

THE INSTITUTE FOR SEMANTOGRAPHY

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

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PIONEER CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

1st Lesson

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PAPER No. 10

Dear Friend,

Above is a reprint of the original letterhead that I used when I first wrote my Pioneer Correspondence Course in 1951. At this time I and my good wife Claire were living in Pagewood, Sydney. Today, looking back over my First Lesson I see that it is still relevant and still good. So, here it is.

Mutual understanding between people on this planet is today a matter of life and death, and Blissymbolics is the continuation of a process which is going on in a field where mutual understanding in all languages is really a matter of life and death. On the highways of the world, motorists and pedestrians are dying by the thousands every day. There are more casualties than in any war. And there warning signs written in the native languages are taken down and replaced by pictographic symbols which can be read and understood in all languages, without the usual translation. These symbols are alike to the symbols of Blissymbolics and they too are not vague or ambiguous.

How Will Blissymbolics Spread?

That the forerunner of Blissymbolics is today a reality in the warning signs of many countries will give you the assurance that Blissymbolics will spread and that your labours will soon be rewarded. As with any new idea it will spread in stages, and here is how.

We need warning signs, for instance FIRE EXIT in all public buildings, cinemas, theatres, dance halls etc. In many countries of the world more than one language is spoken. Even in Australia we have communities where German or Italian is the language used. Now we are receiving hundreds of thousands of New Australians who will need years until they will get used to all the strange words which they see around. Moreover, even if FIRE EXIT is perfectly understood by people, in the panic of a fire, people get out of their wits. Some are unable to "translate" the phonetic symbols F-I-R-E E-X-I-T into its real meaning, and tragic loss of life may result. Here now are simple symbols for such public warning signs. They are the first you are going to learn, and I think they will be the first to be adopted by the world.



door
gate



forward
move



ENTRANCE



EXIT



fire
(flame outline)*



FIRE EXIT



FIRE
STAIRS

The Integrity of the Symbols.

You realise that if you will invent symbols of your own, and another pupil will do the same, then soon we will have a Symbol Babel, and the whole idea will break

down. When alterations were suggested to Esperanto, more than 50 different Esperanto Systems were advocated and fiercely defended by each of the inventors. The result was, that Esperanto broke down. The greatest progress in Esperanto was made when all Esperantists pledged themselves to accept the "Fundamento" and not to invent words of their own.

Copyright.

I have copyrighted the symbols and their derivations and deviations. I did this not for personal gain, but to ensure some restrictions on people who at all costs would try to put up a counter system. This may come when Blissymbolics will be a practical reality and some printers or publishers might be ready to cash in on it, by bringing out books without adhering to the agreed symbols.

The 100 Symbol Elements of Blissymbolics.

The first ten symbol elements are the numbers and a sentence written in them - 5748 - is indeed readable and understandable in all languages of the world.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

The symbols of Blissymbolics are used in much the same way as the number symbols. By adding two elements we get not an additive meaning, but a new meaning. Therefore, if we add 2 to another 2 we get 22 and not 4. Similarly if we write 2^2 we get power 2 which is 4. In short, the Blissymbols placed in different positions take on different meanings, but still relate to each other. 123 is different in meaning to 321. In the foregoing page we have seen how the element of the door and the arrow are used in different positions to mean either Entrance or Exit.

How to Write Your Exercises.

The best paper to use is lined paper, such as in school exercise books, so that the symbols can be written between such lines. And between each symbol there must be a full square spacing. Otherwise, there is danger that you might write two different symbols too near to each other and thus cause misunderstanding. Indeed, I have found that pupils write the symbols too near to each other. So please ONE FULL SQUARE SPACING BETWEEN EACH SYMBOL.

Furthermore, write very slowly and very geometrical. If you will try to write quickly your squares will not be squares and your circles will not be circles and again misunderstanding might occur. Moreover the symbols written neatly are graceful. So try to be an artist. Write slowly and neatly.

I am now contemplating the manufacture of a small template made of transparent plastic. I use such a template myself. But it would cost some money to have such a template made. Let me know if you are interested. If not just write by hand.

The 6 Symbols of Mathematical Operations.

Here, for the first time we shall learn that there is a difference in meaning if we write a symbol big enough to fill the writing lines, or small enough to fit between the lines. For instance the Plus symbol may mean:

$+$	$+$	$++$
addition	and	etc, furthermore, also

Actually the double small plus symbol is not necessary. But it may come in handy.

When we write in such a kind of mathematical writing we realise the waste of words in such parts of sentences as: "and also, in addition". All 4 words can be expressed by one small plus. But this is not the symbol of the Cross. The symbol for the Christian religion will be expressed by the Latin Cross $\dagger$.

We are now coming to the horizontal line expressing subtraction. But here we are confronted with the possibility to write a horizontal line either between the writing lines or on the ground or top lines. Each one means a different subject. I shall draw the writing lines here.

subtraction	without minus	earth ground	sky	world
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Here you see that it will be necessary to write always on a lined paper. Otherwise the symbol for subtraction might be mistaken for earth or sky. The small minus symbol is used in much the same way as it is used nowadays. It does not mean a hyphen. The symbol for earth can be used not only for a particular piece of ground but also when you speak of the Earth. However, I have a special symbol for the planet earth, showing a circle and the inclined axis, in fact a picture of a globe. But I shall show this at a later date. The symbol for sky does not mean the atmospheric layer but the whole sky with all the stars and beyond. Consequently the symbol for world means our Universe in the widest sense. and between these two lines you may imagine all of which our philosophy hasn't dreamt of. If you want to depict the meaning of heaven in a religious way you may put in front the symbol of the Cross, or the general symbol for Creator and Religion which we will learn in a later lesson.

We are now coming to the multiplication mark, and this has great uses. For the first time, you will learn that we shall use some very small marks above the writing lines. This presents no difficulty. The small multiplication mark will be written on the ground line, not between, simply because on the Blissymbolic typewriter we can use the x to depict this symbol.

$\times$	$\times$	$\times \times$	$\times$	$\times$	$\times$	$\times$
						
multiplication	many much	very many very much	plural symbol	doors	entrances	additions

Another consequence of this mathematical writing is that we need not repeat the plural symbol. If we say "Many houses" we have actually indicated twice that we mean a multitude.

We shall not learn in this lesson the last 3 mathematical operation symbols, but shall move on to the symbol for THING (MATTER) and ACTION (ENERGY). These symbols are very important and we need them to write sentences in this first lesson.

The First Rule Of Blissymbolics.

Because Blissymbolics unifies all languages it must conform to the actual realities which we find in all countries. No matter how water is called in different countries, be it water, or wasser, or acqua, or agua, or voda the real THING is the same in all the countries. Consequently we must adhere to certain rules in Blissymbolics not referring to a particular grammar (as it must be the case with Esperanto, etc) but by referring to the natural sciences. And this first rule of Blissymbolics runs as follows;

"Our world consists of material THINGS which perform ACTIONS in Space and Time".

This rule is so simple that it can be taught even to small children. A THING is something which we can touch (if we go near enough), which we can put on a scale and

weigh and which we can count. An ACTION is something which we can see either with the naked eye or with a telescope or microscope and which we can film. But what we see are the THINGS which move in Space and Time. We can measure these movements with a ruler and with a clock. The symbol for THING and ACTION are written between the lines

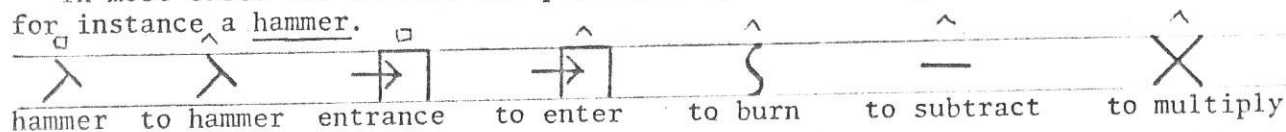


I have chosen these symbols to express a "deep" meaning. The symbol for THING shows that any material THING has a geometrical structure, an inside and an outside, a certain area, certain boundaries. And the beautiful geometrical configuration of the square should indicate that matter is not the product of chaos. On the contrary, a most beautiful divine harmony and simplicity reveals itself to our eyes in the beauty of a crystal and in the harmonious arrangements of the molecules.

The symbol for ACTION, resembling the outline of a mountain, should indicate one of the most primeval actions which has happened on our earth, when the molten ball of our planet cooled down, the throwing up of a volcano, the formation of a mountain. But you may also say that the symbol represents the letter A in Latin, ACTUS meaning a doing.

By writing these two symbols as very small indicators on top of the other symbols we can now depict the performance of ACTIONS by the THINGS. We can thus depict "eye sees" of "ear hears".

In most cases the ACTIONS are performed by human beings who use certain tools for instance a hammer.



And this is the end of the first lesson. Now read as much as you can of my big book, enter as many important questions in your exercise book and examine yourself, until you are sure you have mastered all the important questions. Only then ask for my second lesson. In the meantime, God speed to you and greetings from,

Charles Bliss B.Sc., A.M.

P.S. Let me know your first name, how your friends call you. This will help me to call you my friend.