

THE INSTITUTE FOR SEMANTOGRAPHY

A Non-Profit Institution for the Promotion of Semantics and Semantography

5 Maroubra Bay Road, Pagewood, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia



SEMANTOGRAPHY SERIES NO. 118

September 1950

LECTURE NOTES ON A SIMPLE SEMANTICS FOR THE CITIZEN,

A LOGIC FOR THE PEOPLE

Lecture given by C.K. Bliss to the Sydney Chapter of the Society of General Semantics (Australian Psychology Centre, 296 Pitt Street) on 27th September, 1950.

Note: The following paragraphs comprise the notes, which assisted me in my lecture.

Achievement of one fellow arouses envy, antagonism, criticism in other fellows, who want to counterbalance their inferiority feeling when confronted with another guys achievement.

Be without prejudice, open your minds, judge the work not the man.

Language and Logic is being taught today essentially as it has been taught for the last 2500 years with disastrous results.

We are not taught in the primary and secondary school how to recognise vague and ambiguous words (Semantics) and we are not taught a simple Logic, how to think logically. These are the most desperately needed items today.

Wars are today fought not for a deity or for loot, but for ideo-logies, muddled ideas expressed in muddled words.

Educationalists may counter, that the learning of mathematics trains the human mind. This is the reason why we learn complex mathematics, although nearly all of us don't need it in later life.

But here the trouble starts, because in mathematics we learn to operate abstract meanings, whereas in our thinking we use words, some of them ambiguous, and operate them according to mathematics. This is what I found on Sydney walls:

America = War

Note that these 3 words contain one mathematical symbol, expressing absolute equality, as in $1 + 1 = 2$. And now we shall operate this equation as we have learned to transform equations in math.

Being against America = Being against War
Being against War = Being for Peace
Being against America = Being for Peace

Here you have the basic idea for the fallacious Communist slogans about Imperialist America and the Communist "Peace" Campaigns. And this is proven by the second equation chalked up below the first on Sydney's walls:

Transformed: Tribune = Truth (the local Commo paper)
No Tribune = No Truth
Daily Telegraph = No Tribune
Daily Telegraph = No Truth.

You know how serious all this is, and that it has led to Communist aggression in Korea and may well lead to the third world war. Indeed what we most desperately need is an antidote against totalitarian doctrines, which are composed of vague and fallacious words and similar conclusions. I maintain that Semantography can be that desperately needed antidote.

You may know already what Semantography primarily is. It is a picto-ideography (highbrow term) or a picture writing (lowbrow). I shall not dwell on this most fascinating aspect of a paper being readable in all languages of the world. I shall show you only one sentence, which I shall use on the title cover for a book for children.

$\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + \lambda_3 + \Delta_3 \quad \boxtimes \rightleftharpoons \quad \heartsuit \uparrow$
I and you and he and she correspond happily

I maintain that it is no mere co-incidence that I, a chemist have evolved this new writing. I maintain that only a chemist could have possibly got the idea. We chemists have already a new writing. H_2O means w-a-t-e-r in all languages, and boys and girls know it. But what is more important is the Semantics and the Logic of chemical ideography. H_2O is more meaningful than w-a-t-e-r. It shows you the inherent structure of water, the composition of it, the ratio of its components. And even more important is the Logic of this more "meaningful writing" (Semantography) of Chemistry. With this formula we can make logical conclusions and they will turn out true. We can find how many liter of Hydrogen we can get from 1 pound of water, etc, etc.

I will show you that I have evolved a similar symbolism for ordinary language and I beg you to try to visualise whether children in the primary school would have difficulty to learn this.

Our world consists of material THINGS, which perform physical ACTIONS in SPACE and TIME. NUMBERS too are used to measure all these happenings. Therefore we have MATTER-words, ACTION-words, SPACE-words, TIME-words and NUMBER-words. For instance

man (MATTER) running (ACTION) before, after (SPACE) early, late (TIME) first, last (NUMBERS). Then we have words which belong to more than one group. Runner (MATTER, ACTION) latecomer, firstcomer. We can easily come to an agreement about such meanings. Matter we can put on a scale. Action we can observe.

Then come words, which have no counterpart in real nature: good, bad, beautiful, ugly, etc. I call these words VALUE-words, and human EVALUATION. They cause disagreement. Try to convince a mother that her child is not beautiful.

How can we find agreement about such meanings? Only if we follow the method of physicists and chemists, in short the scientific method.

Korzybski said: "The Einstein theory is indeed such a tremendous structural linguistic achievement that quite probably its full semantic significance and meanings will not be worked out for many years to come."

Well, I maintain brashfully, that I have done just that. Surely mine is only a beginning and it will be improved by others, but a beginning it is.

You know the sensation in a railway station when the other train begins to move and you think that you are moving. Imagine two observers in space ships, sailing through a mist with no landmarks and no means to ascertain whether you are moving or not. Two observers are passing by each other. Who moves and who is at rest? They will never find out. All their observations are true only with reference to their system of reference. It's a relative truth.

Now comes the most important rule of Semantography: There are not two human beings alike. Even identical twins become different persons in outlook and thought. Consequently there are not two human minds alike, and therefore not. two human minds think alike. In the graphs of Semantography and using Korzybski's teaching:

$\lambda \text{ John Smith}_1 \neq \lambda \text{ John Smith}_2$
1 equals not 2

But we can go further and assert:

$\lambda \text{ John Smith}_1 \text{ (today)} \neq \lambda \text{ John Smith}_1 \text{ (yesterday)}$
equals not

He may have changed his mind literally and biologically, overnight.

Now here is the symbol for the mind $\cap$. It shows the outline of the upper skull, seat of the brain. It is more meaningful and international than the other symbol compound m-i-n-d. And you may attach to this meaning all what

you know and believe to know about the working of the mind, including even Clairvoyance, and Pre-cognition, which are now (according to Julian Huxley), established scientific facts, including the miracle (Alexis Carrell)

Now here is a man [^] and he thinks with his mind [^] (action indicator on top) and this is the combination a thinker

thinker What he considers today good, he may find to-morrow bad, cruel or not cruel, considerate or not considerate, etc.

Take the statement: War is inevitable between America and Russia. Let us analyse it, according to our Semantography. War is an ACTION with certain material THINGS. America is a well defined entity, THINGS in a certain SPACE of our globe. So is Russia. Let's not talk now about the 'infamous' IS, over which Korzibsky laboured so much. We shall deal with it later. Between refers to a SPACE relation. We can make the above statement without the "is".

Then remains the last word "inevitable". You can't put it's equivalent in nature on a scale. Indeed you cannot find it in nature. You cannot observe it with your eye, with a telescope or a microscope. It is a Value-word only, a meaning in our head. And consequently its meaning will differ in different heads. When Marxists say: War is inevitable, I say with equal conviction: War is evitable. War can be avoided.

But just imagine that certain Marxists will believe in this statement like in a religious dogma. Then all the attempts of reconciliation will end in failure. "There is no use", would the Marxist say: "War is inevitable, so let's prepare for War". And in the end, the reconciliators will be assaulted.

In the second part of this lecture you will hand over statements which I shall analyse, and so you will have more opportunities to see how the Semantics of Semantography works.

Now psychologists may smile about such "utter over-simplification". But again these words are VALUE words. What you may call "over-simplification" in the derogatory sense, others may call "ingenious simplification".

Then there is the meaning of the mind symbol. As you are psychologists I want to show you that I have studied the most important works on modern psychology to find something which can be taught to children and primitive adults. I have simplified the teachings of Freud as follows. Here are the 3 parts of the human soul.

emotion, feelings
Id

reason
Ego

conscience
Superego

or in more colloquial writing



Id



Ego



Superego

I consider these last symbols excellent educational material. Especially the symbol for Super-Ego. It is another mind super-imposed on each mind, the mind of the father (Freud) or the mind of God (Jung), but it can be also the mind of Hitler or any other political fuehrer. Nazis have murdered with "a clear conscience".

Now, from my brochure No. 6 you have learned that it was Leibniz who prophesied such a writing like Semantography 300 years ago. And he maintained that it will be possible to analyse complex ideas into simple ideas. This I shall show now with the meaning of apology according to the chapter "Leibniz Dream" on pages 180ff of my Book II on Semantography.

And now to a critic of modern logic, which is essentially the logic of 2500 years ago. I shall take a statement from Walton, Groundwork of Logic and shall develop it according to the rules of logic.

All books on logic are dull
 Some books on logic are dull
 No book on logic is dull
 Some books on logic are not dull

According to logic there is only one truth, and everything else is falsehood. Consequently one of these statements, either 1, 3, or 2 (which expresses the same statement as 4) must be true, the others must be false. Well, Walton says, that the only truth lies in statement 2 (equivalent to 4). Some books on logic are dull.

But dull is a Value-word and consequently it will be evaluated differently in different minds. Some people may say truthfully (relative to their mind) that All books on logic are dull. And a ravenous lover of logic may state equally truthfully that No book on logic is dull. As soon as we discover a Value-word in a statement to be debated, it is no use to debate it. Controversy will lead nowhere and both opponents may never be able to convince each other.

Here is an example how the Value word works in a syllogism!

Hitler said: First premise Czechoslovakia is a danger to Germany
 Second premise: A danger to Germany must be eliminated
 Logical conclusion: Czechoslovakia must be eliminated

The Value-word is Danger. See page 449 of Book 111. Must too is a value word.

I have examined even the most complicated meanings like Democracy and drawn up a formula which looks much alike a chemical formula. Boys and girls learn in school how to analyse and to read a complex formula. Change a radical in a formula and you get something completely different. Attach to the formula of voting a radical such as No election secrecy or No opposition parties allowed and you have something which looks like a formula for Democracy, but is not. Consequently much as the Russians want to maintain that theirs is a Democracy, it is not. It is the opposite of it, in spite of booths for voting and ballot papers.

And now give me your statements to be analysed!