A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF CLEAR AND MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION AND DISINTEGRATIVE PATTERNS IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS

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PREFACE

Several weeks before the 1973 spring semester began, Dr. Walter J. Ward, graduate studies chairman, School of Journalism and Broadcasting at Oklahoma State University challenged me to help him devise an instructional situation whereby students enrolled in a general semantics class might have a clearer understanding of general semantics concepts.

The fundamental structure of general semantics (as I viewed it at that time) outlined a process of abstracting which might be used as a technique for relating language behavior to observable reality. This process potentially restructures usual modes of thought and response and perhaps can be understood only to the extent that the individual internalizes the abstraction processes and is able to put them into practice.

The question for Dr. Ward and I then became, if general semantics outlines a method for extensional behavior, how might we provide an educational environment whereby students might practice or behave in accordance with the principles they were learning about?

We decided to institute in-class panel discussions where three students would take a stand on some controversial topic and class members would question them about their beliefs and opinions.

We felt if students were provided a forum which encouraged asking and answering questions they might be able to experience the necessity

for relating verbal symbols with observed reality and the importance for sharing referents for symbols used. We also felt students might be able to better understand their own language behavior as well as the language behavior of other class members, by applying framework of general semantics and process of abstracting to the communication observed in the panel discussions.

The panel discussions were tape recorded and analyzed from the overall standpoint of relating language to reality. This project attempted to show how communication breakdowns may in part, be caused by a failure to abstract properly and adequately, our verbal symbols from our non-verbal reality. In its own small way, this study gains importance by showing how seemingly unimportant words, and phrases, used in seemingly inconsequential ways, can lead to serious or almost total communication failures.

Many people will recognize themselves, and/or recognize the impact they have had on the author, in this study.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Ward, for time binding with me and encouraging me to pursue an understanding of the "monster" which often seemed impossible. I also thank Dr. Ward for the valuable learning experiences gained through two years of working with him in general semantics classes and for his support and suggestions on the project.

I would like to give special thanks to my "families" in Hays, Manhattan, Riley, WaKenney and Kansas City, Kansas; Davis, California; Washington D. C.; Long Island and Stillwater, Oklahoma for their unsolicited backing and encouragement.

If this thesis were to be dedicated, it would seem appropriate to name my brother, Jackson, who unknowingly reared me in the Aristotelian

orientation and who also helped spark the beginnings of long over-due self-introspection and re-evaluation. To "Spook" I am indebted for helping me experience some important differences between knowing and understanding.

A special thanks goes to Marlene Masbruch for deciphering the manuscripts scribbles into typewritten pages and to Larry Maloney for "running the words" around the Oklahoma State campus in my absence.

My very special long-distance communicator, Ted Glasser, provided valuable comments on the rough draft and supplied his own unique combination of verbal tongue-lashings and kind encouraging words to help the author through the trials of compiling this work.

Finally, though verbalisms are never enough, I would like to mention P. H. who remains my silent and loving partner from beginning to infinity. Without his ever present understanding and kindness, this project, I am certain would never have been completed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This project deals with language behavior and language usage in group communication and how the words we use to talk to ourselves and with others can facilitate and/or block clear and meaningful communication.

Because language usage is such an integral part of our lives, we seldom, if ever, question the words we use, how we use them, and the effects they may have on us and on others.

This project outlines a structure for thinking about the manner in which we relate our verbal symbols (words) to the events, things, people, etc., we observe (our reality).

The structure is called the processes of abstracting and is based on the general semantic notion that the map (words) is not the same thing as the territory (our reality). It is a method of acting or behaving and can be measured somewhat by observing how individuals consciously and adequately carry out the process of relating symbols to reality.

Subjects for the study were students enrolled in a general semantics class at Oklahoma State University during the spring semester, 1973. As part of the course requirements, students, in groups of three, led panel discussions on a topic of their choice.

One purpose of the panel presentations was to engage the class in

a group discussion whereby students might be able to apply the processes of abstracting by demonstrating through their language behavior more clear and meaningful communication dialogues.

This study had three general purposes: 1) to isolate points in the discussions where communications failed or disintegrated, 2) to analyze the amount of clear and meaningful communication employed by each class member and 3) to examine how closely students were extensionalizing (behaving) in accordance with the principles of general semantics--the discipline they were studying that semester.

Content analysis was used to count instances of clear and meaningful communication indices which occurred much less frequently than had been expected. Group discussions disintegrated at several points and over-all findings showed that students, even though studying the processes of abstracting and extensionalization, were not effectively carrying out either of these principles.

Hopefully, this thesis will provide a foundation for further study on the ways we use symbols and the process of abstraction as they relate to communication behavior.

CHAPTER II

PROCESSES OF ABSTRACTING

General semantics, Wendell Johnson says, involves the language of science whereby hypotheses are drawn and supported or not supported through systematic and controlled observation of behavior and/or events in reality. Irving Lee believes the discipline is an almost direct attack on our disordered modes of thought and response.[1] General semantics, as the author sees it, employs a process whereby one may structure his language behavior more closely to the structure of observable and/or experiential reality. To understand this process and its importance to communication behavior, we first must examine our existing language structure which, for the most part, has been patterned after what Alfred C. Korzybski calls a traditional Indo-European (IE) structure. Korzybski labeled the IE structure Aristotelian, after the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, who recorded the pattern which has shaped our usual habits of observing and talking.

Traditional IE Language

Aristotle lived and wrote 23 centuries ago. The rules he observed in his culture, have been passed from generation to generation. Johnson states that insofar as we are not scientific, we are essentially Aristotelian in our outlook, in our fundamental attitude, or set, or orientation to life.[2]

When Aristotle observed the people of his culture, and especially their language behavior, he formulated three laws or fundamental premises which he believed described all the language and behavior he observed. Johnson states the laws as: A is A: something is either A or non-A, and something cannot be both A and non-A.[3]

The Is of Identity: A is A

The *is of identity* is perhaps one of the most troublesome aspects of our present language structure, one of the most frequently used and most often missed. It is easily passed from generation to generation and seems to begin at an early age when children are taught to use the "is." "This *is* a truck;" "That *is* pretty;" "He *is* a bad boy," tend to teach children to think and act as if a thing *is* what it *is*. Thus, we learn to structure our *reality* through words. We seemingly are unaware that things we observe are a joint product of our inner states (emotions, reactions, perceptions, etc.) and the object, event, thing, etc., that are observed.

For example, "He is a bad boy," implies that we are describing something which has an innate or inherent "badness" that exists independent of *our* evaluations of the boy. The misuse of the "is" can have serious effects on personal adjustment as well as impair our interpersonal communications. First, we imply there is a thing (boy) which has a quality (badness). Obviously he is nothing else but bad, because he *is* what he *is*. By telling the boy he *is* bad, we place him in a category; we label him as possessing qualities of "badness" and--to live up to our expectations--he may begin to act *badly*. To say the least, we have not helped his self-concept. Second, one must agree

that he is bad because there are no exceptions. If one says anything is good about the boy, he must be wrong because he (the boy) is bad. Then, the argument begins over what "is-bad--is-not-a-bad" boy.

One way to avoid the is of identity is to describe the specific behavior observed. To say, "Yesterday I saw the boy hit Susan on the head with a frisbee," is much more descriptive than "The boy is bad." It states the actions or events observed, not an abstract trait of a boy. The observer refrains from making judgments about this particular action and does not assume that the boy is bad because he hit Susan on the head with a frisbee.

The dating device as outlined by Korzybski, may be useful here to remind us that the boy's actions yesterday may not be the same as the boy's actions tomorrow, next week or next year. In effect, ^{boy} today is not ^{boy} yesterday. This dating device reminds us--as Heraclitus reminded us--that reality is dynamic--that no two things are ever identical--that nothing is the same twice--and no man can step in the same river twice.[4]

A further implication with the use of the "is" seems to be that we have thoroughly examined the subject and have determined the one best way to describe it.[5] Taking different looks at the bad boy might reveal that he is also:

a little league baseball player
a son
a brother
a piano player
a dog owner
a bicycle rider
a neighbor
a second grader
etc.

Korzybski indicates people's desires to name things once and for

all--to plug things into a rigid, non-flexible category--has been carried over from the traditional philosophical quest to define the essence of things:

> This tendency continues to show itself in the "natural logic" of unreflective persons who feel that when a thing is named one has discovered all he needs to know about it.[6]

Labeling, tends to reinforce an unrefective worship of words rather than observation and description of the objects or things, events or person, etc., which those words (as someone's evaluations of) represent.

Two Values: Either A or Non-A

This method of speaking and acting is evident when situations are divided into two categories and we act as if there can be only one alternative; success or failure, good or bad, north or south, white or black, etc. The two-valued language is easily spotted by the use of adjectives which negates that something or someone could be A and non-A depending on the observer's purpose and the physio-semantico-organismic context in which he observed.

The either-or law of the excluded middle reaction seems to ignore several fundamental differences which might make a difference between and/or among things, and rejects all the shades of gray which might lie, for example, between the black and white. Considering the above example, panel discussions for whom? Under what conditions? At what time? Did they not provide the means for everyone in the class? Could there have been some aspects at some time for someone which provided the means for understanding the course material?

Johnson suggests that to go through a day sorting this and that into two bins, two possibilities, may save time, but it can be vicious. He maintains that the either-or is a sick language no matter who uses it about whom or what.[7] And it would seem the individual who thinks and speaks in terms of dichotomized absolutes might be shocked, disillusioned, angered, etc., upon discovering that someone had found an alternative(s) to what he had classified.

Something Cannot be A and Non-A

The third law indicates a splitting of events on the verbal level which cannot be split on the non-verbal. In other words, we can speak (verbalize) about things in separate categories which in reality (non-verbally) do not exist in mutual exclusiveness.

Things often are discussed in terms of "heart" and "soul," "space" and "time," "intellect" and "emotions," etc., as if these things could be isolated; as if they were not related to each other. One way to avoid this elementalistic verbal splitting of events is to use the hyphen, which would change the above to heart-soul, space-time, intellect-emotions, indicating an awareness of the functional relationships which exist in our observable world.

Another aspect of the elementalistic orientation says there can be no contradictions in what we say. The drink cannot taste good and bad. That would be a contradiction. For example, a man was complaining one day that his three-year-old girl would not get into the bathtub because the water, she claimed, was too hot. "I know she was faking, because I felt the water and it was luke warm," he said. As Johnson says, "What is sauce to the goose may be soup to the gander

and the deacon glowers when the alderman laughs."[8] The water very easily could have felt too hot to the little girl and, at the same time, could have felt luke warm to the man.

Summarized, if A is A, then everything must be either A or non-A and, of course, nothing can be both A and non-A. Johnson points to the Aristotelian individual who assumes an A is A orientation to "success," "wealth," etc. If success is success, either one has succeeded or he has failed. According to the law of the excluded middle one cannot have both. And something cannot be success and failure at the same time, if the law of non contradiction is valid. The Aristotelian orientation does not take into account the processes of sharing verbal symbols with reality. It seems to be a rigid, static method of viewing the world in us and about us; makes no exceptions and allows for no contradictions.

Non-Aristotelian Orientation

At lease one important difference between the Aristotelian and non-Aristotelian (if we can assume pure dichotomies for the purpose of discussion) orientation could be that the latter implies awareness that language is man-made, not to be considered as merely a human characteristic as natural as breathing, swallowing, coughing, etc. Aristotle's noted that people act as if, they talk as if, all that they feel and believe and live by might be reduced to the three fundamental laws discussed above. This suggests that the Aristotelian structures his behavior substantially by words (virtually talks himself into difficulties). The non-Aristotelian tends toward the opposite. He continually revises and changes his language to correspond

as closely as possible with the reality observed.

Relationship between language and reality is central to understanding language behavior and communication. Of primary importance is that words are words and no more. They are man-made symbols, used to represent observable events, things, objects, etc., and/or to describe unobservable phenomenon.

If the structure of language is to correspond adequately to the structure of reality, the fundamental problem concerns the correspondence of words to facts.

Degree of Differentiation

Facts, in the non-Aristotelian sense, refer to observable events: things which can be sensed neurally through sight, smell, sound, taste and touch.* Johnson says there are four things about a fact which should be clear: 1) it is necessarily incomplete. What we observe is no more than an abstract of the total situation. We can never observe all there is to observe about any one event; 2) it changes. What we observe is little more than a quick glimpse of a ceaseless transformation; 3) a fact is a personal affair because it is the observation by an individual and 4) a fact's usefulness depends on the degree to which others agree with you concerning it.[9]

Because a fact occurs but once in ever-changing reality, the structure of reality shows a practically infinite degree of differentiation. Our language by comparison is highly undifferentiated, fixed

*Facts refer to observable events on the macroscopic and microscopic levels (see page 13). Called first-order facts, these things include everything that can be neurally and extra-neurally sensed.

and static. Words carry the burden of representing a great number and variety of facts and the same words can symbolize many different things to different people. Johnson says much of our apparent confusion is due to this simple fact: that there are more things to be spoken of than there are words with which to speak of them.

> A rather large share of our misunderstandings and disagreements arises not so much because we are constitutionally stupid or stubborn but simply because we have to use the same words to refer to so many different things.[10]

Problems in understanding and in communication are found when we insist on perceiving from an either-or conceptual framework which allows for differentiation between two categories only.

Variability

Johnson suggests that all our words are in some measure "abstract" or generalized because there are, at any given moment, more facts than there are words with which to refer to them. With the passage of time, new words are formulated, old ones outdated and even as new information is found and written, it is to some extent out of date upon its publication.

> Maladjustments, for the individual or for society, lie in mistaking the verbal record of the past for the description of the present. Because the words we speak today are quite the same as the ones we spoke yesterday, we tend to create the illusion that what we speak about is also quite the same. It can be serious enough when change takes us by surprise; what is even more serious is to have change escape our notice entirely.[11]

Because words represent many things, and because words are individual abstractions, we often use words to talk about words, and make statements about other statements, which may or may not bear

resemblance to observable reality. The ability to make statements about statements about statements etc., is called self-reflexiveness and illustrates the potentially continuous nature of our abstracting processes. The self-reflexive nature of language can be beneficial if it is understood that there is always more about any situation than can be said. However, statements about statements, if taken as statements about reality, can manifest into fanciful delusions and misconceptions, which may enhance communication breakdowns.

Closely related to the self-reflexive nature of language is the use of multi-ordinal words. Such words as learning, education, society, system, democracy are referred to as multi-ordinal words because such terms have no general meaning. What the word means to its user is determined by the context in which he is using it.

As Johnson notes, each time a multi-ordinal word is used, it means something different and because multi-ordinal words have no general meaning they cannot be tied to observable reality. Practically the only way a multi-ordinal word can be defined is by using other multi-ordinal words, making the sharing of referents for symbols nonexistent. In self-reflexive conversations, one can argue about arguing, object to objections of objections until the issue becomes thoroughly confused or forgotten. In any case, agreement is not facilitated.

Johnson indicates that the Aristotelian language structure is one which leads to misevaluation and confusion of words with the facts--events, things, objects, etc., they represent.[12] When words do not correspond with facts, (when self-reflexiveness runs rampant) it is time for us to part with words and return to facts.

The basic structure of the Aristotelian system will make easier the understanding of the non-Aristotelian or scientific language structure.

Abstraction Ladder

The fundamental relationship between language and reality seems ignored in the Aristotelian orientation described above. This relationship centers on the process of ABSTRACTING. Two fundamental aspects of abstracting are, 1) that abstracting is a process of choosing, selecting one by one, assimilating and synthesizing into a structure, elements born of relating oneself to the world about him and the world in him and 2) in abstracting we deal with the several manifestations of the basic fact that one operates with less than complete information--one always deals with abstracts and further abstractions can always be made from present abstracts.

It is useful to visualize the abstraction process in the form of Johnson's schematic diagram called the abstraction ladder. In order to better understand the following analysis of group discussions an examination of each of the levels will be discussed. The symbolic ladder, on page 13 as shown in Figure 1, is based on Johnson's diagrams from People in Quandaries, and Living with Change.

The horizontal line through the middle of the imaginery ladder divides the non-verbal world from the verbal world. The former is often referred to as the "territory" and the latter as the "map," emphasizing that verbal symbols are no more than representations (or abstracts) of some of the events, things, people, etc., observed in the non-verbal territory.

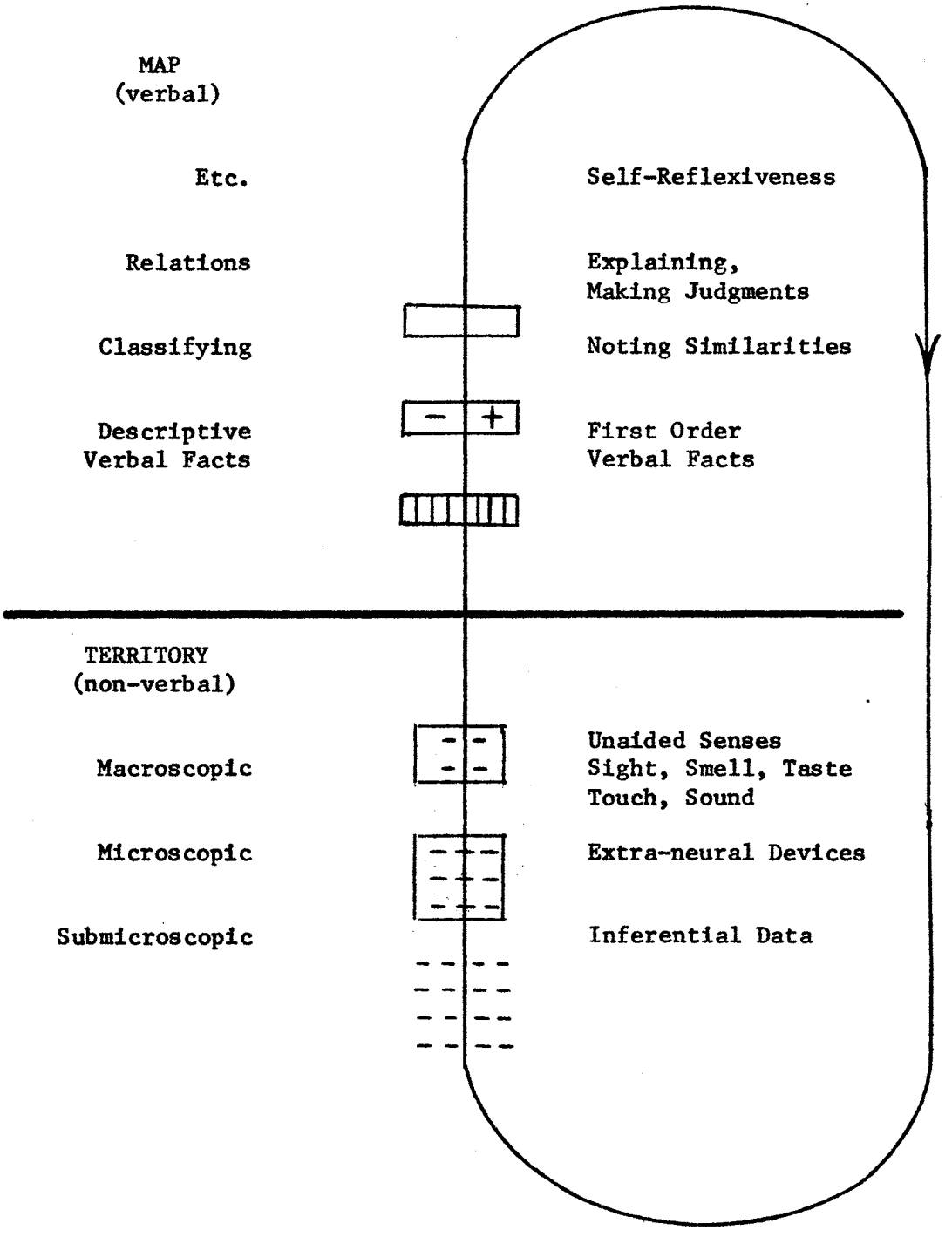

Figure 1. Abstraction Ladder Based on Wendell Johnson's Schematic Diagrams from People in Quandaries and Living With Change

Note, as the levels progress upwards in the territory, less broken lines are used, illustrating that on the lower levels of abstraction the more dynamic and process-like does reality appear to be.

The map section of the ladder also shows less detail as the levels progress upwards emphasizing that as abstractions are farther removed from the low descriptive levels, the words become more general, simplified and abstract.

The oval line to the right of the diagram, shows movement through the process. This line emphasizes that if one is conscious of abstracting one continually checks the word against the thing and moves between the verbal and the non-verbal levels.

Five points about the abstraction process according to Johnson, should be kept in mind when viewing the abstraction ladder. 1) the process of abstracting involves a verbal world and a non-verbal world, that is, a world of words-but-not-things and a world of things-but-not-words; 2) the process requires an honest relationship between them; 3) the process, therefore, involves movement back and forth between these two worlds to accommodate the checking necessary to maintain this relationship; 4) the movement, to satisfy these requirements, must proceed on an endless path, that runs through the worlds and back again, returning on itself in a full circuit; and 5) movement along this path is by steps, stages, or levels.[13]

Macroscopic Level

This level represents facts that can be observed with unaided senses; sight, touch, smell, taste, and sound. It is the realm of neural sensing and only to the extent that neural senses function, or

to the extent that they are used, can observations of the non-verbal world be made.

Microscopic Level

Observations of reality can be extended on the microscopic level with the use of extra-neural devices, such as microscopes, x-ray cameras, telescopes, etc. On the extra-neural level we gain a more detailed picture of the processes of reality. For example, on the macroscopic level we can see, smell, feel and taste a slice of an orange. On the microscopic level, a drop of orange juice viewed under a microscope would expose an entirely different "view" of it. Much more information could be gained about the orange juice. The macroscopic and microscopic levels are the levels of first-order facts, or a reliably observed fact. For example, Johnson says, trees have bark, paper burns and objects fall. There is no why for these things, they are simply observable facts.[14]

Johnson says, life and reality, as we experience them directly, are matters of first order fact.[15] However, our ultimate understanding of life and reality is basically in terms of the inferential process takes place on the submicroscopic level.

Submicroscopic Level

We can never be "sure" of what lies on the submicroscopic levels because we have no way of observing processes here. It is a level of theorizing or attempting to describe the underlying structure of observable first-order facts.

Johnson illustrates the three non-verbal levels with an example:

A glass of water can be observed on the macroscopic level, just as it sits there, or a droplet of the water may be viewed under a microscope. If you observe the glass over many days you may note that the amount of water decreases. No one drinks from the glass and there is not a leak in it. You may describe this process in terms of ghosts or demons who steal water each night when you are not looking.

Or, you may describe the process as evaporation and draw theories which scientists have done, to describe what the processes of evaporation is believed to consist of. The explanation or theory of evaporation is formed on the submicroscopic level; it seeks to explain things that cannot be observed.

The non-verbal levels are the unspeakable levels--the territory which symbolizes our observable, unobserved and unobservable world.

When we talk to ourselves and when we speak about the territory, we enter the verbal world. We construct maps to symbolize what we perceived in the territory.

Descriptive Level

Abstractions are incomplete. We can never <u>say</u> all their is to <u>say</u> about any observable event (just as we can never <u>observe</u> all there is to <u>observe</u> of any event). But, the descriptive level is where we can get closest to our observable world. It is called the level of first-order VERBAL facts because this is where facts are spoken about in as much detail as possible. It is the level of noting differences between and among things which make those things unique. We cannot go with words below the descriptive level. After describing as thoroughly as possible what we have observed, we can only go lower on

the ladder by pointing to or somehow demonstrating non-verbally what we mean. When we stop describing and elaborating on differences we may abstract further to the level of classification.

Classifying Level

It is here that resemblances are noted and one verbalizes how things seem alike or similar to each other. It is sometimes called the labeling level because things are classified, categorized, or put into either-or piles. Of course, NO TWO THINGS are exactly alike but they can resemble each other in one way or another. The person who sorts into two piles, good-bad, right-wrong, liberal-conservative, either-or is operating on the classifying level. This does not mean we should never classify. The difference is that some people deliberately pick segments of the observable world to substantiate their classification, which makes words correspond less with actual reality. In effect, the descriptive level has been by-passed, sometimes consciously, sometimes unknowingly. But, it is difficult to talk sense on this level without first talking sense on the descriptive level.

In the diagram, the classifying level is illustrated with a plus and minus sign to illustrate the either-or nature. The descriptive level has many vertical lines illustrating that many details and differences are noted. The relations level has no details in the rectangular box. It symbolizes a higher abstraction where judgments are made, relations drawn and explanations formed.

Relations Level

If we consciously and adequately abstract through the verbal

levels, we first describe, then classify and draw relations based on our classifications, and descriptions.

This level and others can be explained with the following example:

A: "Why do you read those trashy books? They will turn you into a pervert." (drawing relations, making judgments)

B: "How do you know this book is trashy?" (seeking observable facts)

A: "Anything with a picture like that on the cover is a trashy book." (classifying, drawing similarities)

B: "It doesn't look trashy to me. Have you read the book?" (attempt to seek definitions)

A: "I don't have to. I can tell by looking it is a bad book." (emphasizing similarities, making judgments, no first-order fact referents)

In all of the verbal levels we are using a WORD to represent a THING. In the case above, because subject A did not proceed normally and continuously through the levels of abstraction, his word trashy was undefined--it had no referent in the observable world. It was trashy because it was trashy; the word had become the thing. If we cannot define our words, either directly or indirectly by somehow relating them to observable phenomenon, our language bears no relationship to reality.

The Etc. in the abstraction ladder represents the ability to use words to talk about words. This potentially can continue to infinity. In other words, there is always more to be said about anything.

Etc

This level represents the self-reflexive nature of human abstracting and symbolizing and can be viewed as both our most helpful aspect of abstracting and our most dangerous and potentially damaging.

The etc. represents the fact that any abstract can be further abstracted. Johnson compares this process to our number system. There is no such thing as THE largest number, because you can always add 1 to any number to make it a larger number. Because our language can generate abstracts about abstracts ad infinitum the process is referred to as self-reflexive.

This process makes possible all that we mean by cultural advance. As Johnson says, it has made possible the theory of relativity and the other revolutionary achievements of modern mathematical physics. It is this self-reflexive ability which enables us to formulate theories on the submicroscopic levels.

Self-reflexiveness when it is abused or not recognized and consciously employed has also made possible millions of inferiority complexes and thousands of jealous homicides. If self-reflexiveness runs wild, one has to contend with the maladjustments and catastrophies that result from gossip, rumor, daydreaming, suspiciousness, and delusions, etc. If the self-reflexive process of abstracting is carried out consciously and adequately it makes possible the potential to CHECK theories, assumptions, beliefs, etc., with relevant observations and experiences. The arrow in the abstraction ladder (Figure 1, page 13) indicates our language potentially can be self-corrective. The self-corrective process illustrates an important difference

between scientific orientation and the Aristotelian orientation. The latter is static, does not change and often bears no relationship to reality. The former, Johnson notes, explains why scientists "always change their minds," and why a scientific "truth" is always tentative, subject to change in accordance with further observations to which it invariably directs us.[16]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Irving Lee, Language Habits in Human Affairs (New York, 1941), p. 117.

[2]Wendell Johnson, People in Quandaries (New York, 1946), p. 7.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 23.

[5]Don Fabun, Communications, A Transfer of Meaning (Beverly Hills, 1968), p. 16.

[6]S. I. Hayakawa, "What is Meant by Aristotelian Structure of Language?" Language, Meaning and Maturity, ed. S. I. Hayakawa (New York, 1954), p. 221.

[7]Johnson, p. 8.

[8]Ibid., p. 116.

[9]Ibid., p. 94.

[10]Ibid., p. 115.

[11]Ibid., pp. 119-120.

[12]Ibid., p. 122.

[13]Wendell Johnson, Living With Change, ed. Dorothy Moeller (New York, 1972), p. 82.

[14]Ibid., p. 107.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid., p. 161.

CHAPTER III

ABSTRACTION AND HUMAN COMMUNICATION

The structure of the observable non-verbal reality is process-like, dynamic and ever changing. To draw accurate maps of this territory, it is essential to keep our language structure closely coordinated with the non-verbal world and to keep the abstraction process free from semantic blockages so that it may be self-corrective. If we fail to abstract in an orderly process--to keep the non-verbal and verbal levels distinct but coordinated--the words we use to talk to ourselves and others can create delusional pictures in our heads and seriously hamper our communications with others. Consider the following example of almost total disregard for the territory when maps are drawn.

The author grew up in a small Kansas town where most residents made a distinct division (discriminated) between Catholics and Protestants. City elections were based, not on traditional party lines, but between the Catholics and Protestants. Each group's children attended different grade schools and high schools. It was not uncommon to hear of families disinheriting children for marrying someone of the other religion. If you happened to be born a Protestant, everyone unfortunate enough to be born Catholic was immoral, stupid, and in general, not socially desirable, and vice versa. Most forms of prejudice involve inferences which have no basis whatsoever. The maps bear no

relationship to the territory.

The more serious ramifications of these inaccurate maps lie in the uncritical acceptance of them as true. The words Catholic and Protestant in the above example mean numerous things which lead to family disinheritances, social snobbery and, at worst, total communication breakdown--one just doesn't talk to them.

One key to understanding the process of abstraction lies in the concepts of 1) observation, 2) description and 3) inferences. The macroscopic and microscopic levels are observable. These are first-order non-verbal facts. When we speak about them, we leave the non-verbal world for the verbal. We describe our observations on the level of first-order verbal facts as precisely and accurately as possible. Inferences based on description of observations are used to formulate explanations of the submicroscopic level of inferential data. And because this unobservable level is ever changing, our formulations and theories best be held subject to revision.

In interpersonal or group communication, people "falling off the ladder" can engage in verbal battles where feelings are hurt and friendships broken over inaccurately drawn maps and self-reflexiveness gone wild. When the levels of abstraction are not kept closely coordinated self-correctiveness is not possible.

Abstraction as a Method of Science

The abstraction ladder can be viewed as a model for relating language behavior to reality. The scientist, whether he pursues the study of psychology, education, physics, chemistry, etc., is concerned with the systematic and controlled observation of natural phenomenon.

When this approach is understood, we probably will wonder why much more human thinking and problem solving are not consciously structured along such lines.

When the scientist has opinions or beliefs about a certain relationship among natural phenomena he begins by:

Relations Classifying Describing	Asking clear and answerable questions (based on classifications which are based on descriptions) in order to direct his
Neural Extra-Neural	Observations (which may be on the neural and/or extra-neural level) which are made in a calm and unprejudiced manner, and which are then
Describing	Reported as accurately as possible and in such a way
Relations Classifying Describing	As to answer the questions that were asked to begin with, after which,
Relations Classifying Describing	Any pertinent beliefs or assumptions
Neural Extra-Neural Inferential Data	that were held before the observations were made were revised (self-correctiveness) in light of the observations made and the answers obtained.

The scientific method is clearly different from common sense. Its process, if carried out consciously and adequately, provides a method for revising beliefs, updating theories and keeping abreast of the ever-changing events in reality. The common sense approach, in contrast, outlines a method of reinforcing beliefs and resisting observable events or phenomena which might cause a change in opinion.

The scientific person views his world as a product of himself and what he observes. He pursues relations among things. The man-in the street assumes an essentially static kind of reality. Things just change or are changed. The problem solves itself. The man, as an observer, is not involved. The scientific approach calls for a systematic, orderly process of observing what can be observed and outlines a technique for explaining what cannot be observed.

The common approach man views his world through "Utopian glasses." He sees only what he wants to see. The unobserved and/or unobservables are accounted for by plogglies or with metaphysical explanations. And perhaps most important, the common sense man is unaware of the self-reflexive nature of his verbal abstractions. Thus he can speak about speaking for a lifetime, revealing or gaining little insight into the world in which he lives. The scientific individual, through orderly abstraction, continually refers his statements to observable reality, constantly checking, testing, and revising his statements.

Symptoms of Misevaluation

We have discussed and explained the importance of keeping the levels of abstraction distinct from each other, yet coordinated. The

word is not to be taken for the thing. Judgments, conclusions, etc., are not to be confused with classifications and the latter are not to be confused with detailed description. And description of an event, no matter how detailed, is not the event. Abstracting takes place at different levels and is a personal affair. As Lee suggests, each individual abstracts some descriptive statements from the infinite number of possible events observed and each classifies and draws some inferences from these descriptions.[1]

The levels are different, yet they often are confused. This leads to misevaluation. Irving Lee says to act as if one level is the same as another is to make for faulty responses.[2]

When the abstraction levels are confused, several symptoms of misevaluations are evident which contribute to communication blockages and/or breakdowns. Persons trained in non-Aristotelian language behavior can recognize these symptoms in himself and in others. In fact, a primary purpose of this project was to analyze such symptoms in the language behavior and ensuing communication breakdowns among the panel members in the general semantics class.

These symptoms can be recognized in instances of apparent identification, allness, unchecked self-reflexiveness and unconscious projection in overt language behavior. Concurrent with such behavior often is the evidential unawareness of probability principles and concomitant undelayed or signal reaction to symbols. These symptoms and their ramifications are discussed below.

Identification

This symptom occurs when the natural order of evaluation is

reversed; when, for example, observables are identified with non-observables, when descriptions are mistaken for observables; and/or when inferences are deemed equal to description.

An example of identification can be seen in the person who has an extreme fear of tornadoes. Every time storm clouds fill the sky, he rushes to the storm cellar to be safe from the "approaching tornado." The object--clouds--is identified with the inference tornadoes (unobserved). Such unchecked evaluative fears appear to be undelayed, signal reaction. In short, the symbol is seen as the actual inferential tornado, rather than as a symbol which could stand for many forthcoming events of less potential consequence. In contrast is the notion of symbol or delayed reaction, in which the symbol is viewed not as the thing, but a representation of some thing(s). For example, what do a person's words represent on the non-verbal level? The signal reaction assumes another's words mean the same as his. The symbol reactor stops to ask "What do you mean?"

S. I. Hayakawa gives a signal reaction example by saying, if you are in a railroad station and you want help with your luggage, any redcap, or person dressed as a redcap, will do. However, if you want to get your luggage back when you get to your taxi, you will no longer be content with any redcap, since only one of them has your luggage.[3]

Hayakawa explains signal reactions as reactions inappropriate to the situation at hand because of failure to make differentiations which, in that situation, are both relevant and necessary.[4]

Lee urges that symbol reaction is necessary to live up to potentialities of nervous systems equipped with organs for discrimination (the cortex above all). When this is explained to students, he says,

almost regularly they respond, "This is nothing new: my grandmother used to tell me to count to ten before I acted."[5] Counting to ten before responding may or may not have practical value, depending on what you do during the counting period. If all one does during the delay is count to ten he stands to gain nothing.

Lee adds that investigations of smart university upperclassmen show that those who burst into speech about the obviousness of signal reactions are also most likely to burst into action by signal reactions before they have given attention to what goes on.[6] One might say these students can verbalize the principles of symbol reaction, but cannot behave in accordance with what they verbally know. Knowing the principles or definitions of the terms does little good unless we can actualize what we know in everyday behavior.

The central idea behind symbol reaction is that it takes time to evaluate. This is one reason for the need to practice delayed reactions. If one takes time to observe more details of, and differences among, seemingly identical objects, the responses will be less likely to represent identification of the levels of abstraction.

Allness

The principle of allness usually is indicated in A-is-A language behavior. An allness orientation is based on a one-valued system. Such words as all, always, never, everyone, absolutely, no one, are characteristic of such language. "No one likes to get hurt," "Everyone should love his country," "If you've seen one construction contract kickback you've seen 'em all," "She always dresses grubby," are examples of allness statements. There are NO alternatives. The

allness oriented person does not stop to consider that there might be more to say or another way to view a situation.

The allness orientation discounts differences between individuals, things, etc., which make a difference. It is a language behavior which operates on the level of similarities and relations, or high level inferences. The allness statement seems more likely than not to provoke or stimulate disagreements and arguments. It can lead to some of our greatest communication breakdowns.....particularly when two allness-oriented people confront each other, as in the following:

I: "I'm never going to that class again, I have always hated it."

II: "That's stupid. Jones always teaches good classes. Everyone on campus thinks so."

I: "Well everyone is wrong, because he is absolutely the worst. Besides, he smokes all the time and it looks vulgar."

II: "If he wants to smoke, he can. No one else seems to mind."

I: "I don't like cigarette smoke and I wish you wouldn't smoke all the time too."

In a few short lines, the interchanges have self-reflexed from never attending the class to Jones' teaching ability to smoking cigarettes. There doesn't seem to be much either of these people could say to each other as long as they were speaking in allness terms...so they inter-reflexed from one allness statement to another, saying very little about anything on the descriptive level. Consider the obvious failures to describe any demonstrable aspects of non-verbal environment: 1) Everyone on campus...thinks Jones always teaches good classes (was a systematic survey conducted?). 2) Jones smokes all the time

(perhaps only during class) and, 3) Jones is absolutely the worst... (in comparison to what).

Our "communicators" have no representative referents for these statements on the observable levels. Their allness statements, characteristic of the one-valued orientation bear little or no resemblance to an actual territory.

Keeping in mind that no two things are ever the same and no one thing is ever the same twice on non-verbal levels, we hopefully can begin to see the relative futility of allness statements that are identified with the non-verbal levels.

Unconscious Projection

The process of abstraction, as mentioned earlier, is a personal and private affair. Professor R. D. Carmichael pointed out that the universe, as we know it, is a joint product of the observer and the observed.[7] This involves what we call projection. As Johnson says, adequate projection involves; 1) the degree to which the scientist is conscious of his language as an aspect of his own behavior, 2) the extent that he realizes his statements are about himself as well as about something else that he is apparently talking about, and 3) the degree to which he understands that his language is man-made and no more reliable and effective than the men who have made it and the men who use it.[8] Consider the following from the standpoint of projection:

A: "The questionnaire is no good because you cannot study individual behavior to begin with. You have to consider that when an individual fills out a questionnaire he is operating in a different

social and cultural framework which is unnatural and in my country, in Finland, that kind of thing would be frowned upon. I might even be chastized for filling it out to begin with, so I would not give truthful answers. I know that is so, because I know what my countrymen think. Therefore the questionnaire is worthless."

This student displayed no awareness that his statements were a product of himself and what he observed. (If anything in this case). The questionnaire is worthless because he apparently has decided it is. There seems to be no room for argument or disagreement.

If this individual had made observations in reality he could have showed an awareness of projection by saying, "it seems to me," or "it appears that," or "I belive," or some words indicating his statements were not to be taken as truth but as his personal observations and subject to change with additional observations and/or information.

Johnson notes that with words or expressions which signify "to-me-ness," one expresses his awareness of the degree to which his thoughts or statements are projections of his own internal condition rather than reports of facts about something else.

A consciousness of projection helps discriminate those individuals who are aware of the word-fact relationship and those who are not. Words are words and nothing more. The process whereby we relate our symbols to our reality is central to the scientific processes of abstracting, which suggests that we maintain a substantial isomorphic connection between our verbal and non-verbal worlds.

Unchecked Self-Reflexiveness

As mentioned earlier, the self-reflexive character of our language specifies that we can use language to talk about language, that any statement can be abstracted further, that statements can be made about statements, etc.

Self-reflexiveness indicates the infinite number of levels we may speak on. Each time we move up to a different level, the meaning of the word changes. Words become more abstract than those spoken on the level below.

Mr. Itty Twit,* a fictious (though very believable) character created by F. R. Eldridge, illustrates the idea of self-reflexiveness of words on different levels by saying "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."[9] What Itty Twit doesn't understand, as Eldridge explains, is that the word "fear" is used on different levels in the statement. Mr. Itty Twit treats "fear" and "fear of fear" as though they both meant the same thing. As Eldridge explains to Mr. Itty Twit:

> "In words like 'doubt,' 'hate,' etc., the second order reverses and annuls the first order effect. You may 'hate' someone, and then you begin to 'hate hate' and you end up not hating anyone. You may 'have contempt' of something or someone, and then 'have contempt of having contempt' and end up not having contempt of anyone."[10]

The self-reflexiveness of abstracting is closely tied to multiordinality Almost any word is multiordinal if its referents are not

*Itty Twit, which stands for I Think That You Think What I Think, is a character created by Eldridge, to symbolize the Aristotelian individual. Eldridge's book "The Itty Twit" is a series of dialogues between the author and Mr. Itty Twit to illustrate general semantic principles.

designated. That is, if one cannot describe it in terms of observable details, differences, etc. Korzybski says some of the most important terms we have must be considered as multiordinal terms. Words such as "yes," "no," "true," "false," "function," "relation," "fact," "reality," etc., are such that they can be applied to a statement about a statement about the first statement no matter what their order of abstraction is.[11] Consider Mr. Itty Twit's use of "liberty."

Mr. Itty Twit defines "liberty" as something he looses when handcuffs are put on his wrists something our forefathers fought for, something Abraham Lincoln said in "This nation conceived in 'liberty,'" and something he has loved all his life. What Mr. Itty Twit is operationalizing is that "liberty" means whatever he wants it to mean at the time; but, insisting all along that "everyone knows what liberty is!"

The main characteristic of multiordinal words is that on different levels or orders of abstractions they have different meanings, with the result that they have no general meanings. Their meanings, then, are determined solely by the given context, which establishes the different orders of abstraction. Consider the following dialogue:

I: "Do you love me?"

II: "Yes, I do."

I: "Will you do anything for me?"

II: "Yes, of course I will."

I: "Then drink this bottle of arsenic to prove your love."

Absurd? Perhaps and perhaps not. "Yes," "love," and "anything" mean different things to different people in that they are multiordinal words with no general meaning.

In reality, these words represent "yes," "love," and "anything" UNLIMITED, but this INCLUDES "yes"$_1$, "yes"$_2$, "yes"$_3$; "love"$_1$, "love"$_2$, "love"$_3$; and "anything"$_1$, "anything"$_2$, "anything"$_3$, etc., all of which are, or may be different. It would be wise for us to realize the different levels of meaning least we find ourselves being poisoned by words.

One of the most "colorful" examples of a multiordinal argument the author has witnessed to date occurred one evening when three students and the author were engaged in a discussion about "what is art?" One of the students, an art major, kept insisting that no one could know art when he saw it unless he had been trained to know what art was. Two other students, philosophy majors, were attacking art from various so-called philosophical aspects (which to this date, the author does not understand). The author said absolutely nothing until confronted by the art major who said, "Why haven't you said anything? What do you think art is?

"I don't understand what you are talking about. What do you mean by art?" the author replied. The art student said, "Man, what a cop out. You never have anything to say about anything important. We've only been talking about it for an hour and if you don't know by now, you never will."

Besides the obvious allness statements (never, anything) and identification (cop out=nothing to say), the art major was not recognizing the different levels, multiordinality, of the word "art." It is very difficult, if not impossible, to reach agreement on multiordinal concepts, if the referents for those things are not defined so each person has some idea of the meanings of symbols used and on what

level of abstraction they are used.

As Korzybski says:

> The main point about all such multiordinal terms is that all arguments about them, "in general," lead only to identification of orders of abstraction and semantic disturbances and nowhere else. Multiordinal terms have only definite meanings on a given level and in a given context. Before we can argue about them, we must fix their orders, whereupon the issues become simple and lead to agreement.[12]

Perhaps one answer to "what is art?" could have been that art is the symbol of symbols. It expresses everything because it expresses nothing.

No doubt you have noticed in reading this manuscript the multiordinal word REALITY has been underlined. This is to emphasize the word in the particular context it is used. In effect, the author is saying "please, don't take this word for granted, but consider it in the context of its usage which indicates how you are to apply it."

Multiordinal words can hardly be avoided. (It is not suggested that they should be done away with). But, the awareness of the self-reflexive character of the language and the potential ensuing multiordinal words can keep us from entertaining self-reflexiveness gone wild, and the host of rumors, gossip, and nonsensical conversations which can result.

Desire for Certainty

In instances of identification of the levels of abstraction, allness statements, unchecked self-reflexiveness and unconscious projection, the principle of probability or uncertainty is largely ignored. This principle, Johnson says, simply states that 1) truth is

tentative because all things change 2) truth is tentative because it is abstracted by human beings who are not infallible, and 3) predictions can be made and reports can be given only with some degree of probability, not with absolute certainty. In other words, and bluntly, one cannot be ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN of anything--except, it would seem, uncertainty.[13]

The importance of relating language structure to non-verbal reality has been stressed. The probability principle, Johnson says, lies in the fact that our living reactions and experiences are on the low, nonverbal levels of abstraction. On higher verbal levels, we can say they do not. As Hayakawa expressed, we can put up a sign which says "Free Beer Here," when no free beer exists.[14] Another example can be shown when, during the course of a lecture, a student raised her hand and said, "You can't say that." The professor's response was, "I can say anything I want to."

As Heraclitus said, you cannot step into the same river twice. All things change, and nothing is the same twice. And because no two things are the same twice, one's inability to adjust to reality will be in proportion to the degree to which he insists on certainty as to facts, and believes that he has achieved certainty, finally, forever, that's all.

If the principle of probability is followed, we would not react to something or someone in the same manner twice. We would delay, differentiate and not behave as if a certain thing or person belonged to a specific class of things and was to be treated as all things are treated in that class. A college, sophomore football player describes the following:

"It's funny, I guess. People think just because you play football you are stupid or illiterate, like an animal. They think the only thing you can do is bash into people and growl on the field. So you know, it always surprises them when you talk and sound half-way intelligent. And you know, since I'm black, most people assume I'm stupid. You know, all niggers are."

As Johnson expresses it:

> We make such blunders by reacting to the individual not as though he were an individual, different and variable, but as though he were merely a member of a type and the same as all other members of that type--and then we react inappropriately because we are so very sure of our opinion of the type.[15]

The person who expresses a fear of uncertainty, or complains of "things changing so fast," is one who more often than not will cherish his truth with a capital T and insist, in allness terms, that there is nothing more to the situation. The person who is unaware of projection--that his observations are an extension of himself, as well as his observable world, will ignore the fact that truth is tentative and his truth may be a non-truth for others. Unchecked self-reflexiveness allows the Aristotelian to formulate answers to his metaphysical questions by making statements about statements which may not be tied to observable reality. He will find the answer one way or the other.

The attitude of "I don't know, let's see," is foreign to the person not aware of the probability principle. He will respond in a similar fashion to any situation or event. The scientifically oriented person will not consider words as the facts they supposedly represent. He will check the territory himself or attempt, through questioning others, to get closer to observable reality.

Profile of Close-Mindedness

The Aristotelian or common sense approach to problem coping lends itself to close-mindedness--an unwillingness to accept or consider others' ideas and/or evidence which might seem contrary to existing beliefs and/or opinions. Johnson says the Aristotelian tends to be characterized by rigidity, and places a high valuation on tradition and on Authority with a capital A.

The rigid personality, which favors obedience and submission to authority is further discussed by James Martin, as the prejudiced and intolerant personality. He notes several characteristics which are similar to the Aristotelian: The rigid personality prefers dogmatism to doubt--relativistic thinking does not satisfy his intellectual appetite (A is A); the strongly prejudiced person favors obedience and submission to authority, a trait congruent with his zeal for definitiveness (does not like uncertainty or change); he appears to be low on creativeness, humanitarianism and compassion, and he is inclined to be fatalistic and pessimistic about the scientific study of human behavior (rejection of controlled, systematic observation); he makes strong distinctions between his in-groups and out-groups (either you are with me or you are not; if you agree with me, you are a good guy; if you don't you are a bad guy); he views the world as an arena of conflict, involving power struggles and competition among individuals and groups (failure to see differences among things, events, people, etc., classifying and drawing relations without adequate first-order observations). And cognitively, the strongly prejudiced person seeks certainty through the use of dichotomized absolutes (law of non-

contradiction, something cannot be both A and non-A).[16]

The intolerant and prejudiced personality is not anxious, then to change or revise his beliefs. He sees the world in absolutes, makes definite distinctions between those people he identifies with and those he doesn't (and won't listen to). This individual might show his true colors in the kinds and number of questions he asks. Does he ask questions to seek information? Or does he ask questions to reinforce his beliefs? Or does he ask questions at all?

It was mentioned earlier that the asking of CLEAR and MEANINGFUL questions to direct one's observations is the primary step in the scientific approach. Questioning of our beliefs and seeking information about others' beliefs is also a part of EMPATHIC listening and understanding. Korzybski and Johnson have proposed EXTENSIONAL DEVICES which remind one of the relationship between language and reality so that communication can be more clear and meaningful. Questions, empathic listening and understanding, extensional devices and clear and meaningful communication all contribute to the PREVENTION of communication breakdown and help group discussions from becoming DISINTEGRATIVE. Each of these elements will be discussed in light of how, if consciously used and understood disintegrative patterns in communication can be avoided.

Facilitating Communication

Perhaps the most distinquishing feature between the scientifically oriented person and the Aristotelian is the manner in which questions are asked and the number of questions asked. There are some individuals who never or rarely ask a question. It does not occur to them

that their information might be incomplete. Johnson mentions that the person who asks few questions also shows little hesitancy in answering questions asked by other, or in offering opinions on whatever is being discussed.[17] Those who display what Johnson calls a sort-of verbal brillance also exhibit a remarkable lack of self-criticism, which is essential in the process of re-examining verbal maps. The Aristotelian loves his beliefs, partially because they are HIS beliefs and does not want to change them.

Questions

The scientist, Johnson says, realizes that beliefs automatically become questions the moment he realizes that they ARE beliefs instead of facts.[18] Johnson illustrates the point: When we say, "Criminal behavior is hereditary," and realize that we have stated an hypothesis, a mere belief, it is actually as if we had said, "Is criminal behavior hereditary?" If we are very clear about our abstraction processes, we would go on to ask, "Under what conditions does criminal behavior occur?" and "To what, first of all, do the terms criminal behavior and heredity refer?"[19]

The scientist's theories and explanations are made possible through formulation of questions which direct observations. Then differences that make a difference can be observed, similarities drawn, relations examined and theories made. It is not just enough, to ASK questions. The assumptions behind them clearly must be recognized as OURS--they may not be universally accepted or valid. Johnson explains:

> To be aware that our beliefs are abstractions is to be aware that they were abstracted by us from some lower-

> order abstractions, and these in turn from abstractions of still lower order, etc. Eventually, then, we are brought back to reality, to the non-verbal levels of experience and observation.[20]

The import of asking questions is to guide us to checking our beliefs and assumptions--our higher order abstractions--with experience and observation.

It is a cardinal rule in the meaningful use of language that the terminology of the question determines the terminology of the answer. One cannot get a clear answer to a vague question.[21] Johnson further states that an answerable question will indicate WHICH parts of the territory and when we are referring to. Consider the following dialogue:

I: "Have you ever thought about the relevancy of your existence?"

II: "No."

I: "Don't you think you should?"

II: "What do you mean by the 'relevancy of my existence?'"

I: "Just that your life is meaningless when you die. No one knows you lived, therefore what good does it do to live?"

II: "I suppose it might have something to do with how you define living."

I: "How do you know you are alive? How do you know you are not dreaming and that I am a dream and the blackboard is a dream and your typewriter is a dream and everything is a dream?"

II: "That is something I couldn't care less about. Basically, because I have no way of knowing."

I: "If you have no way of knowing, then how can you justify your existence?"

II: "Tell me something, do you spend much time thinking about these things?"

I: "All the time. Every night, Because these are the only important questions we must find answers for."

Indeed, the metaphysical questions are important for the Aristotelian. It may become a rather sad state of affairs, when one begins losing sleep over such unanswerable questions.

Why unanswerable? First, WHERE do we look in the territory for "relevancy of our existence," "meaningfulness (life) after death," and "everything is a dream?" How, for instance, would we recognize "relevancy?" Does it have legs? Can it speak? Will we find it running down the street?

Second, WHEN do we search? Last week, last year, tomorrow?

Subject A seems to be looking for the ONE answer, the final absolute answer which will enable him to sleep better at night. He indicates some observable first-order facts--typewriter, blackboard, you, me--but to assume these things are, or are not, a dream is to make an inference which cannot be tied to observable reality. He seemingly is unconscious that his abstractions are unique and private and not necessarily valid. Subject A seems to be asking for reinforcement of his belief that these questions are important; he is not concerned with the critical examination of his beliefs or with the seeking of additional information which might bring a change in his assumptions.

Some of the confusion of the levels of abstraction and failure to relate map to territory in the above dialogue have been discussed, but the fact remains that some questions are simply UNANSWERABLE. As

suggested by Lee, there is scarcely any other notion more liberating, more conducive to clearheadedness than the notion that some questions are unanswerable.

Lee suggests that it is not a matter of our not having the information or the intelligence to answer them. It is simply that the questions do not imply just what particular information is required.

> No amount of intelligence can overcome this. In fact, anyone who unhesitantly and confidently answers such questions, or who persistently tries to answer them exhibits thereby a profound lack of intelligence.[22]

In summary, it would seem the person who clings to his beliefs because they are HIS beliefs and something to be cherished and not examined, is the person who asks few questions. The ones he does ask often are unanswerable. This person is unaware of the orderly process of abstraction, lives and believes on high levels of inference, accepts his assumptions uncritically, and is what the author would call a "lover of words." (And it can be pretty embarrassing to find oneself <u>loving</u> a word.)

Johnson makes a distinction between the scientifically oriented person who is conscious of abstracting and the Aristotelian in the matter of glibness. He says the former tends not to be glib. The latter tends to be very glib.

> They can rattle along at a great rate about neurotics and dropouts and Communists. They don't seem to recognize that there are any basic questions of meaning to be asked. To them a word is a word, and that's all there is to it--to say it, is to make it so.[23]

As Johnson very aptly put it, fool is one who knows all the answers but none of the questions.[24] The intolerant personality--the individual who asks few questions but has many answers--may fall into

the category of "glibness."

Questioning of our beliefs and the beliefs of others can be considered an important tool in facilitating communication. Lee notes that much of the breakdown in group discussions coincides with failure of participants to understand each other and WHEN participants understand each other. On very high levels of abstraction or inference, we can heartily agree--or understand each other--but what we agree about may mean very different things to each person on different levels of abstraction. Most often, when we do not understand each other, it is because we make evaluative judgments on what has been said, rather than trying to achieve the speaker's frame of reference.

Empathic Communication

Carl Rogers states that major barriers to mutual interpersonal communication arise from this tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve or dissapprove others' statements.[25]

Consider the following dialogue from the standpoint of evaluation:

"You treat me like a child."

"That's ridiculous. I do not."

"But, I feel you treat me as if you were my father rather than my husband."

"That's illogical and stupid and you ought to know better."

This discussion, which eventually ended in a tearful, shouting contest could have been diverted if subjects would have used what Rogers calls "listening with understanding." This, according to Rogers, is an attempt to see the expressed idea and attitude from the

other person's point of view, to sense how it feels to him, to achieve HIS frame of reference to the non-verbal phenomena. This type of listening, Rogers calls empathic listening, or understanding WITH a person, not ABOUT him.[26]

To achieve this type listening or understanding, Rogers suggests that we should, in our own words, restate the ideas expressed, to the satisfaction of the speaker. This would mean that, as nearly as possible, we would have to achieve the other speaker's frame of reference --to understand his thoughts and feelings so well that we could summarize them to his satisfaction.[27] Once a person's point of view has been verbalized, our own beliefs, attitudes, etc., may be revised. The discussion becomes less emotional: differences are reduced, and the differences remaining will be understood and more tolerable.

This empathic listening can be compared with "backing down the abstraction ladder" in an attempt to get closer to the experiential or observable levels...where events are felt, seen, heard, etc.

Questioning would seem to play an important part in this attempt to share referents for non-verbal events. Through the questioning of others' statements, ("What do you mean?" How do you know?" "Is this what you are saying?" "Do I understand you correctly to say?" etc.) one can get to the lower levels of abstraction and facilitate shared meanings with others as well as the revising of ones opinions and attitudes.

> In speaking meaningfully one does not just communicate; one communicates something to someone. And the something communicated is not the words that are used, but whatever those words represent.[28]

The <u>clarity</u> of the language employed is a measure of the degree

to which words represent the same thing for the speaker that they do for the listener. Clarity is a prerequisite for validity. Statements may be clear without having validity, but if they are unclear, their validity cannot be determined. The extensional devices and terms may be used to help both speaker and listener share meanings or experience for symbols (words) used. Johnson says:

> Only to the extent that those who hear a statement agree as to the specific conditions or observations required for ascertaining its validity can the question of its validity have meaning. And the extent to which they do agree in this sense, is of course, an indication of the extent to which the statement is clear or meaningful. If a statement is such that those who hear it do not agree at all as to how it might be verified or refuted, the statement may be "beautiful" or "eloquent," or grammatically irreproachable. But it is also, and above all, nonsense.[29]

In this process of sharing meanings, or relating symbols to reality Johnson and Korzybski offer extensional devices to help remind one of the structural relationship between language and observable reality.

Extensional Devices and Terms

The extensional devices and terms remind one of, 1) the difference between seemingly similar things, 2) that all things change and no two things are the same twice, 3) that there is always more to be said about anything, 4) that many things cannot be split verbally because those things do not exist independently of each other in reality, 5) that our observations are a joint product of our nervous system and what is observed and 6) of the false-to-fact relationship of one cause-one effect.

The extensional devices (see page 65) remind us of the self-

corrective potential of abstraction and combat elementalism, identification, either-orishness, allness, and unconscious projection.

Clear and Meaningful Communication

In this project, the extensional devices and terms were used as a partial measure for clear and meaningful communication, which goes hand-in-hand with the extensional orientation and scientific orientation.

Clear and meaningful communication here refers to the degree that statements and questions refer directly or indirectly to something in the realm of experience. As Johnson says, it is not enough that statements refer to something for the speaker and something for the listener; what is required is that they refer to approximately the same thing for both speaker and listener. He adds: Ideally, if persons are speaking with clarity and meaningfulness; if they are sharing non-verbal referents for symbols used and each understands and agrees on the referents, there should be no signal reactions in communication dialogues. The signal reaction, which is an undelayed response to a word, statement, etc., and a reaction to the word rather than what that word symbolizes, was identified each time a person INTERRUPTED another before he had finished speaking. The signal reaction signifies a lack of empathic listening and may be associated with/or lead to disintegrative patterns in the discussion.

Disintegrative Patterns

The use of empathic listening and the questioning that is a part of this kind of understanding, and the conscious use of extensional

devices can help combat signal reactions and what Irving Lee classifies as disintegrative patterns.

Lee says the tendency for discussions to become disintegrative most often occurs when differences of opinion are expressed,* and when the controversy and/or conflicts signalize a loss of rapport, so that, participants seem to be talking AT, OR PAST, rather than WITH each other.

Lee's six disintegrative patterns are: 1) when the argument moves from the issue to the personalities; 2) when colloquy between factions is marked by such ego-statements as "You're absolutely wrong," "I've had years of experience in this," "I know what I am talking about," etc.; 3) when a speaker identifies himself so thoroughly with an issue that criticism of it is construed as an attack on him; 4) when one participant fails to deal with a question or argument raised by another who continues to call attention to the failure; 5) when inaccuracy or falsification is charged, and 6) when there are discrepancies in assertions of THE facts, etc.[30] The disintegrative patterns indicate a lack of understanding of the relationship of language to reality. They signify evaluations on TERMS rather than MEANINGS and VALUES assigned to terms by human nervous systems; confusion of levels of abstraction; confusion of statements of fact with inferences; unconscious projection and a desire for certainty characteristic of the A is A orientation.

Disintegrative patterns, where people are talking AT rather than

*This does not mean that ALL arguments are disfunctional or disintegrative. As Lee notes, many times it is through the discussion of differences of opinion that solutions are worked out and ideas clarified.

WITH each other can be avoided. Lee notes that progress in the areas of understanding does NOT require a correction or simplification of the language or the creation of special abridgments. Rather, he says, progress depends on a re-orientation of attitudes toward the verbalizing process itself.

This re-orientation is central to the discipline of general semantics and is parallel to the extensional orientation. This extensional orientation centers on applying techniques and practices of general semantics as outlined in the processes of abstracting. The extensional orientation is what Johnson describes as the scientific method. It is the process of abstracting carried on consciously and adequately and it involves keeping the levels of abstraction distinct and coordinated. It means maintaining adequate word-fact relationships or relationships between inference and non-verbal facts and abstracting in the proper order from lower to higher levels and back again in a self-corrective manner.

Extensionalization can be displayed and/or observed through actions and/or behavior. One can get an idea of an individual's extensionalization (or lack of it) by observing language behavior, in that words used and the structure of statements, give us an idea to what degree one is relating map to territory.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Irving Lee, Language Habits in Human Affairs (New York, 1941), p. 195.

[2]Ibid.

[3]S. I. Hayakawa, Symbol, Status and Personality (New York, 1953), p. 95.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Lee, p. 198.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Wendell Johnson, People in Quandaries (New York, 1946), pp. 144-145.

[8]Ibid., p. 60.

[9]F. R. Eldridge, The Itty Twit (South Dakota, 1966), p. 37.

[10]Ibid., p. 39.

[11]Alfred C. Korzybski, Science and Sanity (4th ed., Lakeville, Connecticut, 1958), p. 433.

[12]Ibid., p. 434.

[13]People in Quandaries, p. 186.

[14]Ibid., p. 187.

[15]Ibid., pp. 187-188.

[16]James Martin, The Tolerant Personality (Detroit, 1964), p. 98.

[17]Johnson, p. 282.

[18]Ibid., p. 285.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., p. 54.

[22]Lee, p. 184.

[23]Wendell Johnson, Living With Change, ed. Dorothy Moeller (New York, 1972), p. 95.

[24]People in Quandaries, p. 53.

[25]Carl Rogers, "Communication: It's Blocking and Its Facilitating," Language, Meaning and Maturity, ed. S. I. Hayakawa (New York, 1954), p. 54.

[26]Rogers, p. 55.

[27]Rogers, p. 56.

[28]People in Quandaries, p. 51.

[29]Ibid., pp. 51-52.

[30]Irving Lee, "Why Discussions Go Astray," Language, Meaning and Maturity, ed. S. I. Hayakawa (New York, 1954), p. 41.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This project attempts to see to what degree students are extensionalizing general semantic principles by analyzing clear and meaningful communication (sharing referents for symbols and/or relating the "map" to the "territory") and to examine disintegrative patterns in group discussions.

Thus far, the Aristotelian orientation has been discussed in terms of the A is A laws. It has been noted that the Aristotelian shares certain commonalities with the close-minded, intolerant person, who most often is unwilling to change his beliefs, rarely asks questions and often makes glib and verbose statements about whatever is being discussed.

The scientific orientation has been explained in relation to keeping verbal maps coordinated with non-verbal realities. The extensional devices, the self-corrective processes of the concept of empathic understanding and asking questions have been offered as ways to facilitate communication and avoid disintegrative patterns.

Objectives Restated

The overall purpose of this study was to determine to what degree students were extensionalizing language behavior. Three anal major analyses were performed:

1. Examination of the number and kind of questions asked,

2. Examination of the frequency of clear and meaningful indices as defined by the extensional devices and techniques, and

3. Examination of signal reactions in relationship to disintegrative patterns.

Subjects were students enrolled in a general semantics class at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma during the spring semester of 1973. As a requirement for the course, students were asked to form groups of three and present a panel discussion on some topic of their choice. Instructions for the discussion, taken from the class syllabus were:

> A series of three-member Feedback Panels are set up to discuss common problems that lend themselves to eliciting widely varying opinions.
>
> The attached problem statements are portrayed in the abstract--somewhat as they often are in the mass media and in daily conversations. (These topics are offered as examples. No doubt, you will think of others.)
>
> Please get together with two other persons and choose a topic by Friday, January 19.
>
> Format of the Feedback Panel discussions is outlined as follows:
>
> a) Panel members research and discuss various aspects of the issue from the standpoint of general semantics or similar frame: i.e. the language, Aristotelian orientation, levels of abstraction, process "reality," structure of maps compared with territories, etc. You might divide your intended remarks into several different approaches and share the responsibilities.
>
> b) Members of the class are asked to initiate discussion by questioning the panel--questions concerning their opinions and/or curiosity about the issue. Or, they might ask about the "facts" surrounding the issue. Or, they may cite instances they have experienced or observed that centered on the issue. The major interest in these presentations profitably could be in the analysis of evidence of Aristotelian orientations that affect us all. Panels carry 0 to 300 points.

All of the nine panel discussions were tape recorded and three were selected for analysis. Among those were the first and last panel of the semester, selected for comparison over time.

In the meaningful use of language it is a cardinal rule that the terminology of the question determines the terminology of the answer. One cannot get a clear answer to a vague question. The scientific method as manifested through language behavior begins with asking clear and meaningful questions in order to direct one's observations. Asking questions seems essential in adequate communication, if we are to attempt to share referents for non-verbal phenomena. In other words, we must question our own beliefs and ask questions of others' statements which will lead us to the observations necessary to understand those beliefs/statements.

Questions were then examined from the standpoint of unanswerable and answerable questions. The former is the vague, meaningless question because it does not imply just what particular information may be required to answer it. For example, the question, "Do you think a liberal believes in change for change's sake?" is an unanswerable question. Where would one go to find a liberal and how would one know change for change's sake? There can be (and was) considerable discussion on this question which will lead nowhere except into other areas of unanswerable questions.

An answerable question is one stated precisely so the means of answering it are clearly indicated. The specific observations needed and the conditions under which they are to be made are implied in the question itself. The way to avoid unanswerable questions is to indicate where and when one may reasonably expect to find answers. In

distinquishing unanswerable from answerable questions the following question was asked of each person's question: "By exactly what procedures might a reliable factual answer to it be found?" If the question did not indicate which parts of the territory and when observations were to be made it was classified as an unanswerable question.

Number of Questions Asked

The number of statements and questions asked were counted. In all panels, subjects spoke 876 times. Only 167 of these utterances were questions. By comparing the first panel of the semester with the last, fewer questions were asked in the latter than the former. This might indicate that, even through taking the class, students had not learned the importance of asking questions in relating verbal maps with non-verbal territories. Simple chi square tests were used to test each panel's number of statements against the number of questions. Table I, page 56, shows that for all panels and the grand total, chi squares were significant at the .001 level. We would expect these results to occur by chance one in 1,000 times--a highly significant result.

Students in all panel discussions seemed to be more eager to make statements, exert opinions, give answers, etc., than to ask questions.

In attempting to explain the lack of questions, one might ask first, what the panels' subjects were. A summary statement of discussion leader's topics (by the author) is as follows:

Panel I: The dangers of labeling.

Panel II: What is learning?

Panel III: A discussion on the panel discussions.

TABLE I

NUMBER OF QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE LEVELS FOR PANEL DISCUSSIONS

	Questions	Statements	P	Total
Panel I	68	220	$p < .001$	288
Panel II	69	335	$p < .001$	404
Panel III	30	154	$p < .001$	184
Total	167	709	$p < .001$	876

All topics seem broad enough to elicit a wide range of opinions and all panel discussions lasted until the class period (50 minutes) ended. It is immediately apparent, however, that Panel II had far more total verbalisms than the other two panels. This may be a direct result of the method of counting statements and questions. Each time a person spoke, it was counted. When a person was interrupted by another before he had finished completing his statement the remark was counted as one statement. The person who interrupted was credited with one--even if the interruption was only one or two words. These interruptions, called signal reactions and shown in Table II, might help explain why panel II has a larger total. The larger number of total statements is partially due to the fact that many statements, because of interruptions were shorter--there were more to be counted. Another reason, and perhaps a more important one, is that 201 of the total 404 verbalisms were spoken by subject Bc and many of the interruptions were from other students attempting to voice their opinions. (The 201

occurrences do not include the number of times this subject was speaking at the same time others were speaking).

TABLE II

SIGNAL REACTIONS COMPARED WITH QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS IN EACH OF THE PANEL DISCUSSIONS

	Signal Reactions	Questions	Statements	Total
Panel I	36	68	220	288
Panel II	155	69	335	404
Panel III	67	30	154	184

The amount of questions ASKED in comparison to statements MADE can be one way to guage the extent one is attempting to share referents or relate maps to the territories. The individual who asks few questions may be the one who doesn't stop to consider that his beliefs, attitudes, etc., may need revising--that his information is out-dated or inadequate. Note, in Table III, page 58, subjects Bc and D, seem quite glib and verbose but ask few questions in relation to the number of statements made. In all cases except Rs and G, students verbalized twice as many (or more) statements as they did questions. A Spearman rank order correlation coefficient of .73 was significant at the .01 level, further supporting the notion that overall, as students make fewer statements they also ask fewer questions. The difference between the scores is high, however, with Bc and J making 12 times as many statements as questions they asked.

It was indicated that the close-minded person asks few questions

and gives many "answers" or seems very glib and verbose. Bc and J, and to a great extent, D and B display this kind of language behavior. It is also noteworthy that Bc had 63 signal reactions, (interrupted a person before he had finished speaking), D had 46 and J had 20. One might suspect that these three subjects are high in Aristotelianism and low in both empathic listening and self-corrective abstracting aided by the use of questions.

TABLE III

TOTAL NUMBER OF STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS
BY EACH PANEL MEMBER

Persons	Statements	Questions
Bc	287	24
D	73	21
B	54	13
J	49	4
A	44	21
N	34	5
E	15	5
T	14	3
P	14	0
R	13	3
Br	9	3
K	7	3
Rs	5	5
G	2	2

Answerable and Unanswerable Questions

Of the questions asked, three categories were isolated; 1) answerable questions, 2) unanswerable questions and 3) non-issue questions. (non-issue included questions such as "Pardon me?" "Question over there?" "What did you say?" or similar questions. They were not included in the analysis since they were of low profile regarding specific information on an issue.

The unanswerable questions (vague, ambiguous, nonsensical) far outnumbered the answerable ones (indicating from which parts of the territory and when observations are to be, or were, made. A question is no more than a series of puffs of air, if the means for finding possible answers are not clearly indicated within the question.

In this analysis, only five of the 167 questions filled the criteria for answerable questions. Out of the total 876 questions and statements, five answerable questions would be one-half of one percent of the total. For asking clear and meaningful questions to direct observations and revise beliefs, class members were "drastically" low. Table IV lists the five questions, who asked them, and subjects' number of total statements and questions.

Notice that three of the answerable questions came from individuals who did not speak as often as others. (Subjects K, R and Br) Also note that Bc, out of 24 questions had only one classified as answerable and subject A had one answerable question out of 21. Bc's question is simple and directly asks for an explanation of an observable behavior. On the other hand, K's question asks for observable referents for classifications. While K seems to be backing down the

abstraction ladder and seeking information to describe higher level inferences, Bc is moving up the ladder and seeking information about a non-verbal action. While both questions display a conscious use of the processes of abstracting, K's question seeks a description while Bc's seeks an explanation.

Subjects K and Br, who each had one answerable question out of three questions asked, had two and one signal reactions for all panels respectively. This may indicate that persons who have fewer signal reactions and fewer overall statements ask more questions in relationship to the number of statements they make and those questions tend more often to be answerable questions.

TABLE IV

FIVE ANSWERABLE QUESTIONS, COMPARED WITH TOTAL QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS UTTERED BY EACH OF FIVE PARTICIPANTS

Subject	Answerable Question	Total Questions	Total Statements
K:	What kind of first-level observations are you basing these categories on, and the labels you are putting on people?	3	7
Br:	What is your definition of a liberal?	3	9
R:	Well, where did you get this information that you are disseminating right now?	3	13
A:	What I am asking is, is you know, what are you basing the facts on, that a person to be liberal must have to be well traveled?	21	44
Bc:	Why are you shaking your head?	24	287

Table V shows the total numbers of answerable and unanswerable questions for each panel.

TABLE V

NUMBER OF ANSWERABLE AND UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS FOR EACH PANEL

	Answerable	Unanswerable	Total
Panel I	2	47	49
Panel II	3	46	49
Panel III	0	18	18
Total	5	111	116

The number of answerable questions is negligible and it is interesting to note that far less questions were asked on Panel III than Panels II or I. It is noteworthy that in this discussion almost one third of all statements were interrupted. (See Table II) It seemed to be perhaps the most hostile and/or heated discussion of the three. Subject D, a panel discussion leader, expressed his dislike for the general semantics class by suggesting that a cure for the panel discussions might be to do away with the panels or do away with the class, and that the course certainly wasn't worth $14.

Several times during this discussion, people were talking simultaneously. Class members were for the most part supporting the idea of panel discussions while the panel leaders steadfastly maintained the panels were worthless and often discounted other's opinions as "you don't understand," or "that is not important to the discussion."

It was a highly charged, emotional discussion and, as Rogers says, it is most difficult to listen empathetically (or question others to attempt to see something from their point of view) when emotions run high.

Questions to Seek Information and to Reinforce Beliefs

Some questions are asked to seek information, others to seek reinforcement of beliefs. A question which attempts to solicit information about what the speaker is referring to, what thing or event, that can be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, felt, or somehow directly known, (neurally or extraneurally) is counted as a question to seek information. Questions which ask "What do you mean?" or "Do I understand correctly?" or other questions which attempt to restate what has been verbalized are questions classified as seeking information.

Questions which seek reinforcement of beliefs are recognized most easily because they are simply declarative statements in a question format. "Do you mean to tell me that you really believe...?" would be an example. The forced choice question is also classified as a reinforcement of beliefs. It is one which gives the respondent only two alternatives. "Do you think learning is beneficial or not?" would be an example.

A leading question is one which indicates the response desired, such as, "Don't you think education on this campus is a farce?" Questions which fall into the non-issue category are those which facilitate the discussion such as "Question over there? or "Pardon me?" or some other question which in essence neither seeks information nor reinforcement of beliefs.

A question may be both answerable and to reinforce beliefs. This is illustrated with A's question (See Table IV). He is asking for referents for "liberal" and "well-traveled," but alone, these things can not be observed in non-verbal reality; thus, the question is classified as one to reinforce beliefs. Table VI shows reinforcing and seeking questions for all panels.

TABLE VI

QUESTIONS ACROSS ALL PANELS, SHOWING CATEGORIES OF SEEKING INFORMATION AND REINFORCING BELIEFS FOR ANSWERABLE AND UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS

	Questions				
	Answerable		Unanswerable		
	Seek Information	Reinforce Beliefs	Seek Information	Reinforce Beliefs	Total
Panel I	1	1	6	41	49
Panel II	3	0	12	34	49
Panel III	0	0	3	15	18
Total	4	1	21	90	

An example of an unanswerable question to reinforce beliefs is:

Bc: "Now can you tell me, from what you have done and from the few remarks you have made, do you think this is a state of mind or reality?" The most appropriate answer to this perhaps melodious-sounding, but nonsensical, question might be "I have no idea." The question is UNANSWERABLE because no observable referents exist for "reality" and "state of mind." Also, only two alternatives are presented, classifying this question as a forced choice question.

The following is an example of an unanswerable question classified

as seeking information.

A: "Okay, what was it what was it you wanted out of the panels?" It is unanswerable again for the same reasons given in the example above. It was classified as SEEKING INFORMATION because it attempted to gain information on lower levels of abstraction--"what was it you wanted"--and information obtained potentially could have been related to or directly explained by observable sense data.

More REINFORCING than SEEKING questions were asked, indicating an Aristotelian orientation of subjects. The UNANSWERABLE-REINFORCEMENT category drew far more entries than any other. This would seem to indicate that subjects were more anxious to have others agree to, or reinforce, their beliefs. They seem to be less concerned with ASKING QUESTIONS of others' to revise their beliefs or attempt empathic understanding. They seem to be content with existing opinions and reluctant to consider "differences which might make a difference" in their evaluations.

In analyzing statements an attempt was made to determine how often subjects were relating maps to the territories in their language behavior. Johnson and Korzybski's extensional devices were used as indices of clear and meaningful communication. If consciously employed they help remind us 1) of the relationship of map and territory, 2) that language is static and reality dynamic, 3) to limit our generalizations to more specific statements 4) that our language is a product of what is observed and our observations of it, 5) that language is man-made and only as effective as its users, and 6) that there is always more to be said, etc. The purpose in employing extensional devices is to make language more precise, more clear and

meaningful and thusly facilitate understanding and agreement, elements desirable, if not necessary in meaningful group communications. The extensional devices are:

1. Indexes: Indication of differences between <u>things</u>: i.e. learning$_1$ is not learning$_2$, conservative$_1$ is not conservative$_2$.

2. Dates: Indication of indexing time: i.e. Frank $_{\text{yesterday}}$ is not Frank $_{\text{today}}$, Classes $_{\text{this semester}}$ are not classes $_{\text{last semester}}$.

3. Etc: The use of the term etc., indicating there is <u>more</u> to say.

4. Plurals: Indicating that there are more than <u>one</u> "things," i.e., cause<u>s</u>, effect<u>s</u>, reason<u>s</u>, objective<u>s</u>.

5. Operational Terms: Indication of descriptions of actions performed. Indicating which parts of the territory must be examined to describe the actions involved in observations made.

6. Quantifying Terms: Terms which specify exact numerical values, i.e., 236 students rather than many or lots, etc.

7. Qualifying Terms: Terms which serve to qualify, to state exceptions and specify conditions, i.e., except, but, under conditions of.

8. Consciousness of Projection: Indication that subjects recognized their statements are a product of observer and observed. Words which indicate to-me-ness, i.e., as I see it, to me, I believe, from my point of view, it seems to me, etc.

9. Hyphens: Indication of an awareness that things cannot be separated on the non-verbal level, i.e., socio-political-economic effects, rather than social effects or political effects only.

Each of the indices for each of the persons who spoke in the

discussions was counted. If no indices were found the statement was scored "zero."

Statements and Extensional Devices

The frequency of use of the nine devices is shown in Table VII. Some individuals who contributed to discussions were excluded from the statements' analysis because they were not regular members of the class for that semester.

Several things are indicated simply by looking at raw scores. A total of 147 devices used is a small ratio to 623 statements uttered; devices one, three, five and nine were not used at all and device eight occurs more than three times as often as the next highest number.

Etc

Of the four "zero" devices there was one exception when Subject B used the word etc., (device three) in the following statement.

B: "Well, he's talking about Daley, let's say, and he says, oh, Daley is a typical politician, you know, he is corrupt, etc., etc., etc., he has got a stake in the business, you know and all this."

In this instance, B was not using the etc., to remind listeners and himself that there is more to be said; he used the etc., because he apparently could not think of other adjectives to describe Daley. Simply parroting the etc., when it is convenient does not indicate an awareness of its value or meaningfulness in relating language to reality.

It was expected that the etc., would occur frequently because it

TABLE VII

NUMBERS OF EXTENSIONAL DEVICES EMPLOYED BY EACH PARTICIPANT IN THE THREE PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Subjects	Indexes	Dates	Etc.	Plurals	Oper. Terms	Quant. T.	Qual. T.	Con. of Proj.	Hyphens	Total Statements
Bc						15	10	22		287
D				2			2	13		73
B		1		1		1	3	8		54
J		1		2		1		20		49
A				2				5		44
N		1				2	1	1		34
E						2		1		15
T								1		14
P							1	1		14
R		1		1			3	1		13
Br							2	1		9
K				1		4	3	3		7
Rs								3		5
C				2						3
G						1				2
Total	0	4	0	11	0	26	25	80	0	623

Grand Total: 147

is such an easy word to parrot or attach to the end of a statement. This did not happen. If the etc. can be said to help counteract an allness orientation--by reminding us of the self-reflexive nature of language and that there is always more to be said--that you can never say it all--it may be that panel participants displayed a strong allness orientation.

Indexes

Failure to use the indexing device may point out one instance of inability to extensionalize principles one seemingly knows. In the following statements, Subject A seems to be attempting to verbalize the index device.

A: "Do you think you know, that you can define liberal, just as somebody...all encompassing as being liberal, or is, you know...

"like to really get back to the book, you know, you can't step in the same river twice, but--

"That if you are not always the same person then you are not always liberal or not always conservative or not always moderate or something, you know.

"If you want to use all those labels that a person could be, what we would call liberal about one thing and conservative about another thing and at different times in his life, you know, could switch back and forth."

Subject A seems to be verbalizing the difference between things, that one may not always be liberal or could be liberal and conservative; but neither A nor other students remembered to use the indexing device as in learning$_1$ learning$_2$, or liberal$_1$ liberal$_2$, panel

discussion$_1$ panel discussion$_2$ etc.

Dates

Closely related to the indexing device is the dating device used only once by four different persons. This device dates time, whereas the indexing device distinguishes between things.

Subject A's statement discussed above also could apply to the dating device. You may be classified as a "liberal" $_{\text{last year}}$ but you may not be the same "liberal" $_{\text{today}}$.

The lack of use of these two devices seems to indicate the students did not recognize differences between things, or the potential for things to change, over time. These kinds of differences would be noted if students had operated first on a low descriptive level--the first verbal level of abstracting--before progressing up to the higher classification level of description and further to relations levels where similarities are heeded and judgments made.

Look at two of the four examples of dating devices used in the panels: The first was in response to the question "Could you vote for George Wallace?" N: "Not in 1972, I couldn't, no."

Person N seems to be distinguishing his voting preferences in 1972 with voting preferences in past, present and/or future years.

In the second example, subject J says: "We're not trying to put our beliefs on you. We're just telling you what we three people thought of the panel discussions as they have been presented in the spring of 1973."

"The spring of 1973" sets a limit on the time period which discussions were evaluated. It would have been more specific if subject

J would have indexed which panel discussion(s) he was referring to. However, from the context of the discussion, panel leaders (J included) made clear they were referring to all panels presented. In this sense, the Aristotelian would see no need to index, date or look for differences among things (panels) which might imply exceptions to the rule (the general classification).

Operational Terms

The operational term is perhaps the most difficult device to use. It is not as surprising that no examples of it were found. This device requires what activities or operations are necessary to observe certain non-verbal phenomenon. It says, "Do such-and-such in so-and-so a manner." Operational definitions are a vital element in the scientific approach (see page 24) which begins with asking questions to direct our observations. What to look for and how to look for it involve the operational definitions.

This is where we define what parts of the territory are to be examined and how we are to go about making our examinations. The operational definition is hard to deal with because it applies directly to the observable world. As has been stressed, the Aristotelian (which most all of us are, insofar as we are not scientific) deals more often in the verbal world than he does in the non-verbal world. He classifies through the use of labels and fits many things into those labels, discounting observations on the non-verbal levels which might not fit into his man-made symbols. Perhaps an example will help clarify the need for operational definitions. The following was taken from panel III where students discussed the value of the panel

discussions. Although students did not specifically state, "Give me an operational definition of the panel discussions so I will know what to look for and how to look for it," there were indications that students were trying to seek more information. For example:

A: "Okay, what was it, what was it you wanted out of the panels?"

E: "Well, the question was, 'Are the panels as presented in general semantics this semester providing a means for further understanding of the framework of general semantics?' you know:::"

A: "Uh huh, you said something about, you said benefits and it would seem to me, you know that it was some really big thing."

E: "Well, benefits to me, is I feel, like I have to internalize it, you know, it's just a personal thing with me. Whatever Johnson says"

J: "I think A--what I feel, anyhow, is that the panels as a whole, not the class, but the panels, have really not succeeded in providing me with a further understanding of the framework of semantics."

An operational definition could have indicated WHAT observations were made and HOW they were made to arrive at the conclusion that a further understanding of the framework of general semantics was not provided. Without this information or explanation, one has no indication of how the conclusion was reached or how one might make observations to arrive at a similar and/or different conclusions.

The response to J's statement indicates an example of Aristotelian logic. Subject B (in the next statement made) seems to say, because the panels did not provide a framework for further understanding, they were a failure. (A or non-A) If they were a failure, they

couldn't be a success. (either-or) Note, also in the following statement the lack of indexing and dating for panels.

B: "Well, I have been in other classes where I felt panels were successful and they were, I'd say in subjects that were relatively new, to me, so the panel itself can be successful."

The six statements mentioned above were among the first 20 utterances of panel III. The topic for discussion was based on an unanswerable question to reinforce beliefs. (See E's statement, page 71) Throughout the remainder of the discussion panel members indicated no change of beliefs about the panels. This was the panel where the least number of questions was asked, 30 compared with 68 and 69 on panels I and II, respectively. Two of the three discussion leaders fell in the top four subjects for the most statements made; Subject D with 73 statements and subject J with 49 statements.

Look at the following statements taken from the last 15 utterances of the panel and note how rigidly subject J has seemingly held to his initial position.

J: "We're not trying to put our beliefs on you. We're telling you what we as three people thought of the panel discussions as they have been presented in the spring of 1973.

"And we're not saying the panels were worthless. We're not saying that nothing was gained from them. We're just saying that as a tool for understanding general semantics, we think that they have been more of a failure than a success.

"As the three of us are concerned, we have learned more from listening to Ward talk than we have in listening to these panels."

Perhaps the key element of the discussion was "we're not trying

to put our beliefs on you," which seemed to say, "We don't want your opinions either. Don't rock our verbal world with any confusing observable data." Without operational definitions for panel discussions, participants could not get even close to sharing non-verbal referents.

Hyphens

The fourth category where no devices were found was the hyphen, which reminds us that things traditionally separated verbally may not be separated and/or unrelated non-verbally. Consider the following examples which could have been hyphenated:

D: "R____, What business is it of yours whether he is a liberal or conservative, anyway?" (Apparently he could not be liberal-conservative-etc.)

J: "I think practical knowledge, theoretical knowledge, I think is really off the subject, because first of all we're not advocating what you should get out of this course in this panel." (Apparently not practical-theoretical knowledge.)

With the traditional IE language structure orientation, where events are viewed in absolutes and one cause-one effect relationships, it is not hard to understand that students would not use the device which indicates an inability to isolate or separate events on the non-verbal.

Consciousness of Projection

The consciousness of projection was by far the device used most in panel discussions. Eighty instances were found in comparison to 26 instances of qualifying terms, the next highest count for all devices.

This, again was a highly predictable finding, since the consciousness of projection terms fit easily and smoothly into our existing language structure. It is easy to use such words as "to me," "it seems," "as I see it," etc., which indicates that our observations are a product of what is observed and our observations of it. It reminds speaker and listener that he is speaking for himself not stating something for example as an absolute truth, forever true and for all people true. It is also the easiest term to parrot, or use without an awareness of its meaning.

The consciousness of projection term preceeded, or followed by, an allness statement, an either-or statement or a non-contradictory statement can be an indication of parroting--an unawareness on the part of the user as to the meaning of "to me."

In cases where it was readily apparent that the consciousness of projection terms were parroted, they were not counted. When it immediately could not be recognized, or when there was some doubt, the device was counted. Examine some of the following statements and notice the ease with which to-me terms are used.

B: "You have used it several times here, it seems to me you are talking about experiences, you know, that young ladies might have in college meeting men."

B: "And you told me, uh, you gave me no clue as to how things really are. Er, not even accurate stab at it, as far as I can see."

Bc: "I learn...you see I didn't learn anything as far as I am concerned."

K: "Okay, maybe, maybe I have personally observed a couple of people who I feel have learned something in the classroom situation or

maybe someone has told me."

Bc: "I don't think you can observe somebody who have learned something, unless you have your own personal experience to tell me:::"

J: "It seems to me and I think it seems to Doug and Ed that it is not a matter of just theoretical knowledge it's more of something that has to grow within you."

J: "I don't know whether it ever should be, to me."

A: "So, it seems to me that you are saying that we should have this theoretical knowledge of it but not a practical knowledge of it, I mean, you know, the part where he is talking about how physicists look down on engineers for actually using the science, you know, when:::"

Although the consciousness of projection may have been parroted more often than consciously employed, it may have had an effect on listeners. It is noteworthy that when discussions became disintegrative to the point where people were arguing or talking at the same time or even saying, "Okay, so just shut your mouth," NO to-me-ness terms were to be found. (Students' may have been so emotionally involved they forgot to parrot their "it seems to me" phrases.)

In looking at the "to-me-ness" frequencies, we find that Bc had 22, J had 20 and D had 13, a total of 55 out of the 80 occurrences.

Table VIII compares the number of consciousness of projection occurrences with total statements for the highest four persons.

Subject Bc displays a relative lack of the to-me-ness terms. Although he has the highest number of occurrences, 22 out of 287 statements is far less than could be expected, if he were consciously aware of the meaning and use of the device. Because these persons had

the highest frequency of to-me-ness terms does not necessarily mean they were more aware that their statements involved projections of their inner states. First we would expect them to have more occurrences simply because they made more statements than others. But, if they were consciously employing this device they all would have scored high on other indexes across the nine devices tabulated. This was not the case. It would seem to follow that the person, no matter how often he speaks, who is aware of his language behavior and consciously recognizes his projections, would NOT be quick to argue with others about their words. Notice in Table VIII these persons showed the highest rate of signal reactions, by displaying identification when they interrupted another person before he had finished completing a statement or question.

TABLE VIII

CONSCIOUSNESS OF PROJECTION FREQUENCIES AND SIGNAL REACTIONS COMPARED WITH TOTAL STATEMENTS IN ALL PANELS FOR FOUR PERSONS

Subjects	Consciousness of Projection	Total Statements	Signal Reactions
Bc	22	287	63
D	13	73	46
J	20	49	20
B	8	54	4

Plurals

Eleven examples of plurals were found in all discussions. Six of these devices were found among panelists who uttered fewer statements.

In other words, they were not among the most "glib and verbose" persons. The plurals serve to remind us that there may be more than one cause (thus causes) and more than one effect, (thus effects) etc., to whatever we observe or talk about. Johnson suggests that to speak of fallings in loves, rather than falling in love, is to suggest by implication that $love_1$ is not $love_2$ and that there are many ways of falling. To use language in this way tends to avoid undue rigidity of beliefs and conduct. It is apparent that panelists were not using this device to counteract rigidity.

Quantifying and Qualifying Terms

The two other categories tallied were the quantifying and qualifying terms. The former specify exact numerical quantities; the latter serve to limit generalizations to more specific conditions. It is fairly easy, and not too unnatural, in the existing IE language structure to say "three people" rather than "several," or "I know one person," rather than "I know of examples," etc. By using qualifying terms, generalizations are limited to certain examples of situations. Again, to say, "in a class last semester" rather than "in universities," and "in this particular case," rather than "all situations dictate," etc.

In summary, each one of the extensional devices indicates a certain type of awareness of the relationship between non-verbal and verbal worlds. The devies go hand-in-hand and have little effect on adequate communication and/or meaningful dialogue if substantial usage of all of them is not present.

Look at some of the following examples from the panels and note

how easily it might be to use the quantifying device:

E: "Yeah, I mentioned that twice."

Bc: If you take 20 hours of law would that make you a good lawyer?"

N: Three ag students and a cowboy.

In Bc's statement the 20 hours was counted as a quantifying device because it serves to note a specific number of hours. But, note the identification displayed in the total statement: 20 hours of law EQUALS goodlawyer. Each one of the extensional devices may indicate a certain type of awareness of the relationship between non-verbal and verbal worlds. But the devices go hand-in-hand and have little effect on clear and meaningful communication if substantial usage of all of them is not present.

Signal Reactions

Recall that Rogers suggests that understanding can be facilitated through empathetic listening, (See page 45) or listening WITH someone rather than ABOUT him. Empathetic listening means one would make sure he understands what someone means. One tries to achieve the frame of reference of the speaker or attempts to see the situation "from his point of view." Rogers seems to be saying one would not make value judgments based on another's words.

The signal reaction, or undelayed response would be a response to someone's words, in most cases without attempting to fully understand what that person is talking about. Consider the following series of signal reactions: (note, this notation ::: signifies a signal reaction)

Bc: "Well, if you think that is learning, I mean I will tell you

that is the old stuff, you know, you spoke of the old stuff, you know. You get a professor telling you what Plato said. He wasn't there, was he?:::"

Z: "We have got written records:::"

Bc: "Even the professor who wrote it wasn't there, when Plato was alive. I mean:::"

Z: "It doesn't matter whether he is alive or dead:::"

Bc: "I, I, it:::"

Z: "It's nice to think about the ideas he brought up. I would... it could be John Doe:::"

Bc: "Now, wait a minute:::"

Z: "It could be anybody:::"

Bc and Z talking at the same time...(inaudible)...

Z: "What source is reliable? It is just nice to get a whole bunch of information:::"

Bc and Z talking at the same time...(inaudible)...

It is easily seen that neither person understood or attempted to empathize with the other person's point of view. If either of these subjects would have asked questions to gain information on lower levels of abstraction or restated the other person's ideas the discussion might not have been interrupted with both persons talking at the same time. Of the latter, it can be safely said, that "no" understanding of statements is shared when persons are talking AT each other at the SAME time.

Disintegrative Patterns

If, as Rogers suggests, understanding and, thus, maximum agreement

are gained through empathetic listening, then a listener who reacts to the speaker in an undelayed, signal-like pattern nips any chance for clear and meaningful communication at the bud.

Through empathetic listening, principals try to lay their abstractions end-to-end, so to speak, in order to see the situation from the other's view. This seems to imply a conscious effort NOT to react signally to another's words as if they meant to the speaker what they mean to the listener. This would involve, among other things, that the listener restate the speaker's ideas and inquiries to the speaker's satisfaction--in short, to delay reaction to delve into what the words are intended to symbolize.

Lee, in analyzing 50 group discussions, found six types of what he called "disintegrative patterns." They seem to comprise at least a partial anti-thesis to Rogers' empathetic listening notion and to the general semantics' principle of delayed and/or symbol reaction.

When interpersonal dialogues reached any of the six points of conflict, Lee observed that the processes of understanding often became disintegrative. The following discussion of Lee's disintegrative pattern categories hopefully will render evidence to the reader that each category involved various degrees of undelayed signal reactions which clearly are anti-thetical to any potential empathetic listening.

In the first of six disintegrative categories observed by Lee, arguments were found to move from issues to personalities. This often indicates a person's single-valued belief in a belief. If his belief IS the fact, then anything perceived as contrary to his belief is an attack on HIM, personally, since he is RIGHT and nothing else is relevant. If one participant's referent is to the non-verbal level of

abstraction and other's is based on strictly a verbal definition, either of the parties could self-reflex and verbally label the other a fool. Derogatory reverberations often are set in motion and chances for agreement on the original issue are lost.

A similar non-empathetic signal reaction pattern was observed by Lee in ego statements, such as: "You're absolutely wrong," "I've had years of experience in this," and like statements. The single-valued, allness aspects of such behavior seem obvious.

Closely tied to the issues-to-personalities category was the apparent tendency in Lee's studies for some persons to identify themselves with an issue so thoroughly that any criticism of the issue was perceived as an attack on the individuals. Here, again, another's WORDS about an issue quite likely were seen as expressing ALL a person felt about it. The Aristotelian might say to himself: "If that guy feels that way about MY issue, he feels that way about ME, since my belief is THE RIGHT one." Unconscious projection manifested in signal reaction seems evident here. The person whose beliefs ARE reality often identifies a speaker's words with his (the speaker's) submicroscopic feelings.

Lee also observed that some group discussion participants fail to deal with a question or argument even after repeated prompting. Such behavior could involve many aspects of Aristotelian behavior, not the least of which is a person's single-minded attempt to convince others that HIS maps are the ONLY ones worth considering. Therefore, the questions and/or statements set forth refer to something that doesn't exist or are an inaccurate picture of what really exists. To such participants, what really exists too often is what they SAY

exists. That's all! Period!

Aligned with the above category, Lee noticed that some participants charged others with inaccuracies and/or falsifications. To the person whose belief IS reality, or whose words ARE ALL the facts, others' views stand little chance of being accurate, if not downright false.

Persons who believe their beliefs (unchecked self-reflexiveness) without periodic attempts to seek new and/or more reliable evidence, often reveal discrepancies in their assertions of THE facts--another disintegrative patterns Lee observed. This can happen when the true believer's unsubstantiated belief (a belief about a belief not founded by description of systematic observation) obviously runs contrary to another person's description of actual observations made. Such confrontations often trigger signal reactions. The parties involved speak different languages--one based on observation...the other on belief.

In this study, the author observed 178 disintegrative incidents among the 14 panelists, as shown in Table IX. The average incident per person was 12.71 (standard deviation: 15.70). However, the distribution of incidents per person was highly skewed to the left, indicating extra-ordinarily high incidents among a few panelists.

Panelists Bc and D led the list in disintegrative incidents, with 58 and 38, respectively. Their respective standard scores of 2.88 and 1.61 further highlighted their disintegrative behavior relative to other panel members.

As shown in Table III, (See page 58) these two panelists also showed the highest verbal output, having made 287 and 73 statements,

respectively. Also in Table III, Bc asked only 24 questions, 8.4 per cent of his total utterances. Panelist D asked 21 questions, 28.7 per cent of his total utterances. Panelist D once stated in class that he had never taken a course that was worth the tuition fee. He then proceeded to ask another class member what he had learned in college that was worth the tuition fee. Noteworthy here is the fact that Panelist D, later appeared at the class instructor's home, along with Panelist J, demanding why he had received a course grade of C. The instructor (as told to the author) told the two former class members he thought their performance average compared with other class members. It is also interesting to note that panelist D had a disintegrative pattern standard score of 2.88 and panelist J, a .21. These standard scores were computed long after the panelists confronted the instructor about the course grade.

TABLE IX

NUMBER OF DISINTEGRATIVE INCIDENTS AND STANDARD SCORES OF THE 14 PANELISTS

Panelists	Disintegrative Incidents	Standard Score
Bc	58	2.88
D	38	1.61
J	16	.21
A	15	.15
E	13	.02
Z	11	-.11
T	7	-.36
N	7	-.36
B	4	-.56
K	2	-.68
G	2	-.68
P	2	-.68
R	2	-.68
Br	1	-.75

*Standard scores are an expression of an individual's standard deviation from the mean.

At this point, it is noteworthy to examine two examples of communications which became so disintegrative that subjects became antagonistic and vicious towards each other. The first example is preceded by a series of D and A shouting at each other from opposite sides of the classroom.

D: "Why talk politics with someone you already know what they are going to say? Why, you know be prepared for a liberal argument or a conservative argument?:::"

A: "You are going into something that, that, I didn't mean. So let me explain it."

D: "Yeah, I don't care what you menat."

A: "Well, yeah, I know you don't know what you mean, 'cause you just told me you didn't."

D: "I don't know what you mean, but I don't care either."

A: "Yeah, right, well, you know, it's really not worth talking about if you:::"

D: "I know:::"

A:..."really don't care:::"

D: "So just shut your mouth."

Subject D shows a total rejection of anything A wants to discuss and becomes so vicious about it he finally tells A to "shut his mouth." The disintegrative patterns here involved the issue turning to personalities, discrepancies in the assertion of the facts, patterns 1 and 6, which also received, overall, the most instances of signal reactions.

The next example could also be characterized by patterns 1 and 6 and also somewhat by pattern 2, ego statements.

E: "Well, I mentioned that twice, to me, it is a personal

problem.

I am concerned with my behavior, you know, so if I am to internalize general semantics:::"

Bc: "You, you, you are wrong. You forced me to make that statement that it is foolish:::"

E and Bc talking at the same time...(inaudible)...

E: "I don't want to get into an argument with you about something silly like that, so:::"

Bc: "No, No, it is not very silly, I mean, I think you made a good point. I never said you said something was silly:::"

E: "I am saying the argument is silly."

Bc: "All right."

The conversation has been side-tracked from any issue and centered upon "something" (I doubt if either subject knows just what) that was "silly."

Over-all, Table IX, as well as Table III, suggest that the panel discussions were <u>dominated</u> by less than half the panelists--most notably Bc and D. And these higher verbalizers contributed most to the disintegrative incidents. Though many breakdowns occurred among the higher verbalizers, themselves, some of the low-output panelists were <u>put down</u> when they attempted to participate. They subsequently fell into the charge-counter-charge syndrome. One woman, a co-editor of the college newspaper, said she felt deparessed in the class due to her fear of panelists D, J and E. Another class member told the author--after D, J and E critiqued the panel presentations that "the only thing wrong with the general semantics class is those three 'birds.'"

The frequency of various disintegrative patterns was even more skewed than the frequency by panelists. Table X shows that 46 of the 17 breakdown points involved an about-face on issues to a frontal attack on personalities, while 48 incidents involved discrepancies in in assertions of facts. The average number of incidents in each pattern was 29.67 (standard deviation: 12-42).

TABLE X

TOTAL INCIDENTS AND STANDARD SCORES FOR EACH OF SIX DISINTEGRATIVE PATTERN CATEGORIES

Disintegrative Patterns	Total Incidents	Standard Score
Discrepancies in Facts	48	1.48
Attacks on Personalities	46	1.32
Charge of Inaccuracies	25	-.38
Ego Statements	20	-.78
Identity with Issue	20	-.78
Issue Ignored	19	-.86

Who were the chief engineers of these high-frequency disintegrative behaviors? Panelists Bc and D. They also led the list in ego statemtns, as well as in charging others with inaccuracies and falsifications--the latter being the third most frequently observed disintegrative pattern.

Regarding the two most frequent disintegrative patterns--attacks on personalities and discrepancies in assertions of facts--traditional Indo-European language structure implies that a fact is a fact, true, right and forever. In such a semantic environment, one tends to forget that a fact is a personal affair that is incomplete and ever changing and that it's usefulness depends upon the degree to which other reliable sources agree with one concerning it.

Apparently the subjects forgot Johnson's descriptions of facts.

The high frequency of signal reactions suggests failure to delay and ask questions in an attempt to gain empathetic understanding with the speaker.

The disintegrative attack on personalities can be compared to the Aristotelian's notion of good-guy, bad-guy: "You are for me or against me. If you are against me, I don't like you."

One overall conclusion from the class discussions, is that for panelists high in signal reactions and disintegrative patterns, communications more frequently broke down and/or failed.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study investigated language behavior employed by students enrolled in a general semantics class in the spring of 1973. It looked for clear and meaningful communication--the sharing of referents for symbols--and at the points in discussions where dialogue followed disintegrative patterns--where understanding broke down and people talked AT each other, rather than WITH each other.

Even though students were studying the extensional devices they did not use them in their own language behavior during the three panel discussions analyzed in this study. They knew general semantics "jargon" but seemingly didn't understand how these word-symbols might relate to their abstraction processes or facilitating communication.

The Aristotelian orientation showed strongly in four persons, Bc, D, J, and E who consistently ranked far above classmates on all dimensions under study. Because the asking of questions is an important part of the self-corrective nature of scientific abstracting the number and kinds of questions asked were analyzed. For all but two subjects far less questions were asked than statements made, indicating that panelists were more eager to impress their ideas and beliefs on others (as the close-minded, Aristotelian person might) than they were to seek information about others beliefs in order to revise or restructure verbal maps in line with non-verbal territories. In essence, the person

who asks few questions is the one who seldom stops to consider that his information might be incomplete or innaccurate.

The extensional devices were used as indices of clear and meaningful communication. These devices help to remind one of the relationship between language and reality. If consciously used language becomes more precise, accurate, specific and potentially more clear and meaningful. The consciousness of projection device, (to-me-ness) which helps counteract the is-of-identity was the most frequently used device. This was no doubt due to the ease with which the to-me is parroted and attached to the ends of sentences without actually realizing its meaning or relationship to the observer-observed phenomenon.

Four of the devices were not employed by any students and the other three received minimal counts. The extensional devices go hand-in-hand and without substantial use of all of them one can be relatively "certain" that their meaning is not being understood.

The most supportive finding of the lack of clear and meaningful communication was found in the disintegrative patterns, isolated when one person interrupted another before he had finished speaking. Although arguments and disagreements of opinions can often lead to solutions for problems, when participants begin talking AT each other at the SAME time, it is a fairly sure bet that meaningful communication--empathic communication--is not occuring. Those students who were the most "glib and verbose" interrupted others most often and had the highest number of disintegrative patterns.

Though the findings are quite clear-cut and highly supportative that students were not extensionalizing the discipline and were not communicating with clarity and meaningfulness, it is difficult to

generalize to the class as a whole and their performance in the discussions. The author did not attempt to measure how much those students who did not speak and those who spoke very little, had learned an extensional orientation. It is strongly suggested, if further work were to be done in this area, that researchers test participants with open-closed-mindedness scales, extensional, intensional agreement indexes or other methods which would yield more information about individuals under study.

Although there is no test DATA from this study available, one might conclude from the content analyses findings that students who come into the class with a high degree of close-mindedness and/or display a high degree of Aristotelian orientation may be UNTEACHABLE in this situation; conversely those who are more open-minded and less Aristotelian may be more receptive to the discipline and be more willing to try to understand it. This is clearly evidenced by subject D, who appeared to be one of the two highest most Aristotelian individuals in the class, said he didn't think this class or any he had taken was worth $14. For an individual of this mind-set, the author doubts whether ANY instructional device or educational technique would effectively enhance a greater understanding.

The Panel Discussions

The panel discussions were structured to give students a forum whereby they might learn more about the processes of abstracting by observing their own and others language behavior. As an educational and learning technique, the panel discussions may have been effective for some but generally students showed a lack of understanding of

extensional devices, signal reactions and the value of questions. Because discussions were largely dominated by a few students, it is not possible to determine how much learning or understanding occurred in those students who didn't speak often. The panel discussions, in another class, at another time, might have been more beneficial.

If the panels are to be used again, the author would recommend to the class professor that he clearly state the purposes and goals of the panels. Some confusion may have resulted because students were not exactly SURE what the purposes were; this element of certainty may be necessary in the structure of the game to provide a framework for students to operate within.

The author would also suggest that certain students be appointed as observers; and they report their impressions of the discussion immediately after the panel discussions. This would provide an element of feedback which might be helpful for panel leaders and class members. The professor should also act as a source of feedback immediately following the discussions.

The author, after observing students in general semantics classes over several semesters and after having gone through some kinds of behavior re-orientations as a result of the class (and other things) would question if general semantics is the kind of discipline which can be taught in the traditional professor-student classroom structure. Students might gain a greater understanding of general semantics if they were asked to teach it to each other. Perhaps each student could devise his own instructional methods and be responsible for presenting some aspect of the discipline for one week's time. Students might choose to analyze language behavior used by politicians, journalists,

their friends and enemies, Dads, or whatever. Emphasis would be on discovering HOW general semantics principles can be applied to communication behavior and WHAT changes in thought and speaking are found when it is applied. The possibilities are limitless, but since many people seem to "rebel" to the subject matter, (as panelists D, J, and E all did) it may be more productive to have students analyze other's behavior and discuss it before they are asked to work on their own behavior language patterns.

For Further Study

Our personal and social problems, insofar as they are human problems, often arise from our use and/or misuse of language. As Johnson says, we can talk ourselves into a host of delusional fantasies if we are unaware of the relationship between words and reality.

More work needs to be done in the areas of communication and language behavior. The author found it difficult in this study, to work with taped discussions. Often times there were problems as to whether a student was asking a question or making a statement since some of the questions were mixed in to and intertwined with statements. A panel of judges could be used effectively here to rate statements and questions and thus, enhance reliability.

Operational definitions should be modified and sharpened; particularly those which deal with 1) operational terms, 2) quantifying terms and 3) qualifying terms. These were the most difficult to categorize.

It would also be interesting to examine communication dialogues from the opposite side of the coin: NOT clear and meaningful

communication, or the degree or Aristotelianism. This could include analysis of allness terms, identification, elementalism, unchecked self-reflexiveness, confusion of fact and inference, multi-ordinality, etc., etc.

It would be beneficial to the researcher to give before and after tests to subjects to measure the amount of change in orientation or over time and these might be accompanied by attitudinal or similar criterion measures which would help explain more about the subjects.

For Panelists

For members of the spring 1973 general semantics class, Dan Piel high school teaching, Kemmerer, Wyoming, 1972 found that the following questions helped him to understand what apparently the panel discussions couldn't and/or didn't do. Perhaps the reader will find them useful.

1. What did I "really" say?
2. What did I "really" mean?
3. To what extent had I inferred something that was false to fact?
4. To what extent had I reified the abstractions that I attempted to deal with?
5. What attitudinal sets do I really possess? How can I become more aware of those which I am not unaware?
6. To what extent can I operate as an idealist and still adapt and survive?
7. Etc...[1]

Etc.

Dr. Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr., Professor at The University of Iowa, School of Journalism provides a thought provoking message which seems to me, an appropriate "etc." for a study on general semantics and communication. He says:

It seems that we can never say all that we know. And, we can never know all that we say.[2]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Dan Piel, "Whale Hunting with Ahab or Missing the Boat," Etc., Vol. 30, No. 1 (New York, 1973), p. 64.

[2]Dr. Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr., Journalism Professor, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, Remarks from a lecture given on November 15, 1973.

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APPENDIX

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Panel Number I

A: So what were you people basing your stereotypes on in the first place?

V: Through the contacts of what we had seen in the mass media.

You know, things like radicals burn buildings, radicals take over, you know, liberals go wild, whatever.

And uh, just through our interpersonal contacts, people calling, oh, there's the freak, you know.

Oh, John, yeah, he's a freak.

A: So you were basing your stereotype on inferences and not on fact.

V: Right, we had, we perceived a stereotype that other people held, and in essence we held a similar stereotype.

You see what I mean?

I mean, we can't separate ourselves from, from what we observe.

You know, because we are part of that and in order to recognize it, we had to realize that we had it to.

And some people might try to define it completely differently than we did.

A: Did you find that persons who you thought fit into the stereotype had stereotypes of their own, of people outside the group that were based on as much inference as other people were based?...

I think I lost myself.

N: Do you think hippies, in other words, you are saying...

You think hippies thought themselves to be hippies, were meeting certain criterion?

A: Yeah, were they giving...did they think they were part of that stereotype because, they were making the same inferences other people were making?

Or, uh, and at the same time were they making inferences about people outside the stereotype?

Br: You mean the straight...(inaudible)...

A: Yeah.

V: I think, probably in some areas.

Yeah, the people within the group that we classified, or the people that I talked to that looked to me like they might fit this subculture, I think they had certain stereotypes about things, about some things.

And other things, you know, very individualistic about.

N: Then on the other hand, you know, I looked at the other side of the picture where I found exactly the opposite.

In other words, I termed a person as a straight and found that, you know, he classified some of the things that V talked about in terms of where a person lived, or pre-marital sex, or that sort of thing.

Br: Yeah, so in other words you look at someone who has short hair and is dressed neatly and you think he is straight and you talk to him and he:::

N: Found the same classification that V had in the people who she found that fit this particular category.

M: You suggest that these stereotypes, or labels, these particular labels should be, uh, be done away with?

V: Uh, No, I don't think they should.

I don't think you really can do away with them.

I am not advocating that they should be done away with.

But, but I think people should take care of, in how they use them, on what level of abstraction they are talking about.

Because I can point to you and I can say, you know, hippy, and that is on the first order, observable labeling level.

But hippy one, two, three or four?

What hippy, under what conditions at what time?

I think, you know, that you need to take care in how you use them.

N: I think if you took the example of a parent, saying somebody was extremely long-haired, they would label that person even before they knew the individual.

You know, as opposed to say, you know, somebody who really was and you know, and he would fit that particular label anyway.

D: You are labeling parents pretty well there.

What about the parent who has a long-haired kid?

N: Well, I didn't conclude by saying that all parents are that way, but you know, I know that some parents are upset with their sons with long hair.

I could draw that conclusion.

D: Not mine.

M: I think that it is really, that you would, want, you wouldn't want to do away, even intellectually, with these stereotypes or labels but rather find possible other ways...

Choose when and where you want to use them.

V: It seems that when you use a word like this it doesn't say

very much about the person.

When you say that someone is a liberal you haven't said very much of anything.

At least if you are saying that to me, because your referents for liberal may be completely different from mine.

And we could not even communicate at all; not share similar meanings, whatsoever for liberal, or freak, or hippy or anything else.

Br: I think what we are trying to say is, you know, we don't necessarily have to do away with the labels, but when you are using such a term, you know, maybe think about it before you use it or maybe try to, uh, how do you say it, explain why you are using that term:::

V: What it means to you?:::

Br: Yeah, what it means to you.

Because everytime, everytime you use a term like that you are using it from your viewpoint, which may not be the person you are communicating with's---on the same level, so you know.

Bc: Yes, earlier you said, that you spoke to certain people who you thought fit into certain categories.

Now can you tell me, from what you have done, and from the few remarks you have, do you think this is a state of mind, or reality?

You know, hippy really is a state of mind.

You know, hippy, radical, liberal, conservative, whatever is just a state of mind, or what he knows about himself, you know, the reality about it.

N: I don't know:::

V: I think it is a word about a word.

Bc: Do you say that explains that?

V: No, I don't think it does.

Bc: I don't know what my answer is...(inaudible)

You cannot answer it.

N: The people that I talked to didn't seem to, you know, think, or well, I don't know how to explain it either.

But they didn't feel that they fit categories just because they were, you know at that level.

J: Seems to have been a big hangup about the word hippy because most of the people you have talked to seem to have indicated that you have to have lived in a commune to be a hippy.

And that may be their self-perception of it, but I think that the mass media and most people would not classify communal living as a prerequisite for being a hippy.

Maybe, maybe you are labeling by asking the person if they fit that label.

You know, and they don't know what else to use.

V: Yeah, I think what you are saying, maybe points out the different meanings that people have for the label hippy.

Because I think N, didn't you say that two of these people that said hippies were people that lived in communal situations, they had before lived in a communal situation and considered themselves hippies at that time, but they didn't now?

N: Yeah, the last two people.

W: Did you bring this up in the questioning, this communal living?

N: No, I didn't.

Br: I didn't either.

I just asked them to define the hippy life style, what does it mean to you.

N: And the reason I find it significant was because of the type of person that I asked.

Three ag students and a cowboy and I was just surprised to find them.

Br: I was really surprised too, because I never thought that would come out in the definition at all.

I don't know why.

V: I think that might be a reflection on the mass media, kind of perpetuated by the media.

Because you read stories, you know, about the communal living and about these people, you know and:::

Yeah, did you have a question B?

B: Yeah, when you say you talked to, uh, when you say meanings, you know, or when you say, oh, businessmen, what does that mean to you, or politician, what does that mean to you, or hippy, what does that mean to you, which, uh, what uh, lets talk about meanings.

Uh, what are we talking about?

Uh, are we talking about what that person means to me, like in a b. s. conversation, or are we talking about that politician, or does this mean we have some value to me, as far as my relationship with him is concerned, how I interact with him...

Uh, it seems to me that you are not going to, to deal with this politician.

You can sit around and b. s. about him, however, I see how the meaning could, the meaning could upset a person.

For instance an old lady that has a meaning, has a meaning, uh, has a stereotype about hippies and she is driving down the street and it is dark and she sees a hippy.

She is operating off this map, that hippies are bad.

She gets upset, you know, really shook and she has an accident.

Okay, when she is operating this meaning has affected her.

It has affected her map, it has affected her.

As far as I am concerned, if you are somewhere, where, uh, you don't have to come into contact with hippies, it doesn't make any difference what the meaning is, does it?

V: I'm I'm, I'm not, not quite sure I understand what you are saying.

B: Well, uh, I'm trying to put this to use in problem solving, you know.

Here we have this enlightment about stereotypes.

Well, what value is it to us?

I mean, this is great, here we are talking hypothetically about how people affect us as stereotypes.

Okay, we've got these stereotypes, you know.

V: Well, if nothing else, it might point out that our stereotypes are, are inaccurate, they don't relate to any observable <u>reality</u> very well.

I mean, they are just very high level inferences.

B: Allright.

Okay, once I know this, how well, how is this going to help me live a better life?

V: How do you mean?

B: How does this help me, in trying to communicate?

V: R can you answer him?

R: Well, I don't know if I can answer him or not.

But the first thing that comes to my mind, although this might not affect your life personally, this particular label; I'd say you could perhaps look at it as a consistent, uh, thought process.

If a person's internal maps don't match the territory in this particular, in this particular case, well, its very possible in other cases, in other situations or whatever, a person's thought processes might go through the same erroneous uh, thinking.

So, if it's true in this particular case, you might not ever have an affect on you.

You might not ever come into contact with anybody who would blow over what you defined as hippy.

But, but it is a thought process, a thought process you go through in this particular situation, well it is very possible it is going to overlap into other areas of your life, so your maps aren't matching your territory.

B: Well, this would help me, uh, I understand that, maybe, this time we talk about hippies, but next time maybe it would be my brother-in-law.

Is that what you are trying to say?

R: I think so:::

B: Maybe something to that effect.

So how would that help me, so next time, uh, someone sits down and starts b. s. ing about politicians, and I say, well wait a minute, you know...

Well, he's talking about Daley, let's say and he says, oh, Daley is a typical politician, you know, he is corrupt, etc., etc., etc.

He got his, has got a stake in the business, you know, and all this.

And I say wait a minute Jack, uh, you know, what do you know about Daley, really, you know?

Is this the way I break this guy down, you know, to the level of differences, you know, is that what you are saying?

T: I think your concern should be with yourself, B.

How you feel you label people.

B: Well, I am trying to say is that when you communicate with people you tend to throw stereotypes around, right?

And you know, some people may use stereotypes around you and you, you may not understand what they are saying, right?

And you know, some people may use stereotypes around you and you, you may not understand what they are saying, right?

So you might have to break them down to see if what they are saying is, uh, has some truth.

Right?

As well as, uh...(inaudible)

T: Uh, when you talked to, uh, when you just pick out broad categories, ag majors, and you found out that not all ag majors were cowboys:::

N: Right.

T: Uh, but you were looking for people that were cowboys and you wanted to:::

N: No:::

T: Well, I can imagine the stereotype in my mind.

N: I thought the guys that I talked to were cowboys, because I had 'em in class last semester.

That's why I went to them, because I knew them.

P: That right there, when you say cowboys, is a stereotype.

N: Right, right, I said that when I began, you know, that I classified them, not-hippy like, because of my own labels.

I did label them that way.

I labeled them as straights.

Bx: Is it possible for me to describe somebody in college, who is specifically called liberal?

P: Well, if you take enough time, I assume you can:::

W: What did you ask Bc to specify someone you label liberal?

Bc: You know, I, I don't have a conception of a group as being liberal, but I think I have an expectation of what a liberal looks like.

When you say, well, well, that I think a college professor, you know could have...

W: Well, you are off base right there.

At least here.

Bc: Pardon?

W: On this campus anyway.

Bc: Well, I you know, I wouldn't say that here, but I would say a college professor on the East coast, you know, or in the North, that he is liberal.

V: Just by virtue that he is on the East coast or in the North?

Bc: Yes, that would be for the education, you know.

V: Don't you think there might be differences that would make a difference between those professors?

Bc: No, it depends, I don't:::

V: Do you think it would be impossible to find someone that is not a liberal that is a professor on a campus in the East or in the North?

Bc: Oh, you could find one not so liberal, I mean your chances of running across such a guy would be about one in one-hundred, you know.

That is comparing with the South here.

A: Why do you, why do you think that would be so?

Bc: Why do I think that would be so?

Possibly because, I think I need to explain myself.

Because I think, I may be wrong, you know, I don't say I am right.

I think people in the North and in these schools have attracted people from...(inaudible)... you know, broader backgrounds.

You know, and from the experiences I have talked to people here, I have been in school here, I have been in school in Indiana and I have been in school somewhere else, and I have my idea of what a college student should be.

But since I have been down here, I couldn't find, you know, the typical college student of my expectations, you know.

Because most people I talk to are either they live within five miles from Stillwater and haven't been out of Stillwater in their lives and they are not determined to get out of Stillwater.

A: Why do you think that a person to be liberal, has to have, sort of, a broad rounded background?:::

Bc: I very strongly believe that.

To be liberal, you know, to be what is the term liberal you have this broad base, out of college, out of the student environment of education.

A: Well, what I am asking, is, is you know, is what are you basing the fact that a person to be liberal must have, to be well traveled?

Why do you, why do you say that?

What do you base it on?

Bc: Well, I mean, if you cannot see the whole geographical relief, you know, if you have then, you remain very small in relation, you know, to what you are.

I mean, surely, if you live in Stillwater, you won't meet... (inaudible)...

Br: What is your definition of a liberal?

Bc: Definition of a liberal.

Well:::

Several people talking at once...(inaudible)...

O: Well, I've lived in Stillwater all my life and I voted for George McGovern, so that, you know;:::

N: and I lived in the East and I'm conservative.

And I know half the members of the faculty and half as many jobs or more jobs than I had all over the country---all over the world.

They weren't liberal.

Bc: Well, I am not trying to define liberal:::

Two people talking at same time.

N: No, its inference again, you know?

Inferencing.

Bc: Well, you are supposed, you can always say the supposed definition.

I mean, this always has been the trouble, trying to fit somebody into liberal.

I mean, when do you say you have conservative, in what regards?

N: Dress, uh, mannerisms, life style, uh:::

Bc: What life style?

N: Simple

Bc: You say you are conservative because of your dress.

I mean, I dress, you know, anyhow, I dress when I feel like, you know, I don't think that is a good assumption as such, you know.

I think you dress you know, just simply how you feel that day.

You know, I dress according to how I feel that day.

I could wear jeans for weeks, if I feel that way.

And then you say the life style.

What, how do I fit in that way?

You think that is a conservative element?

I mean, you have some radicals with, with wives and children too.

I don't think that is, is radical:::

N: To me that is what I am infering as a conservative.

To you it is probably something else.

Maybe you can't make the judgments between just those things, but you know, politics might be:::

Bc: Yeah, to me, if I would refer to you as a conservative I would ask you this.

Could you vote for George Wallace?

N: Could I vote for George Wallace?

Bc: Uh, huh.

N: Uh, probably.

Bc: I don't want probably, yes or no.

N: Not in 1972, I couldn't, no.

Bc: Just quit qualifying it, you know, I mean, yes or no.

Only on that condition.

Don't give me any:::

N: Today?

Bc: Anytime.

Yes or no.

N: Yes

Bc: Then you fit into that category as such.

A: Do you think you know, that you can define liberal, just as somebody all encompassing as being a liberal, or is, you know...

Like to really get back to the book, you know, you can't step in the same river twice, but...

That if you are not always the same person then you are not always liberal or not always conservative or not always moderate or something, you know.

If you want to use all those labels that a person could be what we would call liberal about one thing and conservative about another thing and at different times of his life, you know, could switch back and forth.

Bc: I think you got the meaning wrong.

The word conservative.

See, why we use that word, is to call people who do not believe

in change for change's sake.

That is the meaning of conservative.

A: Well, I don't agree with your definition of conservative.

Bc: We have a dictionary here, if it would help.

W: Bc: Did you say a conservative does not believe in change for change's sake?

Bc: Yes.

A: Do you think a liberal believes in change for change's sake?

Bc: Well, a liberal is someone who has an open mind on any issue.

We don't, we may think in conservative words to see how a certain element has been prepared, and if you can give him a good reason for changing his mind on any issue, you know, that the conservative has, you know, that has always been this way...

That is the way about him.

Br: You said something about looking it up in the dictionary, you know.

Haven't we already dispelled the?:::

Bc: I have, I, you see we don't want to get too much into each other's opinions.

I just want to look into it for my own purpose, you know, to pin it down to certain things.

R: According to that, then, I would have to label you a conservative if you want to possibly go to the dictionary.

Bc: No, no, not, you could label me a conservative, yes, because you are.

W: Now we know what it is, R.

Bc: You are already taught to look it up in the dictionary and

that could be a frame of reference, you know, not as a credible source, just as a frame of reference.

D: R, what business is it of yours whether he is a liberal or conservative anyway?

Why should you even care?

R: Well, I don't, I am just saying that:::

D: Why should anybody care?

Why just sit around and talk about whether somebody is a liberal or a conservative or anything, you know---man or woman, or whatever.

That is the whole problem when you get into any kind of labeling and you start making inferences and stuff.

Why should you care?

A: But, if you are going to interact:::

R: Why use he:::

D: Do you have to label them to interact with them?

A: Well:::

D: I:::

A and D talking (shouting) at same time...(inaudible)...

D: I, I, have to know he is conservative before I can talk with him?

A: No, but if you want to, if you want to, you know, interact with him and have some basis for knowing what to expect out of him you are going to make some kind of label, not necessarily a label that is going to stick, you know, everyday or whatever, but in order to, you know, have some idea of what he is going to do, I mean what you can expect of him:::

Bc: Why do you have to talk to someone on the basis that you

know what to expect from him?

I mean, now if you were to, you might want to talk to him.

Just give him a chance.

Why do you have to have that?

D and A talking (shouting) at the same time...(inaudible)...

D: Why talk politics with someone you already know what they are going to say?

Why, you know, he prepared for a liberal argument or a conservative argument?:::

A: You are going into something that, that, I didn't mean.

So, let me explain it.

D: Yeah, I don't care what you meant.

A: Well, yeah, I know you don't know what you mean, 'cause you just told me you didn't.

D: I don't know what you mean, but I don't care either.

A: Yeah, right, well, you know, its really not worth talking about if you:::

D: I know:::

A: Really don't care:::

D: So just shut your mouth.

A: Well, you know, you were asking, why is it important to add these labels.

I was trying to tell you what my reasons were for having some label.

So, if you don't want to know I won't tell you.

But, if you do, I:::

D: What, well, what, what would you label me?

Okay, you've talked to me a couple of times, what would you label me?

A: I:::

D: Okay, you gotta have a label for me.

A: I have:::

D: You want:::

A: I haven't talked to you enough to give you a label yet.

D: Okay, well you are not going to talk to me any more, because I don't want you to give me a label because I don't think it is any of your business.

W: We're making progress D.

END OF TAPE

Panel Number II

Bc: Well, I think you have to bear with me for the next ten minutes.

I am going to be very subjective, make judgments and I welcome criticism from you.

I have been in school for almost 15 years I hope, and I haven't learned anything.

Just nothing.

R: You what?

Bc: I haven't learned nothing from school.

And I would like to ask anyone here if he has learned anything.

I would like to know what he has learned so far.

From my observation, since I have been here, I found that the education of an average American kid stops at high school.

After high school, they just don't learn anything.

They just remain in school either through the obligations brought upon them by their parents or by the society which, well, I'll explain myself further.

Let's look at the system.

The system is so structured that it is designed to do certain things which means to produce diploma waving kids...those who can make it...and by so doing the system is big enough as a result of which you have what you call the mass production education.

And you look around the classes confirms that.

In an average class about 100 kids, white, you sit next to the next guy and he or she doesn't speak to you.

All he does is to take notes and listen attentively to what is

going to be covered in the quiz next week or something like that.

Surprisingly I have observed that students go along with this, because everyone wants to make it.

The professors on their part, are concerned with that, well, on the catalogue, the class lasts for one hour.

Very often you get a lecture for 45 minutes under the excuse that they give you 15 minutes to get to your next class.

So after 45 minutes he stops talking.

More or less, they go on and on and give you the same stuff you have been getting the past semester so very few of them even bother to up-date it.

In my previous college at Indiana University, there was a conflict, you know, when the guys, they started to fail quizes and all those things and there was a demonstration.

So the regents, the board of regents realized that, well, these kids started causing trouble because of the lack of, you know, they complained that the professors are not teaching them anything.

So they made out a ruling that in the fall, a month before the semester begins, every professor should turn in a---what you call--- a plan of study which is what the course content will be.

They give that to you about a month before so that you know what you are getting into.

As a result of that, the kids would just take the course content and look through it an if they think it was so tough that they couldn't get it, they wouldn't take that course.

So he wouldn't go to class to learn anything.

He is going there to perform.

After that, that is the end of it.

Then you have the categories of the students you find in this country.

As far as I can see there are about three or four categories.

You have the girls who purposely come to college to get married, to find a husband.

Invariably, they spend two years in school.

Within two years you get hung up with somebody either you move to live with them or one way or the other they get married and drop out of school.

And say, well this is the kind of education I want.

That is the end of the career.

And then you have a second category, who just want to come and have a nice time.

And these are the group who really come because they got along with the kids they knew from high school.

They don't care how long it takes them to complete their education.

On the average they spend about six years getting their undergraduate degree.

Then you have a third category.

Nice kids from middle class family who want to get away from home so that he or she could experiment.

You get the guys experimenting with drugs, you get the girls experimenting with men.

They date several kinds on campus; black, white, pink or whatever.

You know they go into it without any purpose, just to have the

experience and after they have the experience for four years (inaudible).

So, I would say on the average, it would be better if you could take correspondence courses rather than coming to college to fool around and say you are learning anything.

In fact, very few people interact, in that you always find people going along with people who agree with them.

K: What kind of first level observations are you basing these categories on and these labels that you are putting on people?

Bc: My point of view, I made that clear from the onset.

My point of view, you have to accept it.

K: Okay, you are aware that you are operating on a higher level of inference then, by saying that their are three types of people and that people do not work when they come to college.

And that all people...you are taking an observation that you have observed in real life and you are generalizing it to...

Bc: wait,...

K: You think that every one,...

Bc: Well, I by and large, if you are sincere with yourself by and large, you know which you fit in out of these categories, you know.

A: You think there are no other categories than those three that you mentioned?

Bc: If I missed out any categories you can inform me and I am prepared to learn about that.

I told you, if I miss out anybody, come back.

B: Could you qualify your statement about learning?

You have used it several times here, it seems to me that you are

talking about experiences, you know, that young ladies might have in college meeting men.

Well, that in itself is a learning process, so I'm not sure if I understand what you mean by learning...

Bc: Learning is---learning, you see---I'm not here to define what learning means, you know, because if I give you my own definition of learning and you do not like it--so I am not going to define it.

R: Well, where did you get this information that you are disseminating right now?

Bc: Where did I get the information from?

R: What you are telling us right now...

Bc: You are getting the information from ME.

R: No, how did you acquire it?

Bc: The information is from my own observations.

R: Did you learn this?

Bc: I didn't learn it.

I refuse to learn it.

B: You know...

Bc: I repeat, I still have some facts...

B: If you bring us down to learning, you know, I think it is important now, that I understand what you mean.

Because it seems to me that you are using it in such an abstract way, that I'm not really picking up any meaning that you are saying.

And if your meaning as far as learning goes---if you could just maybe break it down and see what you mean in two or three ways, so that as far as learning is concerned you know, it could be in relation to the objectives of the university, you know, or it could the

objective of the students...

A: Bc...

Bc: I am not qualified to tell you what learning is and this is what is so difficult to get to know what is really happening in that the professor doesn't know what he is supposed to do, you know.

In terms of learning, the kids who come to the university don't even know what he is supposed to do in terms of learning so I will be very unqualified to tell you what learning is and that is it.

A: Bc, if you are unqualified to tell us what learning is, then how can you tell us that nobody comes to learn?

I mean how can you tell us...

Bc: I am being subjective.

You either take it or leave it...

A: I know you are being subjective, but I am saying...

Bc: talking...inaudible.

A: talking at same time...inaudible.

Bc: Wait a minute...

A: Bc, look at...

Bc: Take whatever I say on face value.

And if you like you can take it personally and the way you like.

I have no qualms about it.

May I proceed?

Come down to this.

Come down to this learning in the (student) union.

In the first place, when I came here, the first place I went was the union.

I found out the student, you know, it is strongly segregated, you

know, because a lot of the times I (inaudible)

But the fourth floor, which is supposed to be the grouping area for the students, was supposed to be on the first floor, instead of the fourth.

Because in my previous university, it was on the first floor, whereby anybody going to their classes could pass through that place, he either stops or he doesn't stop, you know, so that you have the first floor standing for the fourth floor area.
(inaudible)

There you have the kind of community where you have various aspects of the university life represented.

You pass through the union on your way to class and if you want to have a coke you stop and have your coke.

If you want to relax, you relax and if you don't want to you just walk to your classes.

Now, to get to the official areas.

You have the blacks on one side, and in the corner where there is never nobody else but the blacks.

At this time you have about 50 of them on one side.

I think that you have to run your own mind, opinions, whatever you want to call it.

Which is, if you think that you have learned anything since you have been in school, you are free to come back at me.

Yes, I won't take it very seriously.

And I hope that when you view a learning process it will be when you leave this place.

F: Are their any other comments or questions.

We are running out of time.

D: Did you have a category for the rare person who does happen to pick up something, you know, they feel is worthwhile?

I don't mean to insinuate that I am one of those persons, because I am not.

Do you have any category...

Bc: People who...

D: That accidently managed to learn something in the classroom...

Bc: I don't think I have seen anyone so far in that, has learned anything.

B: Well, I can definitely say that, uh, I didn't learn anything from what you said...

Bc: Oh, fine...

B: At least, I feel, I feel that you operated off a very high level of inference...

Bc: Oh, yes, you...

B: and you told me, uh, you gave me no clue as to how things really are.

Er no even accurate stab at it as far as I can see.

It was all too abstract, uh, you wouldn't break anything down into differences that make a difference.

Uh, didn't tell...

Bc: No! I mean, let's face it.

Give your previous professors, how, they haven't been able to break it down to you.

How can I do that?

If there ever was to be, I mean, the task must be impossible!

Someone. Where did you learn the things that you know now?

Bc: What, where did I learn?

Someone. Where did you learn the things that you know now?

Where did you learn them?

Bc: I learn; you see I didn't learn anything as far as I am concerned.

If, if, just certain types of knowledge.

But, my observations, I have my observations, from going through the process, you know, I mean I just have to have a piece of paper now.

A: Bc, since you have admitted to this high level of inference do you think your observations have any validity at all?

Bc: By and large, unless you people don't want to admit it.

K: How about your observations, Bc, you know, whose truth is correct?

You know, you get into opinions as such and maybe, maybe the inferences that we have are based on a different physical reality, on different first order observations that we have, you know, you have to realize that too.:::

Bc: I couldn't care less:::

K: You couldn't understand?

Okay, maybe, maybe I have personally observed a couple of people who I feel have learned something in the classroom situation or maybe someone has told me.

Okay, this is a first level order of observation and so from that I can infer that there are two people in OSU who have learned

something:::

Bc: I don't think you can observe somebody who have learned something, unless you have your own personal experience to tell me:::

K and Bc talking at the same time.

Bc: I mean, if you have learned something, come, tell us here and tell us what you have learned, you know:::

K: Okay, by the same token, I don't think that you can tell me that, that, you have observed people who have not learned anything, because it is not possible, to walk through a whole day and not learn anything at:::

Bc: It is quite easy to make, you know, I don't deny that.

It is easier for me to make observations, to see on the abstract levels, which I said earlier, I am not denying that.

But, if you want to counteract what I have said, you have to tell me what you have learned since you have been in school.

A: If you don't tell us what you consider learning is, or something that can be learned, I don't think its worth really talking about:::

Bc: No, I look, you can tell me what learning is, I don't know, you can tell me.

What do you think learning is?

A: No, I'm not, uh, telling, you, you're telling us, all these, you're making all the observations:::

Bc: I'm not telling you, I mean, you have got to figure it for yourself. ...(inaudible)...tell me:::

A: No, I'm not interested in telling you, because I'm not:::

Z: (to A) I'm interested in what you have to say learning is:::

A: (to Z) Okay, Okay, I'll tell you in just a minute as soon as I make my point.

What I am saying is you're making, you're telling us of your observations and making these inferences, but not telling us what you consider learning to be:::

Bc: I told you, I, I, am not competent to do that.

Here is the problem:::

T: How are you competent to say nobody's learned then?:::

Z: If you can't define it:::

Bc: Your conscious, don't:::

T and Z and Bc talking at same time...(inaudible)...

Bc: Let us get down to this word learning.

I mean, this is just a word too:::

T: You centered your whole discussion around it.

Bc: Learning?

No, I did not:::

T and Bc talking at same time...(inaudible)...

Bc: Wait a minute, this is not talking.

I know you cannot be very objective about it. I think the discussion on what you ought to, I mean, you must have been hearing some false words somewhere, because if you really want to say, to define learning, you have your chance to tell me, 'look here guys, I have learned this, I have learned this, I have learned that,' I mean, you can explain my theory.

All right?

As long as you can come up with something concrete.

I mean, just as I said:::

J: Bc, since this discussion really is not so much about whether we have learned or not, because we haven't been able to define what learning is, it seems like it is more like does a university education lead to anything or is it beneficial.

Now, I don't know that:::

Bc: I wouldn't say that:::

J: I have learned things:::

Bc: Tell us what, tell us:::

J: How what:::

T: Tell him what you (J) have learned.

J: Okay, for instance, I have learned many minescual facts about political science which is my major.

Now, I am not going to sit here and regurgitate all that to you, and I'm not even going to make a value judgment on whether or not what I have learned is useful.

But for my own definition, I think for the definition of taking in a fact and being able to remember it, and use it possibly:::

Bc: Thank you:::

J: If you don't define what learning is this whole discussion is pointless.

Bc: Thank you very much, you have come to the whole point.

You have come to the point.

You are the only person I have seen so far, contribute something to the discussion because you said that you have learned facts about political science.

All right.

What are the facts that you have learned?

J: Do you want me to regurgitate them.:::

Bc: No, not everything.

Facts about political science, political system, or political people, of what kinds of facts you consider:::

J: Well, I could spend a good hour telling you what I have learned over the past four years.

If you want me to do that?

Bc: No, thank you.

I don't think that would help you a lot:

J: Well, I don't think that's going to help the discussion much either but the point is, you've got to define:::

Bc: Oh, no:::

J: We've got to define what learning is or this whole discussion is just up there floating:::

Bc: Wait a minute.

How do, now, you asked me a question, I will give you an answer.

How do you think what you have learned in your political science study, or whatever you call it, is going to help you?

T: Help you what?

Z: I think I can answer that question from my, my purpose:::

Bc: Yes, go ahead.

Let's have it.

A: Real general, generally, I have learned some ideas from Plato some Marx ideas.

I took a course in logic which taught me a certain process of thinking.

I use that in my everyday life to help me be more analytical--

it was a scientific study on logic, you know, how to, and I use that every day in my life, daily life.

I also took a class in music understanding and comprehension which helps me to understand music better, now that I know what to listen for:::

Bc: That is a good student.

She has learned some of Plato.

Plato died in, in:::

Z: Yes, but his ideas are very valid:::

B: Before Christ:::

G: Bc, I wanted to read when I was about in the third grade.

I guess, and in the summertime, I have to read, occasionally, I have to read an order or tell what color a signal is, or something like that and that helps me make about $1,000 a month in the summer time:::

Bc: So that is your definition of learning.

I think we are getting somewhere...(inaudible)...

B: Yeah, well, I have not learned any absolute truths, I don't think or anything, facts of things, like know what the obvious.

But I have learned to share meanings, uh, of my fellow man and by that, uh, maybe you ought to...

We share meanings of words.

You've learned how to read, uh, so I've learned, uh, I believe, to share meanings, I think, uh, with my fellow man.

Bc: Well, if you think that is learning, I mean I will tell you that is the old stuff, you know, you spoke of the old stuff, you know.

You get a professor telling you what Plato said.

He wasn't there, was he?:::

Z: We have got written records:::

Bc: Even the professor who wrote it wasn't there, when Plato was alive. I mean:::

Z: It doesn't matter whether he is alive or dead:::

Bc: I, I, It:::

Z: It's nice to think about the ideas he brought up.

I would...

It could be John Doe:::

Bc: Now, wait a minute:::

Z: It could be anybody:::

Z and Bc talking at the same time...(inaudible)...

Z: What source is reliable?

It's just nice to get a whole bunch of information:::

Bc and Z talking at the same time...(inaudible)...

Bc: We are trying to define learning in this discussion, and I think we are getting at it now.

What do you think you are learning?

You know, you think that you are learning facts and I say.

Why are you shaking your head?

Say what is on your mind.

B: I don't think I am learning facts, and I don't think, I hope these people don't think they are learning facts or truth.

Truth, you know, as it really is.

They are learning words, that, un, they're as close to the truth as we can verbalize.

The way we share meanings, these are our accounts, you know, what we talk about in this class.

Where people get hung up is where they do take these truths, they do take these as facts, they do take what they read as is what actually Plato said.

Bc: I wish that, are you speaking for the whole group or are you speaking for yourself?

Bc and B talking at the same time...(inaudible)...

B: I am speaking for myself:::

Bc: Oh, well you say this group:::

B: Well, I certainly hope they don't think these things are absolute facts.

That words are facts.

Bc: Now, I don't see how, that can help you to be a better person.

As far as I am concerned, because:::

G: Bc, do you have an idea of learning as personal growing?

Is that what you consider as learning, as you grow?

Bc: Yeah, I mean you define it now.

That is what I consider learning.

You may have your own definition of learning.

Z: Bc, why are you at a university?

Bc: Well, just for the same reason why you are here.

E: Tell me why you are here:::

Bc: Well, I, I, :::

E: And I'll tell you if that's the reason why I am here.

R: Tell us why he is here, I mean:::

Bc: Well, I:::

R: You ought to know:::

Bc: He is here to get a piece of paper, I mean that is all:::

V: How do you know unless you ask him?:::

Bc: How do I know?:::

N: How do you know I am here to get a piece of paper?

Bc: Pardon?

Three people talking at same time...(inaudible)...

O: How do you know he isn't here to get a degree?

Bc: One thing, a degree is a piece of paper.

Three people talking at same time...(inaudible)...

J: That is not the point, Bc:::

Bc: No, I am, I am telling him why he is here:::

E: Why are you here?:::

T: Well, I'm glad to hear that!:::

N: Bc, Bc, you mean, I am sitting in class for three or four years to get a piece of paper?

Bc: What do you want to get out of here?

Do you not want to get your degree?

D: Bc, I think everybody is getting down on Bc here, just because they are having so much trouble justifying their existence here.

C: I would like to propose for us to get away from this hangup about trying to define learning, and uh, he has his, uh, own opinions about why he is here and you have different ideas.

You go on what you learn from, uh, out of classroom discussion and/or from classroom learning.

So why don't you tell something about what you learned, or you may say that:::

Bc: I think that this:::

C and Bc talking at same time...(inaudible)...

Bc: They are interested in why I am here.

I am here because, to get the kind of job I want I have to have that piece of paper, period.

A: Did you know anything for that job, before you got here?

Bc: Oh, it doesn't matter:::

Bc and others talking at same time...(inaudible)...

Bc: I still have to have that piece of paper, right on!

V: I feel like I am learning something right here from this whole discussion:::

Bc: That is:::

V: About myself and about you:::

Bc: Yes:::

V: And your projections and your level of abstraction and how I react to you and how you react to members of this group and that is a very valuable learning experience for me:::

Bc: I think I think that is what we are trying to do here.

To try to learn from one another, that is what I came out with all this crap.

I mean, you can talk all you want to about it, but I don't know whether you are sincere when you say that you are learning or when you say (inaudible).

V: Bc, let me ask you, do you feel like right now, that you are learning something?

Bc: Uh, I have learned that a lot of you are stupid!

Several people talking at the same time...(inaudible)...

V: Have you learned anything about yourself and your reactions to people?

Bc: Sure, sure, sure, sure.

V: What?

Bc: What?

Well, I mean I would have to sit back and analyze, you know, I can't give you a definite answer right now.

T: You've set here and you've...everytime somebody..

You ask people what, what they have learned and they've said something about philosophy or something and you say well, you didn't learn anything.

So obviously you have a definition of learning that doesn't fit you know, anything they say.

It doesn't fit, into, into your definition of learning, so you must have some defintion for learning.

So what is it?

Bc: I will not:::

T: You've said what it isn't.

Whatever anybody says:::

Bc: Wait a minute, wait, wait:::

No, learning, I have said by inference what is learning, if you can take that.

V: Perhaps, something that is interesting to me, is your and some of the other people in this room to include myself, but your unwillingness to change your existing beliefs and opinions.

People have said thing to you which have tried to contradict, or combat what you have said and you have sort of tried to:::

Three people talking at same time...(inaudible)...

D: So has everybody else in this class...

Two people talking at same time...(inaudible)...

D: Everybody else in this class has refused to accept what he says.

So nobody else is any better:::

V: That's what I said, I said all us us included; Bc and the rest of us:::

D: I think it all brings us to a question of economics.

I don't think this class is worth $14 an hour.

I don't think any class I have ever taken is worth that much money.

Someone: Well, D:::

D: If I get a job it might be worth it later on:::

Bc: Uh Huh!

He, - you have come down to my point.

I think I finally find somebody to agree with me.

D: Yep, I agree with you.

J: It is just an unanswerable question, you know, if that is what we are trying to talk about:::

Several people talking at same time...(inaudible)...

Bc: I am not in a position to judge you or anything.

Alright?

You can judge for yourselves.

I have said my piece.

And if you like it you can take it or you can leave it.

A: Isn't that what you have done though, is judge, by putting everybody in categories and telling us that we haven't learned anything?

Bc: Yeh, No.

That I am not sorry for that.

B: Bc, isn't there some way...

State your position now and you might be able to get a large number of these people here to agree with you.

But I think that the problem lies in the fact that we aren't able to understand.

In other words, we are operating on such a level of abstraction that; that if you were to break this down somehow, so we could really get the meaning of what you are saying in terms of what your saying...

I'm saying that you might get all of us to agree with you, if you would break it down, to understand.

I can't understand your, your position:::

Bc: Wait a minute:::

D: Do you want them to agree with you?:::

Bc: I don't, thank you.

I don't necessarily want you to agree with me.

I mean, I could come in here and talk about the good, the good to you and you would be happy and you would walk out of this class a happy person.

I do not do what you want me to do.

O: I think the big stumbling block in this whole discussion has been, ah, a value judgment on learning not learning itself, but the

value of learning.

Because I think everyone would have to agree that you have learned something in school; how to write, something minescual, whether it is important or not.

That's irrelevant, but what we are talking about...

I don't think anyone can say they haven't learned a single thing in class.

Bc: Oh, that's what, what I:::

O and Bc talking at same time...(inaudible)...

Bc: That is why I say the education stops at high school, you know.

A: How do you know our education stops at high school?

Bc: Don't be impossible--really:::

A: Well, don't take it personally.

I am just asking you how you know that our education:::

Bc: That is why I say what I say:::

Three people talking at same time...(inaudible)...

P: Bc, Bc, I have a direct question.

You said, that, one statement you made is that education stops at high school.

That is pretty high level abstraction.

Right?

Bc: Yes, sir.

P: Okay, now, you know the first question this book says we need to ask says, "What do you mean and how do you know?"

What do you mean by education?

Bc: Process of learning how to read and write.

P: Okay, okay, that is education, learning to read and write?

Bc: Yeah.

P: Okay, does that stop at high school?

Bc: Yeah, you don't come here to learn how to write.

P: Does it even start in high school?

Bc: Pardon?

P: Un, I learned to read and write before I was even in high school. Does that mean my education stopped?:::

Bc: Now wait a minute.

Don't get me wrong.

You see, I...(inaudible)...

A: That part of your definition, once we start learning how to read and write which would have been the first, second and third grade...:::

Bc: No don't hang onto that.

That is not that important.

Take it:::

A: Well, I think it is important.

Why isn;t it important?

Z: I would like to agree with you on the point that a lot of classes here at college are just like high school.

But I think a person can have his own motivation to either go to the library, interact with people and learn from, on their own motivation.

D: Z, why go to class, though, in the first place?

Can't you get that without spending $4,000?

Z: You can, it's just a:::

D: See if you can get a high school education equal to that, without going to high school.:::

Z: I think one thing that exists about the college atmosphere is that you are exposed to--rather than in a high school in your home town;--you are away from your parents, you make your own decisions, you're exposed to others:::

D: Well, yeah:::

Z: You're exposed to a whole bunch of ideas.

You are exposed to a whole lot of things that you can do on your own:::

D: Yeah, you can do that by moving somewhere:::

Z: Right.

But it is just that it is more convenient to be where there is a lot of:::

D: Well, there is:::

Z: You can learn things from teachers:::

Bc: But the fact remains that I need to get a piece of paper.

Z: Pardon me?

Bc: The fact, that I need that, you know, for the piece of paper.

END OF TAPE

Panel Number III

A: You said, a long time ago that you didn't think anybody got to the benefits out of this class, that maybe they wanted.

What were these benefits that you wanted?

D: Who made that statement?

A: Waht?

D: Who made that statement?

J: Ed did.

D: Ed?

E: I don't even remember making the statement.

A: It was the first thing you said.

And I wanted, you know, to see if you would come up with anything.

Something about, you wondered if we got any benefits out of the class and the answer was no.

D: Oh, you mean his original question.

A: Yeah...

D: And he answered no.

That was I believe he said the panels.

I don't think he said the class.

A: Okay, what was it, what was it you wanted out of the panels?

E: Well, the question was, are the panels as presented in general semantics this semester providing a means for further understanding of the framework of general semantics?

You know:::

A: Uh, huh, you said something about, you said benefits and it would seem to me, you know that it was some really big thing:::

E: Well, benefits to me, is I feel, like I have to eternalize it, you know, it's just a personal thing with me.

Whatever Johnson says:::

J: I think, Andrew, what I feel, anyhow, is that the panels as a whole, not the class, but the panels have really not succeeded in providing me with a further understanding of the framework of semantics.

B: Well, I have been in other classes where I felt panels were successful and they were, I'd say in subjects that were relatively new, to me, so the panel itself can be successful.

But, it's a two-way street, like any other educational process, in my opinon.

It takes a little push as well as a little pull and it takes a little effort and creativity on the part of the panel, since guidelines weren't established and expectations aren't set.

Find, maybe that is one of the things semantics is about, you know, about setting your own expectations and getting, waht, uh, looking for things that you would like to get out ot it:::

D: Well, I think if that is true then I think probably the possibility to cure that is to make the panels voluntary.

B: I didn't hear you.

D: I think possibly a cure for that would be to make the panels on a voluntary basis.

W: Yeah, I like the idea and I've thought about it.

E: Do you have any more suggestions as to how this problem might be overcome?"""

W: I don't feel it is a problem:::

J: Well, you see it is a problem to be overcome:::

D: Yeah, well, I have some suggestions. One is, one suggestion obviously would be to do away with the panels. The second suggestion would be to do away with the class, I mean there are all kinds of answers to:::

J: I think that one thing that could be done is, and this is an administrative problem, according to Dr. Ward, is, is to cut this class in half at least and perhaps have it meet on a nightly basis for three hours at a time, once a week so that people have the ability to get to know each other a little bit:::

E: and interact:::

J: Yeah, and throw things around.

Like I think it would be much more beneficial and you'd get much more discussion if people knew each other, if they had a lot of time to discuss things and if it wasn't just a matter of picking out the broad categories out of the air and talking about them that is really artificial.

I think, just, the everyday response to natural events, you know, I think we could elicit more, probably more geniune responses from people than in these cut and dried categories.

S: Well, I'm not familiar with the panel discussion, actually.

Uh, uh, what are the guidelines that were layed down?:::

D: You don't know?:::

S: What did you have:::

D: Were you here at the very first?

Would you like for us to review it for you again?

S: No...

D: Would it be beneficial?

S: Beverly can tell me here...

Bc: ...(inaudible)...

D: ...(inaudible)...

Bc: You said something, I feel I didn't hear you on a certain statement.

You said that it would be foolish for anyone to think that after 15 weeks in this class you could go out and save the world.

I don't know actually, what you mean by that statement, but if I can give you my impressions, you are saying that after 15 weeks of general semantics you learn everything, you still can't perform, is that it?

E: ...(inaudible)...

Bc: Am I right?

I just want to get it straight.

Now, what do you think the objective of any class is, semantics aside, let it be economics, law, anything?

If you take 20 hours of law would that make you a good lawyer?

E: No.

The answer to that question, to me is no.

Bc: No.

I am just trying to boil it down to my impression to hours, and how many hours in the class.

I think, if I understand the objective of this course very well, it is trying to get to you again individual.

I mean you can't bring your girl into this class.

I mean, people around, people you get in touch with, you know,

it is an agreement to pass on what you know:::

E: Yeah, I mentioned that twice:::

Bc: See what I mean:::

E: All three of us have:::

J and D and E talking at same time...(inaudible)...

Bc: I like to talk to one person at a time.

All right?

J: Can I ask something?

Bc: Yeah, what is it?

J: All right.

Bc: Speak what is it?

E: Well, I mentioned that twice, to me, it is a personal problem.

I am concerned with my behavior, you know, so if I am to internalize general semantics...

Bc: You, you, you are wrong.

You forced me to make that statement, that it is foolish...

E and Bc talking at same time...(inaudible)...

E: I don't want to get into an argument with you about something silly like that, so:::

Bc: No, no, it is not very silly, I mean, I think you made a good point.

I never said you said something say was silly:::

E: I am saying the argument is silly.

Bc: All right.

J: I think, I think one thing that might clear up what Bisi is saying is.

I think another thing which could be done maybe, to change the class bit, if we have to stay in this particular format, I think the people who did the earlier panels were really seriously handicapped because as time went along, more information was revealed to you and I think and the chances of you falling into some of these semantical traps was probably less, you know.

So perhaps, maybe, you know it was more beneficial to do the reading, and get through the chapters and then do the panels, you know, rather than having this kind of gradual build-up process, you know.

I think the panels at the end had much more beneficial information than the others and Bisi, what we're trying to say, is, were not attacking the class:::

Bc: No, no, no,:::

J: May I go ahead?:::

Bc: What I was saying:::

J: Okay, yeah, but what E is saying, is that I think it is more of a personal thing.

As I view it the panels are tyring to, to bring out this personal thing in to the public arena where it can be used in a public debate and I think that, that, perhaps is very hard to do with only a semester's worth of semantical work under your belt, you know.

Bc: Yeah:::

J: I don't know whether it ever should be, to me.

Bc: You say you should do the course and then the panels... (inaudible)...

That is one condition for the course, for passing the course.

Well, the professor comes in and says, this is the text book

for the course and I want everybody to read it and understand it in one week, you know:::

J: Well, why, why one week?

Bc: ...(inaudible)...just to get everybody to know what is going to happen because you want to sp-nd the rest of the time on the panels.

J: I don't see any reason why we should limit it to one week.

Bc: Well, I mean:::

D: Bc, if you are going to apply that to any period of time, you are assuming that the attention would be on the panels, uh, which I would be opposed to.

I mean, I just can't see that.

They are not entirely worth it.

I mean, I've got better ways to spend my time, you know, for better purposes, you know, like I don't particularly care to come here on Mondays and listen to panels.

I enjoy listening to W---that may be personal selfishness, I don't know.

I just don't like the idea of getting up here and giving a public confessional of your knowledge or lack of:::

Bc: Well, do you really want some structured lecture?:::

D: Well, I really don't think W has ever been noted for structured lectures.

But, I, I, I have to admit, I'd just as soon listen to W rave up there as listen:::

E: Got a question over there?

P: As far as everybody up there says as I understand agrees, we need to internalize it, that it be put into use for that purpose, you

know, it's for our own individual benefit.

But if we do the panels, it is all fine and grand to to sit up here and listen to W lay it out for us, we can sit home and I guess, just self-reflex a little of this through our heads.

We have to practice, it you know, and this gives us, maybe, gives the opportunity to, or potential to practice it here in the class, you know, at least to see it--the action before us.

Somebody is going to be talking, we really:::

D: I, I, I think your argument is pretty well done away with by the fact that with the panels there was very little:::

P: I'm not saying that that did happen I just think that the potential existed:::

D: Oh, I don't even know, I don't:::

E: Well, if the potential exists, but you know, was it realized?

Three people talking at same time...(inaudible)...

V: Uh, I think basically I'm I'm trying to hit on the same point that, that you've talked about that general semantics should be a discipline where you, where you learn and where internalize the discipline of general semantics.

And to me, and I don't know how many others of you, but to me, the purpose of the panel discussions was not to argue the knowledge of the topic, it was to look at, or examine the language behavior of, of the people and of yourself in terms of the questions you ask and the information that they gave and the exchange of dialogue.

And so for me, it was a very beneficial thing because I could look at what the people were saying and look at what I was saying in relation to general semantics.

I mean, I think the panel discussions become, you get out of it what you put into it:::

D: You couldn't:::

V: I don't think you can expect a panel discussion to give it to you, you've got to take out of it and you've got to apply what you, what you understand, you know, about general semantics to that.

D: You couldn't have done that without getting up in front of us and talking about hippies, or something?

P: You can't do it unless somebody is talking to you and you are talking to them.

D: You mean you couldn't have, you mean you have to have panels to do that?

P: You don't have to:::

D: You don't have:::

V: You don't have to have, but that's one method:::

D: Yeah, that is one small tool.

But why take one third of the class the entire semester to do that one small thing that I would feel, anyway, its just like any other course.

If you want to get into it to that extent, you can do it.

A: What would you suggest, to do, to practice this method of making inferences and asking questions?

D: Well, I, I would personally suggest as far as this semantics and my limited knowledge, and you know it is very limited, and I think, maybe more so that anyone else in this class, but I would suggest that this whole thing be entirely enternalized, because I think semantics can be a very dangerous thing to yourself if you use it

incorrectly.

Now, I think a lot of people would go out with this, you know, little small knowledge we have of semantics and examine, uh, an issue of the day and use it as a reinforcement tool and that's all that I would feel, you know, that it is just very possibly continually reinforced their liberal and/or conservative or radical whatever their beliefs may be.

They constantly use it to reinforce those beliefs by saying that the other beliefs are abstract and they are higher levels of abstraction and they are just a bunch of crap, you know.

Because they understand what the other guy is talking about--the guy they agree with--they feel he is not abstracting high and it could be dangerous tool, you know.

So I don't feel that it should be entirely internalized until you felt, I don't know if there is such a point, I don't know, maybe W could tell us--if he felt maybe there was a point where you could:::

Two people talking at same time:::(inaudible)...

P: I wouldn't think you would have to internalize it to agree:::

D: Well, I mean, in other words, just keep it to yourself. Don't bother other people with it.

That is what I mean, you know, just, you know, just think about it to yourself.

Just don't go bothering other people with it, saying:::

P: What you're talking about:::

D: Do you have IFD or do you have FDS or whatever it is.

A: What you're talking about seems to be what in Johnson's book

he says that you should be aware of.

Uh:::

D: Well, is Johnson always right?:::

A: No, he is not always right, but I think in this case he is right, that:::

D: Okay, that is just fine, just don't, I don't think:::

A: Okay, well:::

D: Johnson is entirely right:::

A: Okay, let me finish what I was saying first, so you will know what you are arguing about:::

D: Oh, well, I mean, it's not important:::

A: So, it seems to me that you are saying that we should have this theoretical knowledge of it but not a practical knowledge of it, I mean, you know, the part where he is talking about how physicist look down on engineers for actually using the science, you know, when:::

D: Yeah, well what I was saying is more than that.

I can see its practical knowledge, but its, you know, just a practical knowledge of just sitting here and thinking that they are saying, well, uh, just sitting here and thinking they're not coming out and blurting it out, you know, until you have--

Okay, it's just like I go into the lab and try to work out a thing and if I don't know how to use it, I'm going to screw it up.

Just like semantics.

If you go out and try to use it now, you're going to screw up.

So I am saying you can use the practical knowledge when you have a good basis to do so.

D: I suppose W could tell us exactly when that would be...

J: Could I add something here?

I think practical knowledge, theoretical knowledge, I think is really off the subject, because first of all we're not advocating what you should get out of this course in this panel.

We're not trying to put our beliefs on you.

We're telling you what we as three people thought of the panel discussions as they have been presented in the spring of 1973.

And we're not saying the panels were worthless.

We're not saying that nothing was gained from them

We're just saying that as a tool for understanding general semantics, we think that they have been more of a failure than a success.

As the three of us are concerned, we have learned more from listening to W talk than we have in listening to these panels.

I think there are ways to fix the panels.

I am not anti-panel.

I'm not anti-discussion.

It seems to me and I think it seems to D and E that it is not a matter of just theoretical knowledge it's more of something that has to grow within you.

It's not something that can be automatically called out of the, a discussion about welfare, or something like that. It's more of an internal took that you use internally in a regular day to day basis in small things, rather than in debating hot issues of the day.

We're not trying to, we're not trying to convince you of this, because, I, that is pointless, you know.

And if you don't agree, that is fine.

Bc: It seems to be very antagonistic to us - W and the course. I think by so doing, you are trying to voice an opinion. You are attacking OSU and most of the students here because if students have chosen to come out here and take courses...

END OF TAPE

VITA

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