

Grant for a preliminary survey of the field
and preparation of a detailed program-
prospectus

\$3,000

*General Statement p. 18