

One World Language and Script

INTRODUCTION: *Approaching the sacred valley...*

Facilitator

The following is an introduction. Please read it out loud without comment, and then proceed with the study of the quotations.

The most desirable condition a human being can experience in relations with others is unity. Unity is that heart-felt condition of trust, understanding, love and peace with other people. What could be more hopeful in the world than a condition of global unity? It becomes especially evident how desirable world unity is when we contrast it with disunity – relationships characterized by distrust, fear, suspicion, hatred, conflict, violence and its worst expression, war.

The central emphasis of God’s guidance to mankind in this day through His Manifestation Bahá’u’lláh, is the establishment of a condition of world unity. One of the requirements He proclaims as a necessity for social unity is the adoption of a single world-wide language and script.

It is well understood by experts in the field of relationship enhancement that love, peace and unity are more forthcoming when people are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings clearly and understandably to one another. Additionally, it is well known that when communication skills are lacking in relationships they can easily deteriorate into misunderstanding, frustration, distrust, aggression and violence. So one of the most potent unifying factors initiated in our time is the world-wide adoption of a single language that can be used by all the inhabitants of the earth.

Let us explore together the unifying affect of a universal language and script as it is presented in the Bahá’í sacred Writings.



“From the beginning of time the light of unity hath shed its divine radiance upon the world, and the greatest means for the promotion of that unity is for the peoples of the world to understand one another’s writing and speech.”

– Bahá’u’lláh

OBJECTIVE: *A look to the horizon...*

Facilitator

Review the following objective with the participants:

The purpose of this group experience is to *explore* the concept of “one world language and script”, through a study of selected Bahá’í Writings.

THE STUDY PROCESS: *Attaining the pure water...*

Facilitator

Review the following study process with the participants. Then study the numbered quotations on the following pages, one at a time as described below.

1. **READING:** *A drink from the sacred stream...*

Have two participants take turns reading the quotation out loud so that it is read twice.

- A. If anyone would like to have better understanding of a word used in the quotation, now is the time to refer to its substitute phrase, definition or synonym, which can be found in the boxes below each quotation. Read the substitute phrase, definition or synonym out loud so everyone can hear.
- B. Read the sentence again that contains the word you selected, while **substituting for that word**, its given phrase, definition or synonym from the box below the quotation.
- C. If anyone would like a better understanding of another word, repeat the process above until everyone is satisfied with their understanding of the words in the quotation.
- D. Have the quotation read one more time by one of the participants.

3. **FINDING VALUE:** *Gem-like discoveries...*

In the tradition of the “talking circle” ask the participants to take turns sharing, one at a time, in a round, **WHAT WAS PERSONALLY MOST MEANINGFUL FROM THE QUOTATION AND WHY.** (Remember show and tell?) Remind the participants that *whatever* is shared should be considered as a valid perspective, and that in this *exploratory study* there are no right or wrong perceptions and no lesser or greater understandings. All are therefore asked to avoid comments, corrections, or judgments on the perceived insights of others. This is not a time for questions and answers, it is an exercise for the purpose of bonding hearts by sharing and receiving personal heartfelt perspectives without discussion.

1. “O members of parliaments throughout the world! Select ye a single language for the use of all on earth, and adopt ye likewise a common script. God, verily, maketh plain for you that which shall profit you and enable you to be independent of others. He, of a truth, is the Most Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. This will be the cause of unity, could ye but comprehend it, and the greatest instrument for promoting harmony and civilization, would that ye might understand!”

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 88)

adopt: accept formally and put into effect
Bountiful: generous in giving gifts and favors
civilization: cultural and social refinement and development
common: shared; widespread
harmony: agreement in facts, opinions, manners, and interests; calm and tranquility
independent: free from influence, control, and requirements

instrument: means or aid
language: system of verbal communication
parliaments: the supreme law making branches of government
script: written method of communication
unity: a spiritual condition of harmony, agreement, peace and accord in human relations, free of conflict, dissension, contention and strife

2. “Bahá'u'lláh enjoins the adoption of a universal language and script. His Writings envisage two stages in this process. The first stage is to consist of the selection of an existing language or an invented one which would then be taught in all the schools of the world as an auxiliary to the mother tongues. The governments of the world through their parliaments are called upon to effect this momentous enactment. The second stage, in the distant future, would be the eventual adoption of one single language and common script for all on earth.”

(From Notes to *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 250)

adoption: formal acceptance, practice, and use
auxiliary: supplementary aid or assistance
common: shared; widespread
effect: cause to come about
enactment: prescribed requirement
enjoins: with urgency and authority, commands
envisage: foresee; anticipate
language: system of verbal communication

momentous: very important
mother tongues: native languages
parliaments: supreme law making branches of government
process: series of events leading to a particular result
script: written method of communication
universal: present everywhere and including all without exception

3. "...the most important thing in the world is the realization of an auxiliary international language. Oneness of language will transform mankind into one world, remove religious misunderstandings, and unite East and West in the spirit of brotherhood and love. Oneness of language will change this world from many families into one family. This auxiliary international language will gather the nations under one standard, as if the five continents of the world had become one, for then mutual interchange of thought will be possible for all. It will remove ignorance and superstition, since each child of whatever race or nation can pursue his studies in science and art, needing but two languages – his own and the International. The world of matter will become the expression of the world of mind. Then discoveries will be revealed, inventions will multiply, the sciences advance by leaps and bounds, the scientific culture of the earth will develop along broader lines. Then the nations will be enabled to utilize the latest and best thought, because expressed in the International Language."

(From a talk given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the Esperanto Society of Edinburgh in 1913, cited in *Bahá'í Scriptures*, p. 340)

auxiliary: secondary or supplementary
broader: more varied and diverse
East: the nations of the middle and far-East
enabled: provided the means and opportunity
expression: product or outcome
ignorance: the absence of knowledge and awareness
international: among all nations
language: system of verbal communication
matter: that which is physical
mutual: with shared concern for one another

oneness: being one
pursue: proceed along in
realization: bringing into being; accomplishment
standard: flag; rule or principle
superstitions: false beliefs resulting from ignorance
transform: completely change
utilize: make use of
West: the nations including Europe and the Americas

4. "*The day is approaching when all the peoples of the world will have adopted one universal language and one common script. When this is achieved, to whatsoever city a man may journey, it shall be as if he were entering his own home.*"

(*Gleanings From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 249-50)

adopted: formally accepted and put into effect
common: shared; widespread
language: system of verbal communication

script: written method of communication
universal: present everywhere and including all without exception

5. "Unless the unity of languages is realized, the Most Great Peace and the oneness of the human world cannot be effectively organized and established because the function of language is to portray the mysteries and secrets of human hearts. The heart is like a box, and language is the key. Only by using the key can we open the box and observe the gems it contains. Therefore, the question of an auxiliary international tongue has the utmost importance."

('Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 60)

auxiliary: secondary or supplementary
effectively: while producing the desirable results
established: originated and made permanent
gems: symbolic for – "highly prized qualities"
language: system of verbal communication
Most Great Peace: condition of permanent peace and unity in the world strongly urged by Bahá'u'lláh
mysteries: those things not easily understood

oneness: quality, state, or fact of being single and indivisible; unity, harmony, and agreement of mind, feeling, and purpose
portray: describe in words
realized: brought into being and made real; accomplished
tongue: language
unity: being as one and the same
utmost: greatest or highest degree of

APPLICATION: *Showing forth divine light...*

Facilitator

Read the first paragraph and ask the participants to state their ideas out loud. Then, read through the last paragraph and allow time for the participants to write out their plans for action. These plans are not shared.

IMAGINING POSSIBILITIES: *Visions of radiant lights...*

How **could** the concepts in this study on *One World Language and Script* be applied a person's life in these modern times? Begin your answers with: "**One could...**" Suggest as many ideas as you want.

DECIDING ACTION: *Mirroring a beam of light...*

Bahá'u'lláh wrote: "*It is incumbent upon every man of insight and understanding to strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action....*" From your experience in this study on *One World Language and Script*, describe what **you** are inspired to put into reality and action. **I will make conscious efforts to...** _____

CLOSING MEDITATIONS: *A heart song...*

Facilitator

Read the following out loud.

"Lauded be Thy name, O my God! I can discover no one in Thy realm who can befittingly turn unto Thee, or is able to adequately hearken unto what hath gone out of the mouth of Thy will. I beseech Thee, therefore, O Thou Who art the Possessor of the entire creation and the King of the realm of Thine invention, graciously to aid Thy creatures to accomplish that which is pleasing and acceptable unto Thee, that they may arise to serve Thy Cause amidst Thy creatures, and to speak forth Thy praise before all who are in heaven and on earth.

"Thou art He, O my Lord, Whose bounty hath surpassed all things, and Whose power hath transcended all things, and Whose mercy hath encompassed all things. Look, then, upon Thy people with the eyes of Thy tender mercies, and leave them not to themselves and to their corrupt desires in Thy days. How farsoever they may have strayed from Thee, and however grievously they have turned back from Thy face, yet Thou, in Thine essence, art the All-Bountiful, and, in Thine inmost spirit, art the Most Merciful. Deal with them according to the unrevealed tokens of Thy bounty and Thy gifts. Thou art, verily, the One to the power of Whose might all things have testified, and to Whose majesty and omnipotence the whole creation hath borne witness.

"No God is there but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting."

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, pp. 244-45)