

- O: Good evening, Mr Hornby - it's a time since I saw you last.
- ASH: Yes, it is a long time since I saw you, and I'm glad to say that I've kept well and I hope you have too.
- O: Yes, thank you. When did I see you last? About ten years ago, was it?
- ASH: Yes, this is my second visit to Japan since the war, ~~and~~ I came here about ten years ago for a conference on the teaching of English with Dr. Fries, and we had many lectures, and after the conference we travelled about a bit in Japan.
- O: So this is your second visit to Japan since the war, isn't it?
- ASH: Yes, this is the second visit, and I'm very happy to be here again to meet so many old friends.
- O: We're very happy too. What is the purpose of your visit this time?
- ASH: Well, my publisher in London, the Oxford University Press, suggested that I might like to come to Japan for British Week. I'm sure you all know about British Week - I see the Union Jack flying everywhere. And so I was very happy to come, and I shall stay after the week, and perhaps do some work with my publishers here.
- O: How long are you going to stay here? After this Festival.
- ASH: Until the end of October.
- O: Since your arrival in Japan, have you noticed anything different from your last visit?
- ASH: Well, I have been here only three or four days so far, but going about Tokyo I see that everything is getting bigger and bigger, but I'm not sure that it's getting better and better, because the traffic and the noise seems to be so very great these days - I like a quiet life in the country.
- O: I too.
- ASH: But Tokyo is a very fine city of course, and I have noticed all the fine big buildings put up for the Olympic Games, and the new highways, the Super-highways - these are all new since I was here last.
- O: But even these highways are congested every day, from morning till night. When did you come to Japan for the first time? I mean before the war.
- ASH: Oh, that was in 1924. That was the year of the great 'quake'.

Oita Kogyo
Shogyo (= Oita Higher
Commercial College)

O: And to where ?

ASH: I had recently taken my degree from the University of London, and the Appointments Board of the University one day informed me that there was a Japanese gentleman in London who wanted me to go to Japan, and I met Professor Waterbury of the (~~O Ater Gote-de-show-beo~~) and he suggested that I might go there for a three year period, and I was very much interested in this idea of coming to Japan, a very romantic country to a young man. So I accepted for three years. But instead of staying three years, I stayed very many more years, because I like it so much.

Watanahi

O: How old were you at that time, may I ask ?

ASH: I was 26 when I first came out.

O: This was after coming from the London University.

ASH: Yes, I was late graduating because I had been in the navy during the war, so I had to go to the University rather later than usual.

O: How did you find the students of (Oita Commercial) High School in those days ?

ASH: Well, I was rather surprised when I first met my students, because I had been asked to come to Japan to teach English literature, and when I got to the college I found my students were reading Thackeray and Shakespeare, and apparently with great understanding. But, to my dismay they couldn't speak English very well - they could read but they couldn't speak - so I had quite a surprise, but after a few months I decided that my main work ought to be teaching languages and not literature. So my interests became linguistic not literary, and I think ever after that I was much more interested in teaching language, and leaving literature to my Japanese colleagues who did it very well of course.

O: Do you mean that most of the students hardly understood your lecture, in these days ?

ASH: Not unless I spoke very slowly and carefully.

O: And they couldn't make themselves understood in English ?

ASH: They could ask questions, yes, but they asked the wrong questions.

ASH: (cont.) They would say, for example, 'where went you yesterday,' instead of 'where did you go.' Well now, that is very bad for someone who can read Shakespeare.

O: I think there's a great improvement now.

ASH: Oh, I'm sure there must be.

O: Well, what do you remember most vividly about Oi-ita ?

ASH: Well, ^{Oita} Oi-ita is not a very interesting or exciting town to live in itself, but everyone was very kind to me there, but I loved ^{Kyushu} Ki-usho of course. I used to go to ^{Beppu} (Beppen ?), and my wife and I used to travel in Ki-usho, we went to the ^{Aso} (Ar-oo ?) district, Trigoshu, we used to go to a beautiful valley called the ^{Nabakei} (sparkay ?) every autumn.

O: Ah, yes, very famous.

ASH: So we enjoyed Ki-usho.

O: (You like the hot ~~place~~ ?) ?

ASH: Yes, we went to hot-spring resorts quite a lot.

O: Is it about an hour 's ride from (^{Oita}) to ^{Beppu} (Dapbor ?) ?

ASH: Yes, in those days there was an electric tramway between the two towns.

O: An electric tramway ?

ASH: I expect now you've got something faster.

O: Well, how did you come to know Dr. Palmer, the first Director at the Institute for Research in Teaching English ?

ASH: Well, while I was teaching in ^{Oita} Oi-ita of course I sometimes came to Tokyo on visits, and I spent my summers in ^{Kanuzawa} Karanzawa, and I think I met him during that period. Because, well, British people in Tokyo usually did meet; and when I met him I became interested in his work, I joined the Institute, became a member, and corresponded with him about problems I had, and in the end he asked me to co-operate with him, and I used to write occasional articles for him while I was still in Oi-ita.

O: In those days, didn't you have some Annual Foreign Teacher's Conference in Tokyo ?

a summer resort in the Japan Alps

ASH: Yes, there was an association of Foreign Teachers of English, and we used to meet occasionally, we had our meetings in Tokyo.

O: And who was the Director of the Foreign Teacher's Association?

ASH: I forget who it was now, Mr. Gauntlet? Not the young Gauntlet who is in Tokyo now, but his father. I remember Mr. Gauntlet Senior very well. He was a Welshman I think.

O: When you came up to Tokyo to OI-ita in 1936, did you come at the invitation of Dr. Palmer or of the Tokyo School of Foreign Languages or Tokyo Higher Normal School?

ASH: Well I think it was one of those Japanese-style arrangements. Dr. Palmer wanted me to come to Tokyo to help him but he couldn't invite me to those schools but he suggested to the authorities in these two schools that they might invite me and they very kindly co-operated with his wishes and invited me to join the staffs.

O: You ^{were} ~~are~~ full-time teacher in both schools or ^{full time in the School of Foreign Languages} and Higher Normal School part-time?

ASH: Yes.

O: And what was your position at the Institute, I mean, what did you do there? chiefly.

ASH: Well, when I first came to Tokyo of course Dr. Palmer was still the Director, and I was helping him with research work. We did a lot of research work on ^{collocations} ~~(collocations?)~~, vocabulary control and things of that sort, and I helped him. I was a research associate.

O: Can you tell me something interesting about your work while you were with the Institute?

ASH: Well, the research work was routine work, for example, the Ford Foundation sent over a lot of money for research on ^{collocations} ~~collocations~~, and Palmer was very interested in everything concerned with vocabulary, vocabulary control, and then ^{collocations} ~~collocations~~ - that is the coming together of words like 'in order to' - that's a collocation. And nobody, apparently, had listed all the collocations in English. It's not quite the same thing as an Idiom. If you say 'raining cats and dogs' that's an idiom, but of course I hope you don't use it because it's not a very good one. But there are other

ASH: (cont.) phrases, verbal phrases, all sorts of things, prepositional phrases, nobody had collected. So we combed the Shorter Oxford Dictionary in two huge volumes, a Webster for American connotations, we put all these things on to cards and then put them into order, and that led to the publication of the ^uconnotations report. Well, that was the kind of work that we did - not exactly exciting but I hope it was useful.

O: Was it published by the X.R.E.T ?) or by some other publishing company ?

ASH: It was published by ^{i u}Kataksha for the Institute, the ^uKataksha used to publish the Institute work.

O: And one of the results is the compilation of that dictionary I think. With ^{now} whom did you ~~write that book~~ compile that unique and/world-famous learner's dictionary ?

ASH: I did most of the work and it was my conception, I think. I felt that there was a need for a dictionary in English, not quite so difficult to understand as, for example, the Concise Oxford, because of course Concise Oxford definitions are for people who have English as their mother tongue. They're arranged in a whole long string of words without any divisions, and so I thought that if I could write a definition which was easier to understand well then that would help the student of English in Japan. So I tried to give definitions like those which I would give in class. If somebody said what does this word mean, I would answer spontaneously, without thinking very much about exactness, but would give a definition that was easy to understand for my pupils; and so when I wrote the dictionary I decided that kind of ⁵definition was what was useful for them. Then I wanted to put in a lot of Syntax, because if you're going to use English, it's not enough just to know the word and its spelling, its meaning and its ^upronunciation, you must know how to use it, how it fits into the sentence, the sentence pattern. And so the sentence patterns were now, I think, a new feature of dictionaries. And then we had to give information about whether a noun, for example, was countable or uncountable. That is never given in an English dictionary for English-speaking people - they know.

- ASH: (cont.) But a Japanese student might not be too sure whether he could say furniture's plural, but he can't, it's always singular, and so on.
- Q: Nowadays all the English/Japanese dictionaries in Japan adopt that system, U and C - Countable and Uncountable - you started that.
- ASH: Well, I'm glad to know that my initiative has been useful to other people.
- Q: About how long did it take you to finish one dictionary ?
- ASH: Well I worked usually during the long summer holidays. I used to take ^{summer cottages} ~~at~~ ^{Karuzawa} a ~~place~~ ^{in Karuzawa} and take all the material there. And then I did more work during the Christmas holidays and the Spring holiday, ^{Gatenby at Wakefield} and ~~(Gatenby at Wakefield)~~ ^{did the same}. It must have taken about three years to prepare the manuscript copy, and then I forget how long it took to produce them all, the Japanese printers in those days were not so good as now. The rough proofs were full of printer's errors, and so you do much better today with printers.
- Q: Where was Mr. Gatenby teaching at that time ?
- ASH: He was at ~~Sendai~~ ^{Sendai} the University and at the High School.
- Q: ^{at} Sendai and ~~(Hagosimer)~~ ^{Inukushima} higher Commercial School.
- ASH: Sendai University and ~~Kumamoto~~ ^{Kumamoto} High School.
- Q: And Wakefield ?
- ASH: He was teaching in Tokyo, he was at the ^{Peers'} ~~Biers~~ School, and I think at two or three other schools but I forget which now.
- Q: Some years before the outbreak of World War Two, we English teachers of Japan had a very hard time of it. Will you tell us of the unpleasant experiences, if you had any.
- ASH: I don't think I had any unpleasant experiences at all. We had an anxious time because we knew perhaps that war would come, and that war would be a great disruption to our lives. But my Japanese colleagues and my students were very very kind to me during that period, and they tried to allay my anxiety, and even after Pearl Harbour they were very kind to me until the time when I was able to leave on the ship with the Ambassador.
- Q: So, the students didn't protest against you ?
- ASH: No, I was shown very great courtesy, they were very polite students in those days.

- I'm very glad to hear that. I understand that you visited the USSR - Soviet Russia, and many other foreign countries. Will you please make some comment on some of the methods used there.
- ASH: Well I have been to many parts of Eastern Europe, and of course to many countries all over the world, since I left Japan, lecturing for the British Council. My visit to the Soviet Union was really a holiday for six weeks.
- O: This was three years ago?
- ASH: Yes. I want there as a tourist, but my dictionary and ~~(at least 2)~~ ^{Guide to P} patterns were known in Eastern Europe, they were printed in a Russian translation in Moscow; and the dictionary has been sold there from a reprint in Warsaw. So when I got an Intourist guide, it was usually a university student who spoke English, these guides at once recognised my name, and they invited me to go to the faculties of the universities of Kiev, Leningrad and other places, where I met the teachers of English in Russia. And I was very much surprised to see how familiar they were with the work of Palmer. Palmer's work is very widely known in Eastern Europe and -
- O: And your work too -
- ASH: And my work too I suppose. But they were always familiar with Palmer's books and his work, and they were doing what they could to follow his theories and practices. The Russians today are very up-to-date. They may not travel abroad very much, but they keep themselves very well informed on the latest work in linguistics everywhere, and they do very good teaching indeed.
- O: Did they have any methods particularly different from ours, or methods adopted in other countries?
- ASH: Well, I wasn't able to see a great deal of the work, because it was a summer vacation time so I didn't get into classes, but I was aware that they laid very great stress on ^{oral} ~~aural~~ work - the basis of their work was ~~aural~~ ^{oral} - and that of course, is very important, if the teachers are qualified for ~~aural~~ ^{oral} work, and the Russian teachers were; they were very fluent in English. It was extraordinary, but they could produce teachers who speak very fluent English and yet never go outside their own country.

ASH: (cont.) That was a great feature of their work I thought.

O: What advances have been made in teaching English in recent years ?

Tell me something about the recent development advances.

ASH: Well as you know, of course, the linguists, both in the United States and in Europe have been writing a very large number of most impressive books. But I don't think the work of the linguist has got through to the schools yet. Somebody has to examine the work of the big linguists, study their work and find out which features can be dealt with at school level; and that is being done gradually - I'm trying to do it myself - I'm interpreting the work of the linguist at a practical level. And then there has been the immense influence of audio-visual aids and the language-laboratories, they're having a great influence today; television and radio for teaching languages. All these things are a very great help. We mustn't exaggerate them, though. Nothing can take the place of the teacher in the classroom.

O: In the ... world in Sydney (in the public session ?)
I said, ✓
'They can't depress teachers - this is very important, that they can't depress teachers. Is there any difference between the method used in the United States and the United Kingdom - generally more or less the same I think, but is there some conspicuous difference, or very different, or no difference at all.

ASH: Well I think that both in United States and Britain language teaching faces the problem that we haven't enough incentives; because children both in Britain and in the United States know that wherever they go in the world they can get by by using English, and that makes them rather indifferent to the language teaching. But reading has been stressed too much, and today we are trying to do more ^{oral} ~~aural~~ work in England, and today we're making experiments teaching French and German to very young children indeed, and that is very promising indeed. Starting at the age of six or seven years of age.

O: I see - in primary school. My impression is that the American method is more or less mechanical - more mechanical than the British way.

- ASH: Will you probably know better than I do, as I haven't been in American schools.
- O: Do you have some personal reminiscences relating to Dr. Palmer before or after the war? When you were with him here or after you went back to England or after Palmer went back to England. You met him in England?
- ASH: Yes, of course I met him in England. He was a great enthusiast. If he got a new idea he would work at it endlessly until he found ~~he~~ - or thought he had found the solution to a problem. And when he was working on Syntax, and Sentence Patterns that fascinated him indeed, and he worked out all sorts of ideas on paper, designs for a railway system for example, to illustrate every kind of sentence in English.
- O: That sounds very interesting.
- ASH: With all sorts of loop lines - a loop line for the infinitive, a loop line for the past-participle. And you could start on one end of the system and go all round these loops and back for any kind of sentence. When he got back to England - he had a house in the country - and he actually built a model railway in his garden, with landscaping round it and these sentences which went round the railway tracks.
- O: So that is the Syntactic railway system, ^{etc}
- ASH: Yes. You can see it in one of his books, the New Method Grammar, it's ~~also~~ illustrated in that.
- O: And have you seen that?
- ASH: Yes, I saw that railway. There were no trains on the track - just the track.
- O: Do you recommend some particular method, you have some particular method in mind to recommend to teachers of English in Japan?
- ASH: Well I often say that any method of teaching will be successful if you have an enthusiastic teacher, who knows English, he can be successful with any method. But of course, if the teacher doesn't know English well, he will not get success, he will not get results. Whatever method he uses, the teacher is more important than the method. But if we want to recommend a method, I would always recommend a large proportion of ^{oral} ~~aural~~ work, and that ~~aural~~ work should be based on activity, and the activity must represent a situation. So I would say I recommend an

- ASH: (cont.) ^{real} ~~oral~~ method based on activity, and a situational method, so that when the pupils are talking they are doing things that they are talking about - they are talking about something that is being done. In a story they are reading - pictures they are looking at. I think the mechanical ² repetition of patterns may be ~~used as a teaching method~~ but not as a method of teaching; you don't ~~teach~~ a pattern through mechanical repetition of the patterns, but you can use those patterns at a later stage once you have mastered it through use in association with activity, association with a situation.
- O: Not at the initial stage.
- ASH: No. Patterns in the abstract would be rather dull to start with, and I think every new item in language must be associated with activity or the situation in the first place. Not with mere sentences which are irrelevant, not continuous even. Each sentence in a pattern should be related to a situation ~~and not to~~ ^{There should not be} a change of situation ⁱⁿ to every pattern. That is my quarrel perhaps with some of the American systems - a little bit ~~is~~.
- O: May I call the method 'situation-method' or something like that?
- ASH: Situation and method is a description of one of the things I favour.
- O: A Semantic method?
- ASH: Not Semantic, no. They will learn the meanings of words through association, that is the semantic aspect.
- O: This is the nearest expression. Now, is there any book on English teaching you would like to recommend to Japanese teachers of English?
- ASH: Well I should say that they could with great advantage go back to some of the older books like [↓] Jespersen's "How To Teach a Foreign Language", and Sweet's book on teaching languages, Palmer's books. They are very good for theory. The modern books on linguistics are not for the ordinary teacher, they are for the specialist, and if the ordinary teacher starts reading books on linguistics he will probably get confused. Perhaps I'm wronging the Japanese teacher, perhaps he would understand them, but I think the simpler books are better for him, and practical books if I may instance my own, my little books on how to teach

N.H.K., Japan Broadcasting Corporation

ASH: (cont.) structure and sentence pattern were written specially for teachers.

Q: And with very valuable advice to Japanese teachers of English. There some difficult books.

ASH: People in universities could read those books, then interpret those books at the right level for teachers in the lower schools.

Q: Now, what do you think about the broadcasting from *N.H.K.* *H.*
What do you think about the development of audio-visual aids, radio and television and tape-recorders and so on.

ASH: I'm sure they can be very helpful indeed to the learner, especially the enthusiastic learner. If the learner really is enthusiastic he will listen and he will watch; if he's not enthusiastic he won't listen and he won't watch - he'll go out and play baseball or go to the cinema or watch TV.

Q: The point is, how enthusiastic the students are.

ASH: There must be many who appreciate very much the work that you are doing, for example; and adult learners who don't go to school, they can benefit very much.

Q: In this connection, if I understand rightly, you have had a direct or indirect connection with the BBC. Is that right?

ASH: You know that the BBC has what we call the world service which goes out all over the world; and a feature of that service is called "English by Radio", because we in Britain have been teaching the world English for very many years. Teaching in Africa and India during the last century. We continue to teach the world English - we try to anyway - and "English by Radio" programmes include many that I worked on. Sometimes I worked on the scripts, and the work was done in the studio by other voices and sometimes I broadcast myself. And most of these scripts and recordings are available on transcription discs or transcription tapes, which were sent out from London to broadcasting stations all over the world and re-broadcast.

Q: Do you think they are obtainable over here in the bookshops or -

ASH: I don't know whether they are obtainable in the bookshops, but information about them can be obtained from the Information Service of the British

Ogawa has done a lot of radio lessons

ASH: (cont.) Council, and the discs are certainly available if anybody arranges to import them.

O: I thought these not so expressive. *expensive*

ASH: That depends on whether your Government pays tax on them or not, that's so in London, sometimes things like that get heavy tax on them, don't they?

O: I also remember that you broadcast from N.S.K. ^{it} from this station - Radio Tokyo.

ASH: Not from this magnificent building, but from another building, not so magnificent. I used to broadcast English lessons very early in the morning - 7a.m., with *Ashia Hori* ^h ~~Ashia~~ or ~~Horry~~, who was very, very good friend of mine.

O: Yes, an old man, a Professor of *Keio* ~~Keio~~ university. (or ~~Kais~~?)

ASH: I liked him very much, he was one of my best friends in Tokyo. We used to get up very early and broadcast together, and I remember when I came out of the studio every morning, all the staff were doing physical exercises. Do you do that today?

O: Oh, yes. ^{As} a matter of fact, that has a very long history.

Will you give us some hints and suggestions for the future of English teaching in Japan?

ASH: Well, I really don't know enough about present-day conditions to give advice - it would be presumptuous of somebody who has been away from Japan for such a long time to advise you - but generally speaking I think the chief emphasis must be placed upon teacher-training. It's no good having wonderful textbooks, wonderful aids, unless you have teachers who are really good; who know English well, who speak English well; and from my experience in some countries, I would say teachers who have economic security.

Because if a teacher has to work at three or four jobs in order to live securely then there's no time to prepare lessons, to mark papers and so on.

O: The Government must pay more.

ASH: Well, I didn't say that, I said the teachers should have economic security so that they don't have to overwork. If he overworks he can't be a good teacher. That's simple, I think, in any country.

As was (it is) common in Japan

O: Before concluding this evening's talk, Mr. Hornby, would you like to say something to your old colleagues and friends who may be listening this evening ?

ASH: Well, this is a wonderful opportunity indeed, and thank you for letting me have this opportunity. I'm sure that I have friends everywhere in Japan, because of my students in ^{Oita} O-atar and those in Tokyo must be occupying important positions in industry and commerce everywhere, in the Ministries, and I would like to say to them how pleased I am to be back in Japan again. I wish I could see all of them, but I know that's impossible, there must be thousands and thousands, and they're very widely scattered; but would they please accept my very best wishes for the future, and tell them that they are still remembered by their former teacher.

O: Well, thank you for that. What are your future plans or what are you doing now ?

ASH: Well, I'm not an old man yet - I'm getting younger every year - I'm 71, and I'm not going to stop working entirely, but I'm not going to work so hard. I have to keep my dictionaries up-to-date. Every few years there's a new edition, and when we have a new edition we have to keep it up-to-date - put in the new words and improve it in various ways. And then at home I have a large garden, and I'm very fond of gardening, I work in my garden - perhaps that keeps me well. Perhaps you have some good exercise too.

O: I wish you success, and have had a very good time this evening. Thank you very much indeed, and I hope your stay in Japan will be a pleasant one.

ASH: Thank you Mr. Ogawa, I'm sure it will, I've so many friends here.

END OF TAPE

A S Hornby radio recording Tokyo 1969 (Hornby aged 71 years)

(Interviewed by Ogasawa Yoshio, (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) -

Excerpts from radio interview:

- No 1: Early teaching experience in Japan. Employed to teach English Literature after a few months decided main work to teach language. Talks about students.
- No 2: Discussing his lectures and difficulties students had with speaking - students asking wrong questions ex given - although they had very good reading skills.
- No 3: Dr Palmer - how Hornby knew him. Interested in Palmer's work - Hornby joined Institute became a member - would write to Palmer about problems and began working in co-operation with Palmer.
- No 4: Hornby's position at Institute (Research Associate) - research work with Dr Palmer. Compiling of collocations and vocabulary listed in English - had not been done before. Combed various dictionaries - Shorter Oxford Dict/Webster published the Collocations report.
- No 5: The concept of a learner's dictionary. Hornby's conception - need for a dictionary in English which was not quite as difficult to use. Definitions easier to understand - follow through how he taught in the classroom easy for his students. Decided on writing a dictionary with that kind of useful definition. Syntax information - how to use a word - sentence pattern - information on nouns - uncountable/countable.
- No 6: Discussion on how long to produce Dictionary. Hornby 3 years prepare manuscript printed in Japan.
- No 7: Hornby's trip to USSR and other foreign countries. Hornby visited all over the world giving lectures for the British Council. Soviet Union on holiday and guides (students) recognized his name (reprint of dictionary and Guide to Pattern and Usage available in Russian translation) - and invited to Universities - met with teachers of English in Russia - familiar with the work of Palmer - follow his theories and practices. Russian teachers - very good teaching, very well informed in linguistic area and up to date.
- No 8: Advances and developments in English teaching. Linguists in US and Europe publishing impressive books but have not got through to schools yet. Hornby studying work and interpreting linguistics at a practical level and features that can be dealt with at school level. Influence of audio visual aids - great help but nothing can replace the teacher in the classroom.
- No 9: Comparing US and UK methods/differences. In both US and UK face a big problem with language teaching we haven't got enough incentives - children know they can get by - so indifferent to language teaching. Reading has been stressed too much - more oral work starting in Britain with experiment with primary children learning French and German.
- No 10: Recommending particular methods for teachers. Hornby - any method of teaching would be successful if you have an enthusiastic teacher who knows English. If the teacher doesn't know English well - he will not get success - will not get results - teacher more important than the method. Recommend larger portion of oral work based upon activity and a situational method (explains in detail). The mechanical repetition of language used at a later stage when you have mastered the patterns through use.
- No 11: Audio visual aids. Hornby - helpful to learner - the enthusiastic learner. BBC connection - World Service - feature programme -English by Radio.
- No 12: Tips and suggestions for future in English teaching. Hornby - generally chief emphasises must be placed upon teacher training - no good having wonderful text books, wonderful aids - unless we have teachers who are really good, who know English well, speak English well. Teachers should have economic security so they don't have to overwork (more than one job) - if they overwork can't be a good teacher.
- No 13: Hornby's future plans. Hornby working on dictionary updates - every few years new edition new words and improvements.