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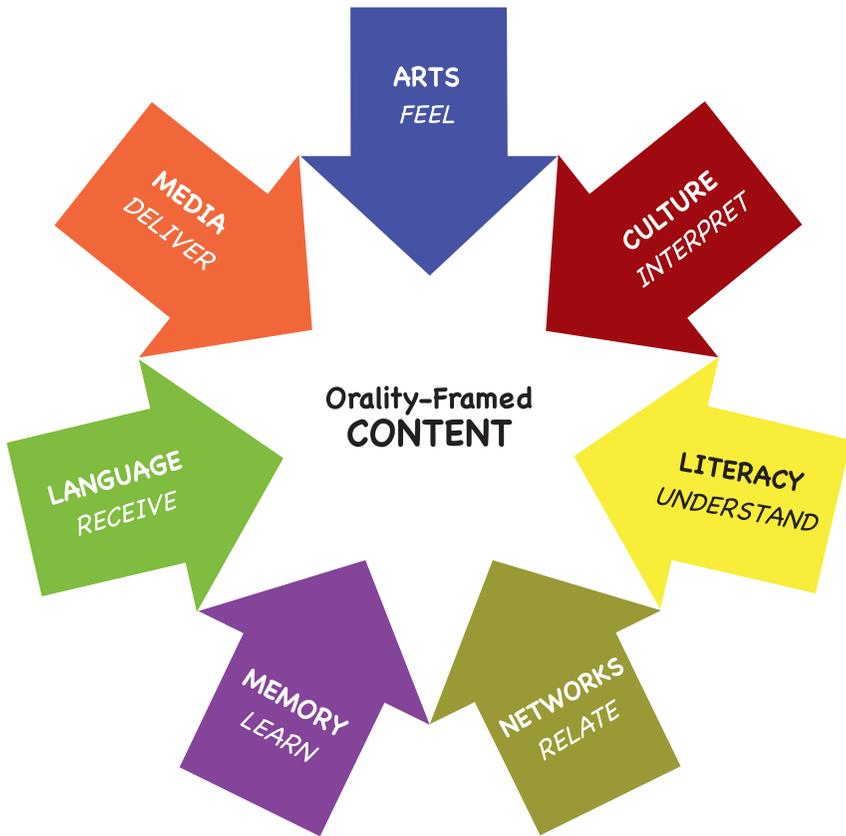
The Word Became Fresh



The Seven Disciplines of Orality

Madinger • Snead • Gravelle • Moon • Getz
Handley • Logan • Swarr • Koch • Williams • Rye

SEVEN DISCIPLINES OF ORALITY: A Holistic Model



Courtesy of Dr. Chuck Madinger who leads Global Impact Mission and serves on the International Orality Network's Leadership Team facilitating the Research Task Force.

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Cover Photo

Uniskript can be traced back to 1446 when King Sejong launched the Korean alphabet which triggered a literacy revolution in Korea. In 2002 Korean linguist Dr. Kim Cho shared her doctorate discoveries on the ancient alphabet at the University of the Nations. The basic idea was then further developed by a team of innovators from the University of the Nations. As a result, the letters were redefined and a technique created to generate new alphabets that are both attractive and relevant.

The art—visual and font creation—is all derived from within the culture, thus providing greater opportunities for natural embracement than an alphabet that might be imported from outside of one's culture.

As we watch the development of Uniskript, which had its roots in a phonic system from the mid-1400s, we are reminded just how much the digital era is mimicking and borrowing from the pre-Gutenberg era.

Among the gods there is none like you, Lord;
no deeds can compare with yours.
All the nations you have made
will come and worship before you, Lord;
they will bring glory to your name.
For you are great and do marvelous deeds;
you alone are God.

Psalm 86:8—10 (NIV)

Orality Journal

The Word Became Fresh

Orality Journal is the journal of the International Orality Network. It is published online semi-annually and aims to provide a platform for scholarly discourse on the issues of orality, discoveries of innovations in orality, and praxis of effectiveness across multiple domains in society. This online journal is international and interdisciplinary, serving the interests of the orality movement through research articles, documentation, book reviews, and academic news. Occasionally, print editions will be provisioned. Submission of items that could contribute to the furtherance of the orality movement is welcomed.

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Editor's Note

Samuel E. Chiang

More Textual / Digital Possibilities Please

When my family moved to Canada as immigrants, I was in my early teens and I knew only the Roman alphabet and seven English phrases that my grandfather had taught me. On the UNESCO “illiteracy to literacy” continuum, I fitted nicely into the illiterate category as a young immigrant in Canada. On the orality continuum (see Lovejoy 2012), which includes learners from those who are exclusively oral to highly textual/digital, and who by necessity or by choice prefer to learn in an oral manner, I was and still am an oral preference learner.

As an eager immigrant, I sought to learn English with gusto. But the Roman alphabet for the English language seemed arbitrary to me, and spelling of words did not always make logical sense. It was bad enough that I could not exercise intuition in the language acquisition effort, but I was lost because logic could not be readily applied to make words and sentences. I wished there was some way in which I could see the link between sound, symbols, and the writing system, so that I could progress along the UNESCO literacy continuum a little quicker.

Decades later, I believe there is now an in-between system which will move people more quickly into textual and language acquisition. The developers of this innovative system call this Uniskript[®].¹

While working on her doctoral studies in linguistics, Ms. Sek Yen Kim-Cho discovered the applicability of the Korean *Hangeul* alphabet system (see <http://sejong-nurigle.com/>). This system was developed by King Sejong (1397-1450), and put into place in 1446 for the Korean people (see page 3 of http://sejong-nurigle.com/uploads/14_Nurigle_Project_Proposal.pdf). Innovators used the principles of the *Hangeul* system and developed Uniskript.

Uniskript is developed from a set of proto-symbols: a rectangle representing the lips; a triangle representing the tip of the tongue; one to three lines representing how wide the mouth opens for the generation of vowel sounds, and so on. Whereas the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA,

<http://www.langsci.ucl.ac.uk/ipa/>) covers all phones (the sounds possible within human language), Uniskript² is fitted to each language as it is developed, only covering the relevant phonemes (sounds possible within a *specific* language).

The difference between the Roman alphabet and Uniskript may be comparable to that of varying symbols used on public restrooms. Consider two washroom doors, the symbol ♂ on one and ♀ on the other. Most people will consider it common knowledge that the first symbol signals male gender and the second signals female gender, but these signs are completely arbitrary and perhaps difficult to remember. In fact, these symbols are created based on a high acquisition of literacy skills. On the other hand, one door with the icon of a man and another door with the icon of a woman in a skirt would be more intuitive (across *most* cultures), because the symbol corresponds directly to what it represents.

Uniskript is not meant to replace any already-existing alphabet; it is simply meant to introduce literacy in a variety of settings.

What Are the Applications of Uniskript, and Where Is It Going?

The innovators are already launching test trials, academic experiments, and scalable study groups to implement Uniskript into different domains. Consider the following.

Reading. Uniskript can be used as an introduction to reading, because it helps people see the correlation between symbol and sound. Uniskript teaches symbols (icons) that correspond to symbols (phones) in a way that makes sense. This process is called *iconophonological* or *icono-feratural*. Uniskript is unique in that a visual translates directly to sound. Furthermore, the art—visual and font creation—is all derived from within the culture, thus providing greater opportunities for natural embracement than an alphabet that might be imported from outside of one’s culture. The implications for oral preference learners are huge, including those who are highly textual/digital.

Children. Children sometimes have difficulty learning to read because the Roman alphabet is arbitrary, providing no intuitive connection between sound and symbol. Uniskript can accelerate the reading process by making

a clear visual representation of how and where sounds are made. Children then understand how an alphabet represents sounds. Can we dream of what might be possible with biblical literacy?

Dyslexia. Current focus group studies and trials in the English language, it is already demonstrating that the deployment of Uniskript as a tool to introduce the concept of an alphabet to a child produces different outcomes. The alphabet avoids any mirror images that might create confusion as to what sound is meant to be produced. More scalable studies are now underway to see how individuals with dyslexia will function better with Uniskript.

Apraxia. Speech therapists handling cases of children apraxia (difficulties in handling motor movements involving facial muscles) and adult apraxia due to trauma are teaching patients how to speak through Uniskript.

Deafness. The advancement of technology is so great that hearing devices implemented into the ears can now help people who are born deaf to “hear”—but how do they pronounce words after years of inactivity in the muscle formation of sounds and words? Uniskript is deployed to help formerly deaf people to recognize facial muscle formation and how sounds can be made and words can form.

Lack of space precludes me from discussing the Uniskript digital input system, and ultimately, the Uniskript contribution to shell books (www.shellbooks.org) through crowd-sourcing.

This fledging system will need to be reviewed by many others (an intensive process which has already begun), and if proven fruitful, will take time to gain acceptance. If this happens, it may present a fresh hope for the 1.6 billion adults who are excluded from the opportunity of reading scripture for themselves.

As I watch the development of Uniskript, which had its roots in a phonic system from the mid-1400s, I am reminded just how much the digital era is mimicking and borrowing from the pre-Gutenberg era.

This issue of the Orality Journal is a special one; not only do we celebrate our one-year anniversary, but also the articles are keyed off from the anchor

piece by Chuck Madinger. He provides both scale and scope of coverage in “A Literate’s Guide to the Oral Galaxy.” Then, we include an aspect of each of the disciplines of orality—culture (Snead), language (Gravelle), literacy (Moon), memory (Getz), networks (Handley), arts (Logan), and media (Swarr, Koch, and the ION Audio Scripture Engagement team). Keith Williams was gracious to provide digital and mobile interests and implications for oral-preference learners. Tara Rye provided reviews on two excellent books that are now being translated into multiple languages.

As promised in the last issue, the labs on adaptive changes are here—in print, it is covered by Joe Handley (covering network and participatory learning in leaders development), and online, the blog (www.oralicity.net/blog) by Jennifer Giezendanner (describing the acceptance process of Bible storying in a cross-cultural organizational environment).

Finally, we are in for a special treat, as each of the writers of the “Seven Disciplines of Orality” are also the presenters at this year’s ION conference. What they have written is also mediated audibly into what they shall say and what we shall hear.

On the Journey Together,

Samuel E. Chiang
From Johannesburg, South Africa

- ¹ The developers of this system have filed patents globally.
- ² A simplified description of the process for developing Uniskript for a language involves a few steps: 1.) First, the phonemes of a language must be determined; if certain phonemes do not exist within a language, there is no need to develop extra symbols for it. 2.) A team is sent to collaborate with indigenous speakers of the language in order to determine how the proto-symbols may be adapted in a way that is relevant to their culture and art—sometimes images and shapes that are significant within a culture may be incorporated into the Uniskript alphabet. This creates a connection between the people and this new alphabet as well as the shape of the symbol and the mouth. 3.) Once symbols are decided on, an artist finalizes them, ensuring their aesthetics. 4.) A font is developed.

Reference

Lovejoy, Grant. 2012. "The Extent of Orality." *Orality Journal* 1(1): 11-39.



Leader Development and Orality: A Lab on Leadership Formation in the Church of Asia

Joseph W. Handley, Jr.

Joe Handley graduated Azusa Pacific University and then began working at the University's Office of World Missions. After working on his masters, the Lord called he and his wife to Rolling Hills Covenant Church in 1998, where Joe served as the Global Outreach Pastor. In June of 2008, Joe answered the call of God to become the new president of Asian Access; he is currently completing his PhD at Fuller Seminary.

At its core, Asian Access (A2) is about developing leaders who multiply churches that transform communities and nations across Asia. A2 believes that the local church is God's primary agent for spiritual and social transformation and that our best effort is to lift up seasoned, yet emerging young leaders to lead the Church.

This laboratory ('lab') series includes a number of case studies on leadership development from networks across Asia—some are connected to Asian Access, and all are connected to movements and networks in and of themselves. Most of the case studies pertain to networks other than A2; they represent the movement of God in Asia rather than the work of any one particular mission, network, or organization.

When I joined the mission five years ago, I knew that leader development and church multiplication were

key issues as the Global Church shifts from North to South and from West to East. These shifts are far more comprehensive than that popular slogan or jingle. They are evident in multiple arenas of faith and life and are addressed in this article.

A2's leadership model focuses on collaborative learning through cohorts of pastors over a 2-3-year period. This allows local leadership to sift through solid material and presentations brought in initially from the outside. These leaders then find ways to adapt and transform the learning into a local context.

While most of the pastors can read and write, their preferred and optimal learning style is oral, auditory, and sensory, rather than literary. This is pertinent because most of the educational and leadership formation models coming from the West are based on

readings, writing assignments, and a one-way, lecture-based pedagogy.

These pastors have expressed appreciation for community-based learning, experiential pedagogies, and learning through dialogue, rather than through reading. This lab will explore some of those stories, as well as interviews with other organizational leaders to discern how the Global Church can strengthen its effectiveness in developing leaders.

Cambodia

It was a thrill to attend one of my first leader development sessions with Asian Access in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Walking through what had been a notorious torture center during Pol Pot's reign of terror kept my attention focused and provided a gruesome pictorial of what I was hearing from each pastor. One of the pastors, formerly a brutal general during *The Killing Fields* era, had come to Christ. After graduating from the Asian Access leader development program, he went on to plant 30 churches near Siem Riep where many of the Khmer Rouge peoples lived. What a transformation!

As I attended the sessions, I was impressed with the written curriculum provided by the faculty

member. It was filled with practical examples of reproducing disciple-making leaders and emphasized being a leader in one's family. Upon meeting and hearing this faculty member share, I was entranced. I was so impressed with this trainer that I asked him, "Why would you come and teach 12 leaders in Cambodia when you are invited to train thousands in India?" His response was:

That's easy. Leverage and impact! Sharing here with 12 key influencers will have far more impact as we interact with one another than just me speaking to several thousands. We can **learn and process together**. In addition, Joe, I know that each of these leaders represents significant movements and/or denominations in this country and they are reproducing everything they learn.

The key phrase in his reply was "learn and process together." I was impressed with his content, delivery, preparation, and style; yet, when it came time for interaction, I noticed an odd, awkward silence. This went on day after day. Outside of the sessions, I played table tennis with the pastors and heard them staying up late at night processing what they learned. They were

gaining powerful insights, but they weren't sharing them during the sessions. As a newcomer, I saw my role as one of listener and learner.

By the end of the week, I asked the Cambodia national director what he thought of the session and how it went overall. This was insightful and significant since the faculty member who taught the session had received high ratings in India. In Cambodia, however, the national director told me that while the session went well and the pastors learned a lot, most of their learning took place with one another through their peer interaction between and after the sessions, not during.

While these pastors could read and write, the literary and lecture approach was not an effective learning environment for them. They preferred interaction and small group time to discuss and learn together. They were not as enamored as I had been by the volume of written materials and the words written on the white board! While the lectures were adequate, no time had been allotted for discussion in community with the faculty member.

These Cambodian leaders *took their learning to the street*. During

the times set aside for recreation and rest, they discussed, debated, and challenged one another in their own language. They stayed up late at night, sharing stories from their own lives and adapting what they were hearing into a format that worked better for them. They invested many "extra miles" together to get where they wanted to go.

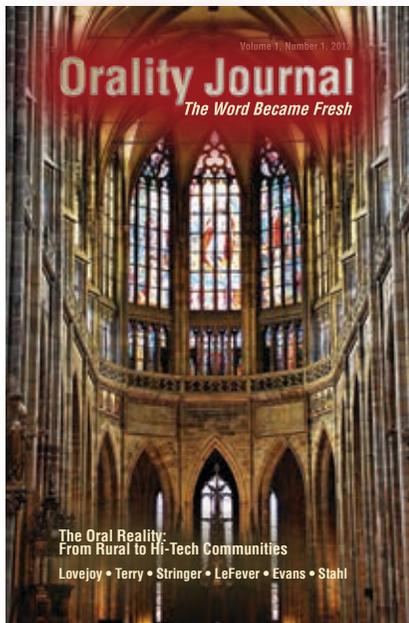
Attending the session in Cambodia and getting feedback afterwards has been invaluable. Since then, we have started coaching the session directors, translators, and faculty on how to best facilitate learning in orality-based cultures.

This story highlights an important truth for leader development in the world today. The vast majority of the world—including literate and educated leaders—learn best in oral environments where they don't just read materials and listen to lectures. Rather, learning happens best when these leaders have the opportunity to engage with the faculty and one another, discussing how the new ideas might work or not work in their contexts and cultures. It happens through dialogue and discussion, debate and conversation, sharing and prayer—together.

More stories will follow in the coming lab of ideas...



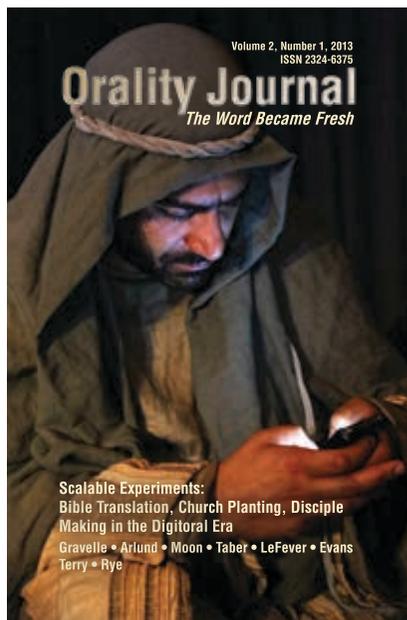
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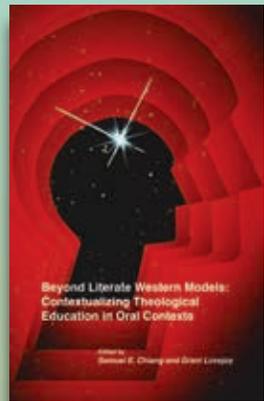
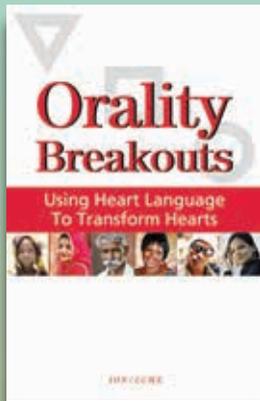
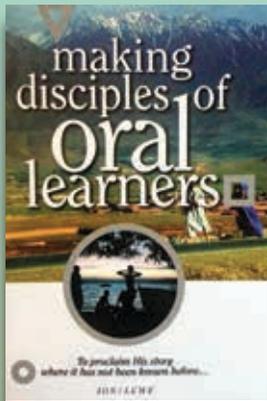


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