THE ROLE OF SEMANTICS IN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

A Thesis Presented for the Degree of Master of Arts

By

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CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEM

Man's actions, thoughts, and feelings are intimately related to the words he uses, his means of communication. Words are used to influence the public in connection with war, peace, national politics, international relations, and problems in our own personal lives. Much of the confusion, the disagreement, and the misunderstanding in existence today is the result of the misuse of words and the failure of individuals to interpret correctly the language they use. "These months following the end of hostilities are full of hateful words, both written and spoken, words which some use to divide man from man and group from group."¹

In the study of semantics the concern is with language, which is man's most important instrument for adjusting himself to his environment. By language we mean reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking. These are activities that are common to every individual regardless of his race, nationality, religious belief, or

socio-economic status. The study of semantics as a part of our language activities is important in any program of general education. By semantics we mean, briefly, the study of the meanings of words. This is important if we are to be able to communicate clearly observations, deductions, and ideas concerning the environment in which we live.

The more complicated culture becomes, the less reliable is our ordinary language. We see how the printing press, the radio, propaganda, and advertising increase the confusion. In any newspaper or magazine we choose to pick up, we find articles devoted to influential messages of politicians, editors, leaders of industry, and diplomats. The content of the advertising section is little more than a skillful attempt to make words mean something different from what the facts warrant. Not only are words used to misrepresent facts but also to conceal them. Besides, words have many meanings and a speaker or writer may not convey the meaning he wishes to express to his listener or reader because the same words have different referents for different people. All about us we find examples of communication failure. Most of us need not go farther than our own classrooms.

Students of semantics point out that although language can be abused, it can also be used for effective
adjustment to reality. Charles I. Glicksberg says:

Words are not fixed entities; they are dynamic chameleon-like creatures influenced by their contextual environment. They are shaped and colored by the organismic events that precede their emergence. They do more than state facts or single out objects for our attention; they also suggest; they evoke moods; they compose the substance of poetry and prayer.  

At no other time in the history of our nation has there been a greater need for the skillful use and intelligent interpretation of words. These are essentials to our national unity. We have just gone through a war that cost millions of lives and destroyed untold billions of property. That war accentuated racial hatreds and misunderstandings. We are beginning to realize the necessity of building an educational philosophy in America which will include the understanding of peoples, customs, and social controls having other than "old-stock American" sanction. As Bess Goodykoontz, Assistant United States Commissioner of Education, states:

The improvement of human relations is generally recognized today as an essential prerequisite to national unity and world peace. Bringing about better human relations, however, presents many important problems, among them those of: Providing accurate knowledge about different races and groups; developing understanding and appreciation of these groups; and

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improving the attitudes of different individuals, races, and groups toward one another. The world crisis has accentuated these problems, and has emphasized the need of efforts to preserve unity in the Nation and to establish peace in the world.\(^3\)

Teachers have been puzzled by the antagonism of many Negro children toward white teachers and by a belligerent attitude on the part of Negro parents. Oftentimes both Negro children and their parents feel that favoritism is shown toward white children in many of the activities of the school. White children resent the demands for equal rights that Negroes sometimes show because they feel that these demands often go beyond the bounds of equality. Slighting remarks, incidents that occur on the playground or street, feelings of inferiority, and failure to accept pupils into a particular group because of their color are other reasons for the formation of unfavorable attitudes.

Words, their meanings, and their interpretations have much to do with the building up or destruction of favorable attitudes among peoples of different races. Take such a simple game as:

Enie, meenie, minie, mo
Catch a Nigger by the toe
If he hollers let him go
Enie, meenie, minie, mo.

\(^3\)Bess Goodykoontz, *Education of Teachers for Improving Majority-Minority Relationships*, Foreword, p. 11.
Even though this childish rhyme is used only as a means of selecting one child from a group to be "It" in the next game, it may have a permanent affect upon the actions, thoughts, and feelings of small colored children toward their white playmates. Frustrations, strained situations, and tensions in many schools are caused by the words we use, how they are interpreted, and a lack of the knowledge of the principles of semantics.

Although children are born without prejudice, we know that many prejudices and biases are acquired at a very early age, especially in homes and communities in which various tensions are operative. William E. Henry explains how prejudice is an attitude into which we gradually grow under the tutelage of persons who are themselves prejudiced:

The development of prejudice is not inevitable; it develops in people in a highly selective fashion. The child, for example, is never prejudiced, is never a bigot. His human relations are matters of friendly curiosity and it shocks him when he discovers that his parents expect him to select his playmates only from approved groups. One well-worn story that illustrates the beginning of prejudice is that of the boy who went to kindergarten for the first time. He came home full of enthusiasm for one little boy: Johnny was a swell kid and could he bring him home to lunch some time? His mother thought that would be very nice until she recalled that there were several Negro children in the school. Then she asked, "Is Johnny a little white boy or colored boy?" "I don't know, Mother," her son replied. "I forgot to look, but the next time I see him
I will look."\textsuperscript{4}

There are many instances which prove that the feel- 
ings and ideas we have toward other people are the result 
of our own personal history and training. The way in 
which conventional school practices tend to play upon the 
attitude of small children toward children of different 
racial, religious, nationality, and socio-economic groups 
is not definitely known. But we do know that Americans 
are united in their loyalty to the public school. So the 
problem of improving human relations is primarily an edu-
cational job.

During the years when a boy or girl is attending 
school, he is especially pliable and can easily be influ-
enced. It is at this time that he forms many of the atti-
tudes toward others which will go with him through life. 
His emotional, mental, and social growth do not cease with 
his graduation nor with the coming of adulthood. Growth 
will continue as long as the individual allows his mind 
to be open. One of the functions of education is to pro-
mote the growth of the child both as an individual and as 
a member of a social group. If he is to become a happy, 
well-adjusted member of society, if he is to understand

\textsuperscript{4}William E. Henry, "A Psychology of Prejudice," 
those with whom he associates, he needs a knowledge of
the language which is constantly in use.

There are many words that are unbelievably evil in
their effects upon the minds of those who make up our
nation, words which are a very dangerous threat to na-
tional and international understanding. At their worst
they are the names of minority groups, hated, not for
the reality behind the hated names, but for the inner
meaning of the names in the mind of the majority, a mean-
ing which often has no relation to actuality. In such
words as "Jew," "Polack," "Mormon," and "Negro," the
"danger lies in a complete confusion of human identities
under a label which is evolved, not out of facts, but
out of prejudice."5

Words may be only words, mere sounds made
by certain combinations of the lips, tongue,
and palate, mere breath made articulate, the
most important differentia between man and
certain creatures ironically called "brutes,"
but these innocent things of breath may be-
come as evil as a weasel let loose in a dove
cote.6

Not only do the words we use build up prejudices among
peoples of different races and nationalities and tend to
widen the gap of understanding, but words also have their

5Ralph Philip Boas, "Weasels and Chameleons,"

6Ibid., p. 261.
effects upon people of different religious beliefs and those of different socio-economic levels. If our national unity is to be maintained and strengthened, the study of words and their ways in our system of communication is surely our province. When we find that words enter deeply into the patterns of our behavior, it is time that we as teachers of English recognize that fact and attack the confusion caused by words at all levels.

The problem to be investigated in this thesis is the role of semantics, the study of the meanings of words, in the education of our youth who are of different races, nationalities, religious beliefs, and socio-economic levels. When we realize that a word may, in different situations, have different meanings for different people of the same race, nationality, religious belief, and social status, we wonder how much wider the range of meaning must be for those of different races, nationalities, religious beliefs, and social levels. Since our national unity depends upon the ability of our mixed population to understand each other, a knowledge of the principles of semantics should be very helpful in eliminating much of the confusion and disagreement which exists.

Hugh Walpole says that the study of semantics will profit each individual, whether a man of the streets or a scholar, in three ways. First, he will understand
better what he hears and reads; second, he will talk and write more effectively; and third, he will think more accurately.7 If each individual, through the study of the words he uses, is better able to adjust himself to his environment and becomes a better member of society, then certainly our efforts have not been lost.

The introductory chapter of this thesis has set forth briefly the nature of language and its effects upon the minds of others. It shows how prejudice, confusion, and misunderstanding among different groups are the results of the misinterpretation of words. It also stresses the importance of the study of semantics in improving human relations and in preserving our national unity and establishing world peace.

In the second chapter is given an over-all view of the program of intercultural education as it exists at the present time. It tells something of the beginnings of intercultural education, the meaning of the term, and its role in our present system of education.

The meaning of semantics and the values which may be derived from its study in the high school English program is the subject of the third chapter.

7Hugh Walpole, Semantics The Nature of Words and Their Meanings, pp. 28-31.
Chapter four deals with specific means of relieving intercultural tensions through the study of semantics in high school English classes.

The last chapter consists of a summary and the conclusions drawn from the study.
CHAPTER II
AN OVER-ALL VIEW OF A PROGRAM
OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Recently there has been much discussion of what appears to be a new emphasis in education called "Intercultural Education." Here and there are a few people who discuss it with authority, but, generally speaking, there is a great amount of confusion as to what it is all about. Many teachers and administrators are attempting to incorporate ideas and plans of intercultural education in the school program, but thousands of others consider it a newfangled idea which will be popular only for a short time and therefore they are not much concerned.

The term "Intercultural Education" was coined several years ago by Rachel Davis-Dubois, a teacher in the schools of New Jersey, who worked to bring about a better feeling among children of diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Through the efforts of Mrs. Dubois and those who worked with her, both the Service Bureau for Intercultural Education and the Intercultural Education Workshop were organized. The idea has gained wide attention during the past two or three years in relation to problems accentuated by World War II.
From a very early period the American population has been composed of people of different races and cultures. Traditionally, we have looked upon this country as the "melting pot," but we know that in this mixed population we have much to do before our attitudes toward, and our treatment of racial, ethnic, and religious groups are brought into line with our democratic principles.

If we expect to maintain and perpetuate our democratic way of life, our public schools must teach an appreciation of all the various groups that go to make up America. The present interest in the plan known as the Springfield Plan is a clear indication that we have given little or no thought to using our public school system to indoctrinate our children directly and positively with the American democratic ideal. It is our duty to teach children naturally and realistically about other racial, nationality, and religious groups and their contributions to America, and to show them why we must respect all groups and grant them equal opportunities.

Respect for the individual has always been one of the essential elements of education in a democracy. If we are to gain and retain the many worthwhile cultural contributions of the various racial and nationality groups, we need to recognize, develop, and use the intelligence of every pupil in our classrooms. Much can be learned of
the art, literature, music, drama, and handwork of other nations by giving each individual an opportunity to express himself. This involves the careful study of each pupil's potentialities, the development of his abilities, and the provision for the free communication of his ideas to the group. By this procedure all the members of the group will feel that they are a part of it, each will feel that he has something to contribute, and our nation will retain a wealth of tradition and folklore that might otherwise be lost.

In any society, the matter of educating the young is the concern of all the adult members of the community although the formal task is delegated to chosen leaders. It is our schools that must deal constructively with the problems of intercultural and interracial tensions among our people. "One of the most important educational needs of the day is more effective teaching in the field of so-called 'intercultural relations.'"¹

There are four kinds of intergroup tensions which schools must recognize and take into consideration in the education of our youth. First of all, the race situation seems to show the most pronounced instance of

antagonism and discrimination. Perhaps the most disturbing race problem facing American educators is the Negro-white relationship. Negroes are forced to adopt certain personal and social roles in our American society which are not on a par with those of the whites. They must live in the colored districts where they are overcrowded and tuberculosis is prevalent; they are not permitted to go into most restaurants, hotels, recreation centers, and theaters; delinquents are frequently treated severely by local police; and it is almost impossible for Negroes to enter the skilled trades.

It is difficult to know exactly the chief cause of misunderstanding between Negroes and whites, but certainly the education which generations of Americans have received in our schools and colleges must rank high in the list. No other minority group has been victimized more in our textbooks than the Negroes. A study of the material on the Negro in history textbooks was made recently in the city of New York under the auspices of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Of the texts examined, most of them had been published since 1930. Yet their treatment of the place of the Negro in the history of the United States was highly derogatory. Most of the material dealt with slavery and pictured the Negro as a simple and childlike creature who worked in
the southern cotton fields during the day and returned to
his rude cabin at night where he would pass the time
crooning sad melodies that we now call spirituals, tell-
ing tales of mystery and superstition, or dancing shuff-
ing steps to the accompaniment of the banjo or guitar.
He was free from care and worry and had food and clothing
sufficient for his humble needs.

The illustrations in the textbooks were found to
picture the Negro as inferior also. Either he was shown
as a slave in the hold of a ship, a cook in the kitchen,
or an old family servant.

This kind of emphasis in school texts without any
mention of Negro progress is definitely one of the chief
causes of racial misunderstanding. If writers feel it
necessary to dwell at length upon slavery and the place
of the Negro in our history during the period of Recon-
struction, then, in the interest of justice and fair play,
they should particularize on Negro progress. There is much
to be said of Negro inventors, technicians, scholars, edu-
cators, and businessmen who have aided the general pro-
gress of our country. "The textbook treatment of the
Negro cries aloud for revision, and we shall make little
progress in education for racial understanding until the
average boy or girl no longer absorbs this poison from the
first grade through high school."²

While the problem of textbooks is a major one, its correction alone will not make our schools the factor they should be in education for democracy. Other problems are involved. Take, for example, participation in extra-curricular activities. In schools where there is a mixed population, there should be participation of all students according to their talents and abilities. Pupils of all races are usually permitted to take part in athletics, debate, and musical events in these schools, but when it comes to the class play, it is necessary for the Negro pupils to sit on the sidelines unless there happens to be a part which calls for a stereotyped cook or clown. If we are to make democracy work, we must offer equal opportunities to all in accordance with their abilities regardless of race, nationality, or religious belief.

Then, there is the problem of books, other than textbooks, which tend to cause misunderstanding between races. We need to analyze how some books reinforce stereotypes already in our culture or "drill in" such hated nicknames as "Rastus" and "Sambo." Negro children and their parents resent these names because they suggest

clownishness, docility, and stupidity. Derogatory connotations of such words as "puckaninny" and "mammy" are evident to Negroes even though used quite innocently by whites. Instead of books which picture Negroes as slow, easy-going slaves who work on southern plantations, our schools need to find new values in books which motivate character, show Negro progress, and give the inner feelings of Negroes toward white people.

Thus we find many causes for the misunderstanding which exists between Negroes and whites. However, it is not against Negroes alone that we find a great deal of discrimination, but also against Orientals who have retained native patterns of behavior which are foreign to the prevailing culture in this country. Vickery and Cole say:

Orientals, native Indians, and Negroes are still regarded by the majority of American whites as naturally inferior peoples. They must, therefore, remain subordinate to the master class. Besides, there is a disposition on the part of many of the latter to regard the color white as a symbol of purity and goodness, black as evil, and yellow as cowardice and treachery, and to impute these moral traits respectively to the white, black, and yellow races.  

The second intergroup tension which our schools must consider is the one that arises from adverse attitudes

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toward certain nationality groups in our midst. Members of race groups differ in skin color and other biological characteristics, but members of ethnic groups differ in folkways, mores, arts and crafts, languages, and family customs. It is not generally realized that there are thirteen million foreign-born citizens among us, twenty-five million first-generation descendants (one or both parents born abroad), and five million aliens legally here.\footnote{Ibid., p. 13.} In other words, forty-three million, one-third of our whole population, may be regarded as relatively foreign. These groups, because they have appeared to be different from old-stock Americans in so many ways, have been shunned and ridiculed. They have become known as "Dagos," "Wops," "Yids," "Hunkies," "Heinies," and "Chinks." World War II did not improve the situation. Persons bearing foreign names were held under suspicion and manufacturers of war materials did not regard foreign-born citizens as safe workingmen. For example, an employer might have been very much interested in the qualifications of a certain applicant until he glanced at his name and found it to be the very German - Carl Hans Schlabauch. And he may have been favorably impressed by the application of Etsu Sakamoto until he realized that the name was most
certainly Japanese and therefore he had no place for this individual. Names of these kinds cause tensions to arise automatically, and letters of application bearing such names were likely to go no farther than the waste paper basket.

The public school can help to prevent false rumors about the foreign-born. Children acquire unfavorable attitudes in their homes through hearing the discussions of parents who are prejudiced. They also hear careless remarks made by different members of the dominant culture group. A program of intercultural education in the school tends to check these influences. Practices such as the correction of unwarranted ideas about races and nationalities, the extension of friendly gestures to timid children of foreign extraction, an appreciation of the diverse gifts contributed to America by old-world peoples, and the cultivation of respect for all American citizens regardless of race, nationality, religious belief, or socio-economic status are some of the ways of building up a feeling of fellowship and equality among the various nationality groups. In connection with this, Robert J. Havighurst says:

The schools cannot build a new social order, but they afford our best hope of realizing the ideals of our present social order. If our social order is in danger of destruction, as some people believe, the main chance for salvation
lies in what we do through the schools in realizing our ideal of the brotherhood of man on both a national and an international scale. Thus there are two related educational problems of prime importance: the problem of intergroup relations and the problem of international relations. They are bound together. We must have national unity and solidarity in order to contribute our share toward international peace and stability -- and without international order and peace we cannot reap the social rewards of national unity.

Education with respect to intergroup and international relations should have top priority in our schools today. Of the two areas, intergroup or intercultural education is at present getting the greater amount of attention.5

The third kind of tension is found in religious antagonisms. Wherever religious favoritism is manifest in a community, it is reflected in school circles. As a rule, members of a particular religious faith take their church loyalties seriously, and many look upon other faiths with suspicion and often regard them as fantastic or absurd. Protestants have often looked with suspicion upon what they believed to be aggressive activities of Roman Catholics. From time to time Catholics have expressed certain claims about Christianity which have resulted in conflict. Rivalry often develops between different sects of Protestants. A minority group suffering

mistratment recently is the sect of Jehovah's Witnesses. And perhaps the strongest kind of religious intolerance is to be found in the attitude of both Catholics and Protestants toward the Jews. Hence, educators who seek to develop a democratic understanding among racial and nationality groups must also concern themselves with contemporary phases of religious conflict.

By law the public school cannot teach a particular religious faith. Teachers cannot even work on the assumption that this is a Christian nation, but rather they must recognize the right of Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Buddhists or any other group to profess and practice their particular belief. They must make no attempt, either directly or indirectly, to change these faiths. However, educators can promote a spirit of interfaith understanding which is an essential to democratic living. Such an understanding is based upon respect for differences and is not an attempt to reduce all religions to a single form. If members of the student group can be led to respect each other's viewpoints and honor the principle of freedom of worship, a wholesome attitude will prevail.

In connection with race and nationality conflicts, certain words were given as examples of causes of misunderstanding and discrimination. We also have words
and phrases which are used disrespectfully in referring to religious beliefs. It is not uncommon in many communities to hear members of different religious sects spoken of as "fish eaters," "holy rollers," or "long-faced Presbyterians." Our pupils need to realize that such expressions are the result of prejudice, and to use them is to give evidence of faulty thinking and un-American behavior. The school can help to overcome religious misunderstandings "by teaching pupils to treat objectively the interfaith conflicts which disturb certain peoples in the community." 6 Another way it can help is by sponsoring a lecture series by ministers, priests, and rabbis for the school's assembly programs. This would be a means of revealing that all religions come from one root and that each reflects truth in its own fashion.

The fourth kind of tension with which our schools must deal arises from the differences in the socio-economic status of certain groups in the community.

Occasionally in this country the social gap becomes so pronounced between groups having economic privilege and groups deprived of economic necessities that independent subcultures and new forms of social conflict spring

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up. These groups are usually referred to as "the haves" and "the havens."7

Since such conditions oftentimes become relatively permanent in a community, a problem in intercultural education presents itself.

Perhaps the most striking example of a pronounced social gap in the United States is the struggle between the sharecroppers and the land-owning classes in the South. A similar situation develops oftentimes between employers and employees. Many times members of the dominant class exercise control over the less-privileged groups and acquire the idea that these people lack the ability or ambition to rise higher in the socio-economic scale. They may even attempt to cultivate in these less-privileged groups a sort of contentment with their particular status.

The problem of what the school can do to create better socio-economic relations among our mixed groups is a difficult one. But the school does have a responsibility directly to the pupils. "It should help them understand community conditions which contribute to physical handicap, social suffering, and intergroup conflict, in which they are personally involved."8 The

7Ibid., p. 21.

8Ibid., pp. 25-26.
public school can and should help create public opinion and it must insist upon the democratic treatment of all minority groups. We need to eliminate from our students' vocabularies such expressions as "hillbilly," "Kentuckian," "poor white trash," and "below the tracks" if we expect a truly democratic atmosphere to exist.

A study of these four intergroup tensions among the people who make up our population focuses our attention upon the urgent need for planning a program of education to improve the relations between racial, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic groups. World War II, "by bringing about many changes in the distribution and relationships of these groups, has increased these tensions and emphasized this need."\(^9\) It is a generally recognized fact at present that the improvement of human relations is an essential prerequisite to national unity and world peace. Vickery and Cole state that "race and culture conflicts are serious threats to the well-being of individuals, of communities, and of the American nation as a whole" and "these conflicts can be lessened and, in certain instances, eliminated by a carefully planned educational program."\(^{10}\)


\(^{10}\)Vickery and Cole, op. cit., p. 29.
What, then, is the purpose of intercultural education? And why should we be concerned about it? Perhaps the most important purpose is the promotion of our national unity. Also, "among the important purposes of knowing our neighbors is to understand them better, to appreciate them more, to be able to work with them cooperatively and effectively, and finally to reduce our prejudices toward them and theirs toward us."11 It is not advocated that we emphasize the differences among groups, but that we recognize them and appraise them. The more we study other people the more we see the value and quality of many of their differences. We need to appreciate and accept differences and realize that it is the diffusion of these traditions that has enriched our national culture. As Louis Adamic says:

In line with this, I think it is urgent that in each major community in this country some light be found to show the way to interesting immigrants from Italy, Bohemia, Poland, Greece and other countries to band together with second-generation people of their respective backgrounds and with us old-stock Americans with this purpose: that we would get out of their minds and feelings what is left in them and remains worth while for us today. Start clubs. Dozens, scores, or even hundreds of them in cities, say, like Buffalo, Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, New York, etcetera. Decorate and furnish the clubrooms with originals or skillful replicas of objects in the typical rooms which the immigrants

11 Caliver, op. cit., p. 35.
once knew as home. Endeavor to get numerous pieces of native handwork and folkcraft. Collect the literature where possible, classic and modern, in the original and in translation, which was and is available from the mother countries. Produce old country plays and pageants... And show us old-stock Americans that we have something in our "foreign sections" which is not to be deplored, which may, in fact, be part of the hope of this country.  

Because of our reluctance to accept the point of view suggested above by Louis Adamic, cultural values have been squandered, and often recklessly destroyed, all over the world. For years, we have failed to appreciate fully the importance of the contributions which our minority groups can make to American culture. Besides, we have failed to realize how our treatment of different races and nationalities has warped American institutions and influenced American character. As Dr. Earl C. Kelley, Professor of Secondary Education at Wayne University and Supervisor of Secondary Education in the Detroit Schools says:

We are bound to hold that all people have value. That is basic to the ideals of American democracy. We are bound to realize that each person in our society has unique worth, and that there are no people among us that do not count. Each individual has potential abilities, and, given a chance, can make a unique contribution to the good of all. There are no expendables.  

12Louis Adamic, From Many Lands, pp. 287-288.

13Earl C. Kelley, "Do We Really Believe That the High School Should Serve All American Youth?" School Management, (December, 1945), p. 190.
One of the greatest threats to democracy during this post-war period is the prevalence of racial, nationality, and religious prejudices. "A prejudice is an opinion or emotional feeling which is not based on fact or on reason. It is an attitude in a closed mind." We do not inherit our prejudices but develop them as a result of our experiences in our environment. We absorb them unconsciously in our relationships in the home, at school, and in the neighborhood. Some prejudices, such as a prejudice against eating turtle or some other food we have never tasted but other people enjoy, are meaningless and harmless. But prejudices against people because of their race, nationality, or religious belief can do a great deal of damage. Intolerance against these people not only affects the group itself but the country as a whole.

Prejudices make our American population the victims of many fallacies. We form "pictures in the mind" of people with whom we have had little or no contact and characterize them by certain peculiar, often unpleasant, traits which make them different. For example, Irishmen are fighters, Negroes are lazy and shiftless, Jews talk with their hands and are money-mad, the Scotch are stingy, and Italians are gun-toting gangsters. These generaliza-

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tions are passed on from one generation to another and from one individual to another by men and women who should and do know better. Some expressions in our common speech which reflect prejudice against groups are "to Jew a person down," "get up your Irish," "an Indian giver," "a Yellow streak," and "very white of you."

These stereotypes are being constantly reinforced through magazines, newspapers, movies, conversations, jokes, books, comic strips, and the radio. We need only look through some of our widely circulated magazines to find examples of the treatment of minority groups in much of our popular light fiction. White, "old-stock" American Protestants are pictured as superior people with wealth and prestige. They are usually intelligent, industrious, athletic, esthetic, democratic, and lovable. Members of minority groups are the cowardly, lazy, cruel, and weak characters. In radio, the ridiculous business ventures of "Amos and Andy" and the dialect of "Mrs. Nussbaum" become the national concept of Negroes and Jews. The motion-picture treatment of minority groups is often disparaging although there is some indication that Hollywood has recently become aware of the stereotype and of the social impact of gags, lines, and situations which were herefore judged only on the basis of amusement. Advertising copy is almost wholly directed at the "typical American."
If we are to know and understand people of different racial, nationality, religious, and socio-economic groups, and to realize the importance of their contributions to our American culture, the schools must assume the leadership in this project of intercultural education. The school is the accepted meeting place of all groups and through its efforts school and community programs can be carried into effect. Coordinated school-and-community programs of intercultural education which utilize Scout troops, Y. M. C. A.'s, Y. W. C. A.'s, and similar youth organizations, as well as the public schools, are highly desirable. These groups can reach the general public in various ways such as forums, discussion groups, sermons, lectures, and community festivals. Where this kind of program is implemented—for example, in Springfield, Massachusetts—the results are quite encouraging.

In an ideal situation, the plan for a program of intercultural education should be constructed by representatives of all groups concerned: the students, teachers, school administrators, school board, parents, minority groups, and community organizations. With the aid of an experienced adviser who is familiar with this field of work, the project could move ahead, avoiding mistakes others have made and developing techniques which would be useful in the various situations which might arise in the program.
The foregoing presupposes that teachers will realize their responsibility of educating for democracy and will make a deliberate and conscious effort to discharge this responsibility. One prerequisite for an effective program of intercultural education is that the teachers have a firm belief in its many values. With training, a keen sense of duty, and a willingness to work courageously, much can be accomplished in creating better human understanding.

The primary concern of teachers in planning an effective program of intercultural education would be that of setting up courses of study and constructing units of work.

It may reasonably be maintained that the social studies supervisors and teachers should take the lead in the project, for their training in the social sciences -- particularly in sociology, anthropology, and psychology -- affords them a critical introduction to important concepts and subject matter which other teachers may not have.15

However, according to a study made by the U. S. Office of Education, several teacher-training institutions are offering teachers opportunities to study the intercultural relationships of our school pupils and to prepare them to help improve human relationships. Besides, intercultural education should by no means be considered the exclusive

concern of any one department or combination of departments. The subject matter in almost any field can be used to promote intergroup understanding. Then, too, the "incidental" approach is oftentimes more effective than the specifically planned method.

For teachers planning a program of intercultural education, there are three objectives which should be the foundation of the project. First of all, the teacher should "concern himself with the facts he wants his pupils to learn and the misinformation he wants them to unlearn." For example, many pupils have been taught that Negroes are mentally inferior to white people and that they are by nature "shiftless." So one of the objectives of a program of intercultural education should be to show the fallacies of such theories so that students will reject them rather than accept and transmit them. The study of such Negroes as George Washington Carver, educator and scientist, Booker T. Washington, educator and author, Marian Anderson, well-known contralto, Paul Robeson, the actor, and Dr. Abram Harris, the economist, would probably be very helpful in tearing down prevailing prejudices. It would also be enlightening to many pupils to know that "more than one hundred Negroes have become sufficiently

16 Ibid., p. 81.
prominent in American life to be listed in *Who's Who in America*."17

In the second place, teachers should plan a program which includes experiences for their pupils that will affect their emotional reactions toward those of different races, nationalities, and religious beliefs. That was what Miss Rosa M. Bowker, the principal of Washington School, at Springfield, Massachusetts, had in mind. To plant the seeds of interfaith understanding and cooperation in her school, she has the children from kindergarten on through the elementary school learn songs and psalms common to all peoples. The pupils also visit churches and synagogues where religious leaders explain the rituals of their respective faiths. Besides, as Rachel Rubin explains:

> It was Miss Bowker who, several years ago, introduced the Festival of Lights, a dramatic presentation of the Jewish Hanukkah and the Christian Christmas by pupils of the sixth grade. Each year, while Mattathias and Antiochus share honors with the Holy Family, mothers with full hearts and brimming eyes hear the telling of the old, old stories by young voices.18

The plan of preparing school programs and plays in observance of national and religious festivals provides

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opportunities for the Jewish and non-Jewish children to work together and to learn to respect and admire the customs and beliefs of each other. Other techniques which might prove helpful in affecting the emotional reactions of pupils are the study of the Jews' contributions to world religion, their place in the history of the United States, and their work in the fields of science and medicine.

In the third place, in planning an effective program of intercultural education, it is necessary that pupils be taught to think critically and analytically about intergroup relationships. Students should see the unfairness, for example, of blaming all Italians for the actions of one person or group of persons of that particular nationality. They should learn to detect the methods used in propaganda against the different races and be able to recognize the factors in their own thinking that distort their judgment.

When, then, is intercultural education? According to C. Leslie Cushman "intercultural education is at bottom the effort to make prevail among us the truly democratic treatment of all minority groups." 19 E. Harold

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Mason says it is the "attempt to make our curriculum materials representative of the best cultural traditions of all Americans." 20 It is the beginning of the process of bringing a greater amount of group wisdom into our educational system. It looks forward to the day when the home, the school, and society will work together in relaxed cooperation to bring about the more perfect development of all our youth regardless of color, nationality, religious belief or socio-economic status. "Intercultural education is the norm for education in America." 21

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21 Ibid., p. 243.
CHAPTER III

THE MEANING OF SEMANTICS AND THE VALUES THAT
MAY BE DERIVED FROM IT’S STUDY IN THE
HIGH- SCHOOL ENGLISH PROGRAM

What is semantics? To attempt to answer this ques-
tion in a few sentences would be futile. "Semantics" as
a word did not come into existence until the present cen-
tury. Briefly, semantics is concerned with the nature of
words and their meanings in our system of communication,
and it is of general value because it gives us a better
idea of what we are trying to do every time we make use
of language.

The first man to take language into the laboratory
and explore the possibility of formulating a genuine
science of communication was Count Alfred Korzybski, a
Polish mathematician who is now living in the United
States. Other linguists soon recognized the importance
of his study, and they, too, began to reflect upon the
nature of the words we use. Among the first to spend a
considerable amount of time in intensive study were
C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards.

Perhaps the best way of finding what the term "semant-
tics" really means is to examine the definitions given by
several well-known linguists who have been working in this
field. The pioneer, Alfred Korzybski, simply states that the term is "derived from the Greek Semantikos, 'significant', from semainein 'to signify', 'to mean'."¹ He also adds the explanation that the word "has been variously used in a more or less general or restricted sense by different writers."²

To go on to some of our other linguists, Hugh Walpole states that "Semantics, or semasiology, is the study of the meanings of words."³ He stresses the idea that most of our words have many different meanings and that the reader or listener who wishes really to understand a word that pertains to some discussion or to a subject in which he is interested, will find the practice of meaning shift or multiple definition of vital importance. He believes that a flexibility of mind is demanded of the student before he can grasp the true meaning of semantics. This linguist regards the study, not as a science, but as an exploration which rewards students with a skill in the use of words rather than a body of subject matter.

Another definition is that given by Robert H. Moore, who says that general semantics is a "study of how words

¹ Alfred Korzybski, Science and Sanity, p. 19.
² Ibid., p. 19.
³ Hugh R. Walpole, Semantics The Nature of Words and Their Meanings, p. 20.
convey meanings, for the purpose of promoting the more accurate expression and the more exact interpretation of meanings through language. ⁴ He, like Walpole, is primarily concerned with the problem of the multiple meanings of words and the difficulties involved in conveying meanings from the speaker or writer to the listener or reader.

A slightly different slant on the meaning of the word is given by Louis H. Gray, who states that semantics "deals with the evolution of the meanings of words and with the reasons for their survival, decay, disappearance, and, sometimes, revival, as well as with the causes of creation of new words."⁵ This linguist is interested not only in the problem of the many meanings of words and of how to achieve greater accuracy in conveying meaning through the use of them, but also in the historical development of words. He believes that the history of the changes that take place in word meanings is one aspect of semantics. He would also include the study of the reasons for coining new words.

A linguist who seems to be very much in agreement with those already mentioned is Isaac Goldberg. He says

⁴ Robert H. Moore, General Semantics in the High-School English Program, p. 35.
⁵ Louis H. Gray, Foundations of Language, p. 249.
that "the study of language primarily from the standpoint of meaning is called semantics (Greek *sema, 'a sign'; *semantikos, 'significant')." He is preoccupied with the manner in which meanings undergo changes, not as something that happened in a dim yesterday, but as something that is going on all the time and will continue as long as man uses words as his means of communication.

Stuart Chase also defines semantics in terms of meaning. He explains that "the term which is coming into use to cover such studies is 'semantics,' matters having to do with signification or meaning." He uses the word to signify the formulation of a genuine science of communication and advocates that language itself be taken into the laboratory for competent investigation.

Now let us look at the definition which is given in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Here we find "semantics" defined as "the study of the changes in the meaning of words in the way of specialization or generalization." This again is in agreement with the other definitions.

A definition of semantics which seems to cover all these definitions with their slight differences and which

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is probably the most complete and most inclusive is the one given in Webster's *New International Dictionary of the English Language*:

The historical and psychological study and the classification of changes in the signification of words or forms, viewed as normal and vital factors in linguistic development, including such phenomena as specialization and expansion of meaning, maliorative and pejorative tendencies, metaphor, adaptation, and the like.\(^9\)

Thus we see that linguists agree that semantics has to do with our language, the words we use, the meanings of these words, and how they are interpreted. Whatever definition of the term we accept as the best explanation, we realize more and more the important part that words, and the meanings of words, play in our system of communication. Many times we find that language, the chief function of which is communication, does not serve adequately. Misinterpretations and misunderstandings are often the result of the fact that our tools of expression are such that the listener does not know what the speaker is talking about. Nor does the speaker himself know clearly what he is saying. This makes us wonder how often minds really meet and how often they completely miss each other.

Language is perhaps the most intricate, yet the most

widely used invention of man. It is without doubt a very influential factor in his behavior. "Its universal use, which begins in the cradle, has often, however, blinded us to its difficulties."10 It causes prejudices and misunderstandings among peoples of different races, nationalities, religious groups, and socio-economic levels without their realizing what is happening to them. Language fails to communicate to the listener or reader the ideas that the speaker or writer wishes to express. What is the cause of this communication failure?

According to Ogden and Richards, the chief reason for communication failure is the confusion of word with thing which is prevalent in the present use of language. Words mean nothing by themselves. "It is only when a thinker makes use of them that they stand for anything or, in one sense have 'meaning.'"11 These authors contribute a technical term, the "referent" by which they mean the object or situation in the real world to which the word or label refers.

The relationship of thoughts, words, and things as they are found in reflective speech can best be explained by a triangle. From the outside world we receive a sign


which may be a word, phrase, or symbol. We then proceed to interpret this sign, to find meaning in it. Our interpretation depends upon past experience. For example, the word or symbol "dog" would mean one thing to an individual who had just been bit by a chow and quite another thing to a person who was very fond of his pet terrier. So this symbol calls up the object, the "referent." Then memory is consulted and interpretation takes place. This process we call thought or "reference."

Reflection, thought or REFERENCE

Word, phrase or SYMBOL

Object, thing or REFERENT

Clear communication demands all three angles of the triangle. Our understanding or interpretation proceeds from symbol to referent to reference. The sign or symbol may be the word "accident." This calls up the object,
the car itself, which is labelled the "referent." The interpretation, reflection, or thought which then takes place may consist of the recall of a recent accident in which a car struck a bicycle and injured the boy who was riding it. This is the "reference."

To the speaker the word "accident" means a specific incident. It means the sounds, the scene, the injuries, and the people involved in a particular accident which he had seen recently. But what does "accident" mean to the listener who had not witnessed this particular accident? It means something entirely different because his experiences were unlike those of the speaker.

We have the same situations arising in our classrooms. The words we use are not identified by any two people in exactly the same way because their experiences have not been the same. Oftentimes words in a poem or other piece of literature or in a class discussion do not make sense to students because they have in mind a different meaning from the one intended by the author or speaker. "Most of us are aware of the chronic inability of school children to understand what is taught them; their examination papers are familiar exhibits of communication failure." ¹²

Let us suppose that in an English class the word

¹² Chase, op. cit., p. 19.
"law" was used to refer to rules of construction, as the "laws of poetry," and the pupils were familiar with the word "law" only in reference to a rule or regulation to enforce justice or prescribe duty. They would immediately indicate surprise when the word was used in a way which was strange to them, and they might be puzzled as to whether a certain "law" would prevent poets from writing anything but four or six line verses. To them the word would be confusing and they would probably become curious to know more about these so-called "laws."

The English teacher, or the teacher of any subject may, at any time, find himself confronted with a similar difficulty which is really a language problem. When this happens, he should consider the event an opportunity for him to lead the pupils to an awareness of the fact that the same word may have different meanings in different situations and that its intended meaning can be discovered only through the study of its context. The teacher should recognize that this situation affords him the opportunity to introduce pupils to the study of semantics as an aid to them in expressing themselves or interpreting the speech and writing of other people.

Perhaps the best way to proceed in clearing up a difficulty in word meaning is by having a discussion of the word in question and giving numerous illustrations
of its use. If the word is "law," its variable meaning can be brought out by showing that the word may not always mean a statute law but may refer to the legal profession, as in the sentence, "He practiced law in Seattle, Washington, for several years." It may mean a rule of action and conduct imposed by superior authority, enjoining what is right and prohibiting what is wrong, as in the phrase "the laws of God." In science the term "law" can be used to mean a sequence of natural processes or events in nature as "the law of gravity." It is also used to refer to a certain field of study as, "He studied law at the University of Wisconsin." Many other examples could be given. "If the teacher is to take advantage of opportunities which arise in the English class for a study of the principles of semantics, he must have available materials which illustrate the principles and in the study of which the principles may be applied."\(^\text{13}\)

The question may arise as to when the study of the multiple meanings of words should be taken up in the classroom. It certainly would be wrong for a teacher to announce at the close of a unit's work in literature, grammar, or composition that a study of the meanings of

\(^{13}\) Moore, op. cit., p. 141.
words would be taken up next if there was no evidence of
the need for it on the part of the pupils. The prin-
ciples of semantics should be presented when pupils are
engaged in activities of such a nature that a knowledge
of the principles will help them gain their objectives.
Such activities are likely to occur when the complexity
of the material read by the students is such that they
come across such abstractions as "freedom," "justice,"
"democracy," "Americanism," and "truth." And, since
these abstractions are everywhere, we need to be pre-
pared to take up the study of semantics at any time.

This raises still other questions in our minds. Why
do such words as "freedom," "democracy," and "Americanism"
create difficulties in communication while other words
are easily interpreted? Why, in our schools where there
are students of different races, nationalities, relig-
ious beliefs, and socio-economic levels, do the words
"capital," and "labor" cause misunderstandings and build
up prejudices when other words do not? We realize that
such words often cause individuals with different back-
grounds to see things that are not there and hear things
said that were not spoken. They affect the students'
attitudes toward other groups and cause tensions and
strained relations to exist.
Frequently we hear a speaker use these abstractions with perfect assurance that they have meaning and that he is conveying this meaning to his hearers. Yet if we were to ask him what he meant by certain of these abstract words, he would find it extremely difficult if not impossible to make an explanation. By "whites" does the speaker mean people with, let us say, seventy-five per cent "white ancestors?" How far back would he trace the ancestry in order to decide? Would many qualify to be classed as "whites?" By "Christian" does he mean a member of a certain church? Are all Protestants Christians? Or, is a Christian someone who reads his Bible and goes to church regularly? Would he include Catholics as Christians? Are some Jews Christians? By "labor" does he simply mean work? Or does he mean members of organized labor groups? Would people who are members of a company union be included? There are many such broad generalizations loosely used in lectures, newspapers, and daily conversations.

Let us go a little further into the discussion of abstract terms, which we readily see include many ideas and experiences, and compare them with words which are more concrete. Let us examine a few words and see why language difficulties arise in the use of abstractions that do not occur in the use of other words. For example,
why is there a clearer concept in the mind when we hear someone say, "There is a pencil," than when he says, "There is a Christian"? How are the words "chair" and "Christian" different? Why does one have a more definite meaning than the other?

When we study these words carefully we find there is little difficulty in interpreting labels for common objects such as "pencil," "chair," and "dog" because they represent an actuality. It is quite easy to identify these words with things. The word "pencil" may mean the student's own red pencil which he holds in his hand, an instrument for writing. "Dog" may suggest the family's pet, or the dog next door, or some furry animal that is actually known. The confusion arises when we cannot make this identification as in the words "capital," "power," "Christian," and "whites." For such terms there are many possible referents in the outside world "and by mistaking them for substantial entities somewhere at large in the environment, we create a fantastic wonderland."\(^{14}\) Normally we attempt to find referents for these abstractions and proceed learnedly to define the term by giving another dictionary abstraction, for example, defining "sublime" as "lofty" and thus making symbols for referents.

\(^{14}\)Chase, op. cit., p. 10.
Lou La Brant emphasizes that "a basic understanding which needs to be taught in school and home is that the existence of a word does not at all prove the existence of anything."\footnote{15} She explains this more fully when she says:

Let us for a moment consider the term "Jews." Once it referred to members of a nation, committed to one form of religious belief and practice, using a common language and literature. Today the term survives but includes: persons who were born and have lived in Germany, Italy, Russia, France, England, or any other country you may name; persons accepting various forms of Jewish faith or persons with no religious training at all; persons who speak any of the languages of the earth; and persons of all walks of life, associated with every variety of vocation, government, or social level. The child who learns the word "Jew" usually fixes upon the characteristics of a few "Jews" whom he knows or hears of, generalizing that, since the word is commonly used it must have validity and a meaning which might be defined, and that there are consequently common characteristics of those to whom it is applied.\footnote{16}

It is clear to us then that abstract words are the ones that cause the most difficulty in our system of communication. They are the words that are the most likely to cause misunderstandings among the various race, nationality, religious, and socio-economic groups that make up our school population. Shall we do away with abstract-

\footnote{15}{La Brant, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 324.}

\footnote{16}{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 325.}
tions? This is impossible because abstract words are being used constantly and although they correspond to no recognizable actuality, they do represent something real in life whether it be an emotion, a conception, a hope, or an ideal. However, to eliminate as much group tension as possible, we, as teachers of English should encourage pupils to be as specific and concrete as possible in their use of language. Concrete, specific terms show sharp, clear thinking; vague terms are evidences of vague thinking.

Pupils should become familiar with the use of abstractions and realize that the greater the control over language the greater will be the power to recognize the writer or speaker's meanings. If the comprehension of language is insufficient to enable students to grasp meanings, they not only fail to understand what they read or hear but also substitute something actually quite different. Pupils should recognize this language peculiarity and realize the possibility of their misinterpreting abstract words in their reading and listening. Besides, they should make clear by illustrations and definitions what they themselves mean when they employ these terms. For example, there is no entity in the world for the word "whites" but several million individuals with skins of an obvious or questionable whiteness. If
pupils were to use this word in their writing or speaking, they should be prepared to define specifically what they mean by it.

The following observation concerning the use of words is made by S. I. Hayakawa:

They (our students) are trained to respond in specific ways to certain signals: "Christianity" ("a fine thing"), "The Constitution" ("a fine thing"), "Shakespeare" ("a great poet"), "Benedict Arnold" ("a traitor"), and so on. But, especially in the elementary and secondary schools, they are taught very little about how not to respond.\(^{17}\)

In our use of abstract words, this is important. There are certain things that words do not mean and pupils should be aware of that fact. The word "Japanese" does not mean treachery and deception, nor does the word "Jew" mean talking with the hands and grabbing for money.

Ralph Philip Boes explains the difficulties caused by the way we use our language when he says:

Shakespeare knew that a major source of man's mental confusions is the universal tendency to regard words as realities. Juliet, being in love and therefore unusually perceptive, was able to distinguish between a mere word and what it stood for.

What's in a name? (she says)  
That which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet:

So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title.

But Juliet did not know how wise she was. Were Juliet a modern girl, she would not have been so
clear on the difference between a reality and its
label. To a modern Juliet, the choicest attar
of roses, were it sold in plain glass bottles at
woolworths', would not smell as sweet as the same
elixir in gold-striped "flacons" adroitly called
'nuit passionelle'. 18

There is little fault to be found with the words we
use, but much fault to be found with the way we use them.
The use of metaphorical language, as Boas points out, is
probably one of the greatest causes of language failure.
By means of metaphors words are used to represent ob-
jects, persons, actions, or ideas which have some ele-
ment in common with the usual referent of the word. If
we hear it said of Theodore Roosevelt that when he went
to a wedding, he wanted to be the bridegroom, and when
he went to a funeral, he wanted to be the corpse, we
recognize that we must not interpret such an expression
literally but simply in its metaphorical sense. When we
call a girl a nightingale, we call attention to her
ability to sing by giving her the name of a bird that
likewise sings sweetly. Such expressions as, "I've been
waiting ages for you," "He's got tons of money," and "we

18 Ralph Philip Boas, "Weasels and Chameleons,"
had oceans of fun," are nonsensical if interpreted literally; nevertheless, they do "make sense." By means of metaphors in language we link the new with the old, the unfamiliar with the familiar, and the unknown with the known. "Metaphors are not 'ornaments of discourse'; they are direct expressions of feeling and are bound to occur whenever we have strong feelings to express." ¹⁹

It is not at all uncommon for students, unversed in the peculiarities of our language, to interpret the material they read literally rather than figuratively and miss the writer's meaning altogether. Not only do they fail to grasp the author's meaning, but they also substitute something quite different according to their various life experiences. When a teacher discovers that his pupils have not recognized the fact that writers say one thing and mean another, when the problem itself arises, the principle of metaphorical language should be introduced.

As a means of clarifying the difficulty of interpreting figurative passages literally, it would be well to ask pupils to study and then comment upon fully in writing some short poem or passage of prose. For instance, we might take the following selection written by

Edmund Vance Cooke and ask each pupil to write in his own words what he thinks these lines really mean.

The North! the South! the West! the East!
No one the most and none the least,
But each with its own heart and mind,
Each of its own distinctive kind,
Yet each a part and one the whole,
But all together form one soul;
That soul Our Country at its best,
No North, no South, no East, no West,
No yours, no mine, but always Ours,
Merged in one Power our lesser powers,
For no one’s favor, great or small,
But all for each and each for all.

This procedure allows the students to interpret the passage independently without being influenced by remarks made by the teacher or other students.

After all the pupils have completed their interpretation, they can compare their ideas with one another. Those who have an erroneous interpretation or who have thought of the North, South, East, and West simply as directions rather than as parts of the United States should be helped to understand why they have misinterpreted the author’s words. If they have thought of the word “one” as an individual instead of regarding it as one of the divisions of our country—the North, South, East, or West—they should be assisted in discovering their weaknesses and shown what they must do in future reading in order to avoid misinterpreting passages. With other examples and helpful criticisms, students will be-
come more language conscious and more familiar with metaphorical expressions. They will begin to read more critically and understandingly because they recognize this language peculiarity.

Sometimes pupils, and grown-ups, use metaphors to show their feelings toward other races, nationalities, religious, and socio-economic groups by saying one thing and meaning another. Students should recognize this use of metaphorical language also. When one boy calls another boy "yellow," he implies that he believes that boy to be a coward. In this way he expresses his dislike for the boy and tries to influence his hearers to feel the same way toward him. Occasionally one pupil will angrily call another a "dirty Jew," not meaning that the person he assailed was either unclean or Jewish but that he had been unfair or dishonest in something he had done. Pupils should realize that metaphors of this sort are dangerous and the result of prejudice and therefore must be avoided.

Nearly everywhere we choose to look we find language used in ways which demand our close examination. In any magazine or newspaper we pick up, we find articles devoted to expressions of strong feelings from politicians, diplomats, leaders of industry, and editors. The advertising sections often create verbal goods, skillfully
drawn up in catchy patterns, that turn the readers' attention away from the actual value of the product. A writer may strike directly at the emotions of the reader and unless we are aware of the purpose of the author, we can easily be swayed by his highly figurative expressions.

When we say that writers take into consideration the emotions of the reader, we encounter another aspect of our study of semantics - that of emotive and referential language. Walpole says:

> Emotive language expresses the speaker's feelings, and aims at stirring those of the hearer and perhaps spurring him on to some action. Referential language refers to objects or actions or situations which can be pointed to or described, and makes statements which may be verified or disproved by the other fellow.²⁰

In emotive language, which is found so often in political writing, and speaking, advertising, editorials, and propaganda, the writer's purpose is to get his readers to form opinions similar to his own. He expresses his feelings on a given subject and shows his distrust, dislike, and even fear concerning the matter. His speaking or writing, especially his emotive expressions, is far from being a matter of words, alone. Into the picture come situations, circumstances, and illustrations to make the point more vivid.

²⁰Walpole, op. cit., p. 40.
In a well-known magazine we find this simple illustration of an advertisement which we would accept as being highly emotive:

DOCTORS PROVE
2 out of 3 women
can have
LOVELIER SKIN IN 14 DAYS

"I wanted to hide from my Mirror!"
says Mrs. Florence Johannes

"Then I tuned in the Palmolive Plan
Here's all you do!" - etc.

YOU TOO MAY LOOK FOR THESE
SKIN IMPROVEMENTS IN ONLY 14 DAYS

The pictures on the page give "that Palmolive look" to a beautiful young lady who has succeeded in gaining the attention of a handsome young man. The implications to the reader, of course, are that all one needs to do to be charming, beautiful, and admired is to use Palmolive Soap for only fourteen days.

Whether the language is that of an advertiser, a politician, or a propagandist, we need to examine the writer's purpose in each case. Then we must decide whether he is selecting one significant detail and omitting another or whether his ideas are based upon factors or upon prejudice. If references are made to other

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articles, we may need to check back to the original piece of writing and decide whether the present writer has dealt fairly with the author of the original, or whether he has misquoted him, misinterpreted him, or in any way misrepresented him. If our reading is placed upon a thoughtful and critical basis, we will understand better the emotive factors involved.

Since the chief purpose of emotive language is to express the speaker or writer's feelings and to stir his listeners or readers to action, pupils should be brought to the realization that it is this kind of language that is used in propaganda against racial, nationality, religious, and socio-economic groups. They should recognize the importance of examining this language carefully and finding the speaker or writer's purpose before they accept the statements as true or form hasty opinions.

The foregoing discussion may lead the reader to believe that emotive language is dangerous and destructive and therefore must be avoided at all times. This is not true. Emotive language has its place and is often used for very constructive purposes. Sometimes existing conditions are such that emotive language is necessary in order to move people to action. If funds are needed for the relief of human suffering, if unhealthful surroundings are causing sickness, or if working conditions
are endangering the lives of the employees, emotive language can do much to bring about needed changes. Our school pupils should realize that emotive language has many values and is not something that is always to be guarded against.

Charles I. Glicksberg discusses another value of emotive language:

If the young are to be taught to beware of emotive language, they may form the erroneous conclusion that emotive language is not only dangerous but illegitimate. Such a notion could arise only from a misunderstanding of the educational implications of semantics. Emotive language has its uses in both poetry and prose. Language is a confusion of various types of meaning, and emotion can no more be eliminated from human discourse than it can be completely eliminated from human thinking.\(^2\)

It is in literature, and especially poetry, that we find feeling skillfully expressed. These feelings are understood by the reader and through them he gains an understanding of the inner lives of other people. Even though literature may have as its primary purpose the expression of the emotions, it does convey information from the author to the reader. In our study of the principles of semantics, it is important that we understand the value of emotive language in literary expression.

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On the other hand, there is referential language, the chief purpose of which is to convey information rather than to express feelings or to influence the feelings and actions of others. Scientific writing is perhaps our best example of language which is almost exclusively referential. In it the author simply attempts to make statements that give information which can be verified or disproved. For example, when we read the following passage from a biology textbook our feelings are not aroused, nor do we feel impelled to do anything as a result of reading it.

The author says:

Arteries are provided with a coat of elastic and muscular fibers between the tough protective outer coat and the delicate inner coat which is faced with the endothelial cells lining the vessel; this enables the arteries to expand and contract freely. When the finger is placed on an artery near the surface of the body, as at the wrist or temple, the throbbing (pulse) that one feels is the rise and fall of the arterial wall which corresponds to the successive beats of the heart.23

Close examination of the paragraph on the structure of the arteries fails to reveal that the writer had any strong feelings regarding either the structure or functions of the arteries as a part of the circulatory system or that he wished his reader to take any particular

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action as a result of reading his statements. This paragraph may be said, then, to be primarily referential.

In contrast to this we see that in the following paragraph taken from a newspaper editorial dealing with the President's veto of the OPA extension bill the writer expresses his own opinion and attempts to persuade others:

The President's veto is made by the circumstances surrounding it to seem an act of political vindictiveness and revenge at a time when good faith, mutual cooperation in the best interests of the nation's stability, and constructive leadership were called for. 24

Not all writing can be classified as either emotive or referential because it may be both. If the statements are true and can be verified, the language is referential. If statements are made that cannot be verified, the passage contains emotive elements. If a reader is to interpret correctly, he must be familiar with the different functions performed by language and be able to differentiate between language used referentially and language used emotively. Lou La Brant believes that:

Throughout the study of word meanings, youngsters should be aware of the larger associative meaning words have, and the fact that frequently these are individual feelings. Thus, without making the teaching too sharp a focus on

24 "The OPA Veto," The Columbus Dispatch, July 1, 1946, p. 2 - B.
individuals or specific minority problems, the teaching will lead to a more objective and intellectual use of words.\textsuperscript{25}

The average high-school student is in very little danger of reacting to referential language as if it were emotive language. But he is apt to respond to words used emotively as if they were used referentially. A pupil who is not in the habit of distinguishing between these two chief functions of language and who usually believes everything he reads may very easily be led to action as a result of his reading or thinking. If, in the future, a pupil is to become an intelligent adult leader, reader, and thinker, he must learn to recognize his language difficulties and be able to solve his own particular language problems.

As teachers of English, it is our duty to help pupils to become more conscious of the nature of words and their use as a means of communication. We need to show them how words and their multiple meanings and interpretations are often the cause of disagreements and misunderstandings among the various groups in our classrooms. When we read essays, short stories, poetry, editorials, or news articles together, we should begin with the first question to be asked about anything we

\textsuperscript{25}La Brant, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 326.
read. How is the material to be read? The best way to read any passage of whatever length will always depend upon who is reading, what he is reading, and for what purpose he is reading. Furthermore, we should recognize that each individual will interpret the writer's ideas in his own way according to his particular life experiences. Whenever word difficulties arise, the semantic principle which will help the pupils to understand the material they are reading should be introduced. If erroneous interpretations are given, pupils should be assisted in discovering their weaknesses and encouraged to overcome them.

A study of the principles of semantics in our high schools is not just a theory; it is a necessity. It will help pupils to understand better what they read and hear; it will help them to speak and write more effectively; it will help them to form better attitudes toward their classmates and associates; it will cause them to think more accurately. "It is imperative that young people acquire in the highest degree commensurate with their ability the power to read intelligently, to interpret meaning accurately, to examine critically what they read, and to apply it to socially desirable purposes." 26

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In this chapter we have discussed words and their multiple meanings as the source of much of the confusion that exists among the peoples who make up our population. We have recognized that words are interpreted differently by different people because of their various life experiences and that they have much to do with the formation of attitudes among people of different racial, nationality, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. We have seen that misunderstandings and disagreements are often the result of the misuse of words and the failure of individuals to interpret them in the same way. We have also stressed the importance of the study of the principles of semantics in high-school English classes to acquaint pupils with the many peculiarities of the language we use.

In the next chapter we shall discuss some different means of relieving tensions among pupils of different racial, nationality, religious, and socio-economic groups through the study of the principles of semantics in high-school English classes. We shall attempt to show how a knowledge of the principles of semantics may create better majority-minority relationships.
CHAPTER IV

SOME MEANS OF RELIEVING INTERGROUP TENSIONS THROUGH
THE STUDY OF SEMANTICS IN HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASSES

Since words and their use as our means of communication are the cause of an untold number of complications in human life, it is our duty, as educators, to help students acquire the ability to use language as an instrument for understanding themselves and their fellow-men. The English class affords an excellent opportunity for the development of proper attitudes among members of different social groups. The study of language and literature can be a potent means of bringing about a democratic appreciation of each pupil as an individual regardless of any group label which may be applied to him.

It is not unusual for the teacher of English to concentrate upon the improvement of pupil expression through the study of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, and even literature to the neglect of the quality of the students' thinking. Knowing and applying the rules and regulations of language are no assurance of rational thinking. That we resolve to attain correctness in language usage and literary expression is important,
but true educational progress is not measured wholly in terms of oral and written expression. One can call a Negro a "dirty, lazy, ignorant nigger," or "a person of undesirable character and low mentality who is greatly inferior to the white man." The quality of the thinking is the same although the contrast in expression is very noticeable. There is clear evidence of prejudice and according to June Blythe:

It has been said that prejudice is the atom bomb of ideas. Just as atomic scientists have spoken out to demand socially constructive use of their discovery, so educators must speak out to demand socially constructive use of the communications media.  

The crux of the matter is: what can the English teacher do about words and their effects upon members of different racial, nationality, religious, and socio-economic groups? Should the study of semantics in relationship to attitudes be approached directly or incidentally? If misunderstandings and disagreements are the result of the use of certain words and the ways in which they are interpreted, what can be done in the English class to relieve and eliminate these social tensions?

In answer to the question concerning the direct or incidental approach to the study of semantics or the

\[^1\text{June Blythe, "Are You Listening?" Education, LXVI (January, 1946), p. 291.}\]
meanings of words, we would suggest that both approaches are necessary. Whenever the occasion demands, or whenever an opportunity arises to help students better understand those with whom they are associated, the English teacher should take advantage of it. He should always be ready with a good example or illustration to bring out his point. Occasions where words such as "nigger," "wop," or "dirty Jew" are used are bound to arise at one time or another and the teacher should be prepared to meet them.

Let us suppose that the word "nigger" was used in a classroom in the writing of a short story, the telling of a joke, or some group discussion activity, and as a result a great amount of tension was shown. What could the English teacher do? It would be helpful if he were ready with an anecdote or illustration such as the following to relate to the group:

Not long ago a southern woman from Atlanta was traveling in a bus to Columbia, S. C. A white man entered, saw the only vacancy to be a seat beside a Negro woman, called to the bus driver "to make that nigger woman move to the back seat." The Negro woman said that she could not sit on the back seat because she was not well. The bus driver urged her to move; the white man insisted, and every one in the bus began to feel uneasy and tense. The white woman from Atlanta quietly stood up, offered her seat to the white man and sat down beside the Negro woman. Everyone in the bus was grateful to her and shamed. Many showed their gratitude; the bus driver thanked her.2

This story should lead to some very worthwhile discussion and serious thinking on the part of the pupils. They might discuss such questions as: What is your opinion of the white man? Of the woman from Atlanta? Why did the man refuse to sit beside the colored woman? Should the colored woman have been forced to take a back seat? Which person showed really good-breeding? Many other questions would naturally enter the discussion and into the picture would come the problem of prejudice. To the teacher who was really interested in developing better human relations this could easily open a wide field of exploration.

First of all the class might take up the study of the word "prejudice." What is the meaning of prejudice? What kinds of prejudices are there? Are they helpful or harmful? Does everyone have prejudices? What are the causes of prejudice? Are prejudices more common among thinking or unthinking people?

The teacher should point out how anthropologists have proved that prejudice is not an inherited characteristic but the result of cultural learning. Prejudice, which tends to keep groups apart, is not inborn in human nature. Students need to recognize that information gained at home, at school, in church, and in their social cliques affect their habits, beliefs, and emotions and cause them to form
opinions which are unsound. They should realize that individuals who harbor prejudices are simply projecting their own unsolved conflicts into a world of ideas instead of thinking them through.

Concerning the work of the teacher with pupils in regard to prejudice Ernst Kris says:

He must try to make not only their own motivation understandable to those who hold prejudices, but must also explain to them the reaction of those against whom the prejudice is directed. There is no better means of dissipating prejudices than familiarity between one group and another. The educator's work will therefore not be completed unless he includes in his scope the group against which prejudice is directed.3

As a language activity pupils might make a list of words which they believe show prejudice. They would list as many words as possible that cause misunderstandings, disagreements, and tensions among races, nationalities, religious, and socio-economic groups. With little trouble they would be able to list the words already mentioned - "nigger," "wop," "dirty Jew," and add "dago," "hunky," "darke," "coon," "chink," "limejuicer," "yid," "heiny," "swensky," and others. These are used in reference to races and nationalities, but words which name religious and socio-economic groups would also come to mind. Among

them would be "Catholic," "Protestant," "Christian," "rich," "poor," "capital," and "labor." The words "Negroes," "whites," and "Orientals" might be listed as group names which tend to cause interracial tensions. To refer to those who live in city districts in contrast to rural areas come the words "snob," "sissy," "dandy," "slicker," and "hick," "hayseed," and "country Jake." By investigating these words, trying to understand them, and attempting to find their meanings, students would soon realize that their ideas of people different from themselves were not based upon facts but upon prejudice.

Any one word from the list might be selected for careful examination. Let us suppose that we took the word "hunky" and used it as the basis of the class discussion. What is a "hunky"? No two people in the class would interpret the word in the same way. To some a "hunky" would be a man who did dirty work. Others would think of a "hunky" as a "Foreigner" who had a fruit and vegetable store on a side street near by. Still others might identify a "hunky" as a ditch digger, street cleaner, section worker, or garbage collector. Many would think of certain nationalities as "Italian," "Hungarian," or "Slovakian." One or two might think of the word as a name given to a friend who was really quite congenial.

It might be well to select two or three other words
from the list and try to find their meanings. What does "rich" mean? How much money does it take to be rich?
Does "rich" always refer to money? Where would you draw the line between the rich and the poor?

Or, we might take the word "Jew." What is a Jew? Here again there would be as many different ideas as there were people in the classroom. Each would have a different way of identifying a Jew according to his experiences with Jewish people. Many school pupils, and grown-ups as well, have the mistaken idea that if certain individuals have a name in common—say, "Jews"—they must have the inherent characteristic of "Jewishness" in common while "non-Jews," of course, do not possess that particular quality. They have the profound sense that there is something essentially different between the group of people labeled "Jews" and those called "Gentiles." When they have learned that a certain person is "Jewish," it is their firm belief that they have found out something very important about him. Following a dinner not long ago the writer overheard a conversation something like this: "Do you think the speaker is Jewish?"...."I don't know. He doesn't look Jewish."...."No, but his name certainly sounds Jewish. And his wife, there's no mistake about her being Jewish."...."You couldn't tell by his accent, but he might be a German Jew."...."If you had been in the service and heard all the Jewish propa-
ganda, you'd know that he's just another one of them."....

"Perhaps, but somehow you never can be sure, can you?"

The study of words in the English class gives us an opportunity to show students the dangers of thinking in terms of "brand names" whether they be racial, nationality, or religious. This sort of activity introduces pupils to the semantic principle of abstractions and helps them to understand that the existence of a word does not at all prove the existence of any particular thing. As S. I. Hayakawa states:

Words, and whatever words may suggest, are not the things they stand for, and education that fails to emphasize this fact is more than likely to leave students imprisoned and victimized by their linguistic conditioning, rather than enlightened and liberated by it. 4

To give a racial or nationality classification to any given group is to rely upon the false assumption that the particular group is essentially different from any other. An "Italian," at one time, usually came from Italy, spoke Italian, and preferred Italian cooking. But that time has passed and this is the United States. Today many Italians have never been to Italy, often speak English better than Italian, and may prefer American fried potatoes to Italian spaghetti. One of this nationality may be dark or light

complexioned, a Ph. D. or a street cleaner, or anything from a gangster to a noted artist. An American "Negro" may be any shade of color from black to white, a worker in the southern cotton fields or a George Washington Carver, a lazy individual or an extremely ambitious one. When a man is called an "Italian," "Negro," or "Jew," no predictions about him can be made at all except that many people are going to make wrong predictions. Semantic reasons may not account for all racial and nationality hostilities, but they do explain many of our difficulties.

Sometimes teachers hesitate to use certain words in the classroom for fear of the meanings they may have for the different pupils. They believe that the use of words such as "Jew," "Negro," or "Catholic" may cause greater misunderstandings than those that already exist and for that reason avoid them. But the classroom should be marked by a healthy freedom to use language to promote better group relationships rather than by fear and restraint. If the occasion or situation calls for the use of these words, there should be no hesitancy on the part of the teacher. Let us suppose, for example, a class is reading Ivanhoe and discussing it as a group. Should the word "Jew" be avoided? The problems of Rebecca and her father, Isaac, will naturally arise and teachers and pupils should feel free to talk about the Jews and their persecu-
tion and treatment both in the story and at various times
in history. The present Jewish situation may even be men-
tioned, and treated tactfully, would result in better Jew-
ish-Gentile relationships.

Or, let us take the teacher who believes he cannot
teach The Merchant of Venice to high-school pupils because
he is forced to show that all Jews are Shylocks. The rea-
soning in this case is bad. He need not teach that all
Jews are Shylocks in Shakespeare's play any more than he
needs to teach that all wealthy people will at some time
come to ruin as the Pyncheons in Hawthorne's The House of
Seven Gables. He can help his students to see that Shy-
lock is a Jew, surely, but that he is one Jew; besides he
is an individual who, as he says, has eyes, hands, senses,
affections, and passions as they have, and that they are
perfectly free to condemn him for claiming his pound of
flesh.

The word "Negro" should not be avoided simply because
there are several colored pupils in a class. In fact, in
the study of literature it would be a good idea to include
a few Negro writers and some of their selections to be
read along with the works of other authors. Let us take
Langston Hughes as an illustration. It may be enlightening
for the class to know that Hughes was born in Joplin,
Missouri, in 1902, brought up in the Middle West, graduated
from Central High School in Cleveland, Ohio, that he taught English in Mexico, and attended Columbia University. Working as a busboy in Washington, he was discovered by Vachel Lindsay, who read several of his poems to a fashionable audience in the very hotel in which Hughes carried trays of dishes. They would probably enjoy the following:

Florida Road Workers

I’m makin’ a road
For the cars
To fly by on,
Makin’ a road
Through the palmetto thicket
For light and civilization
To travel on.

Makin’ a road
For the rich old white men
To sweep over in their big cars
And leave me standin’ here.

Sure,
A road helps all of us!
White folks ride —
And I get to see ’em ride.
I ain’t never seen nobody
Ride so fine before.
Hey buddy!
Look at me.
I’m making a road!

Langston Hughes

This poem may lead to some very interesting class discussion concerning Negro-white relationships. The attitude of the author toward white people and his feeling of helping others by "making a road" would tend to bring about better racial understandings. Besides, pupils would realize
that not all writers are white and the word "Negro" would be used in a very acceptable way.

Or, some poems by Countee Cullen, who graduated from New York University in 1925 and received his M. A. at Harvard a year later, might be read. For example:

Incident

Once riding in old Baltimore,
Heart-filled, head-filled with glee
I saw a Baltimorean
Keep looking straight at me.

Now I was eight and very small
And he was no whit bigger,
And so I smiled, but he poked out
His tongue, and called me, "Nigger."

I saw the whole of Baltimore
From May until December;
Of all the things that happened there
That's all that I remember.

Countee Cullen

Study of Negro authors and reading selections from their works would not be out of place in any classroom. And to avoid the use of the word "Negro" would be to deprive students of the opportunity of becoming better acquainted with their fellow-man. "Incident" may be very helpful in illustrating how the words we use affect others and how proper, respectful words create good relationships while improper, disrespectful ones cause ill feelings - the hurt feelings that Cullen experienced.
Words which are strange to one group but thoroughly understood by another are often the cause of misunderstandings and strained relationships. Especially is this true of words which pertain to different religious beliefs. Jewish students understand perfectly the words "rabbi," "synagogue," "Bar Mitzvah," and "Hanukah," but these terms may seem very strange to Catholics and Protestants. In the same way "mass," "priest," "nun," and "confession" are clear to Catholics but often not to Protestants and Jews. Elucidation of unfamiliar words in other religions diminishes prejudice and brings about a better understanding and closer relationship among these groups.

This raises the question as to the circumstances under which it would be proper to study words used in different religions. Certainly this sort of work would not be done simply as a dictionary exercise nor as an assigned task without some background for it. Neither would it be used as a direct attack upon creating better religious understandings. If, however, the material being studied in the literature class called for an explanation of certain religious terms in order to make a clear interpretation of a particular passage, then the words should by no means be avoided but defined.

Let us take some examples from literature which show occasions that may call for the clarification of such terms.
In Longfellow's *Evangeline* we read:

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn,  
while the bell from its turret  
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air,  
as the priest with his hyssop  
Sprinkles the congregation, and  
scatters blessings upon them,  
Down the long street she passed, with  
her chaplet of beads and her missal,  
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle  
of blue, and the ear-rings,  
Brought in the olden time from France,  
and since, as an heirloom,  
Handed down from mother to child,  
through long generations.

The words "hyssop," "chaplet," "beads," and "missal" may cause confusion in the minds of Protestant and Jewish pupils but be clear to Catholics. To understand completely what the author is saying we need to know their meanings. The teacher may state that these words are probably familiar to the students of the Catholic religion and ask if anyone would volunteer to tell the group what was meant by each of them. In this way no one person would be singled out but an opportunity would be given for the pupils of that particular faith to make a contribution which would clarify these terms. Then, too, the entire group would recognize that words pertaining to religious beliefs are not to be kept as secrets but to be understood.

In "The Vision of Sir Launfal" by James Russell Lowell we find the lines:

Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;  
Behold it is here, - this cup which thou  
Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now;
This crust is my body broken for thee
This water his blood that died on the tree;
The Holy Supper is kept, indeed...........

Clarification of the terms "Holy Grail" and "Holy Supper" in this selection may lead to the discussion of how the Lord's Supper is conducted in different churches. Explanations of this ceremony would tend to show the similarities in religious beliefs rather than their differences.

Similarly, Ivanhoe or a selection from the Bible may be a part of the English program at the time the Jewish pupils are celebrating their Bar Mitzvah. If and when the occasion arises for an explanation of this rite in the Jewish religion, the teacher should not hesitate to take time out for this purpose. If the Catholic and Protestant students would then describe their somewhat similar rites of confirmation, there certainly would develop a more sympathetic understanding of other religions. Interfaith festivals which illustrate the common elements in different religions are also helpful in relieving intergroup tensions.

In a classroom where there are sensitive minorities and specific reference is to be made to a particular group, it would be wise for the English teacher to begin the discussion in terms of a group that is not represented. Marion Edman suggests that stories such as "The Frill" by
Pearl Buck, which deals with exploitation of the Chinese, or "Yours Lovingly" by Eugenie Courtright, which shows the human side of a lonely Indian boy, may be used for this objective attack if there are no Chinese or Indian students in the group. Then there is "The Lagoon" by Joseph Conrad, which shows the close relationship between a white man and a native of Malay who had gone through trouble, danger, and war together and the complete confidence of Arsat, the Malayen, in his white friend. Other stories suitable for this purpose are "How Gavin Burse Put it to Mag Lownie" by James Matthew Barrie, a humorous Scotch story that is told in dialect, and "Miss Youghal's 'Sais'" by Rudyard Kipling, a study of racial traits as the author knew them in India.

Students coming from a variety of ethnic backgrounds may also be brought into closer understanding of each other through word study. Like elements in different languages can be demonstrated in the classroom by having pupils compare similar and familiar words in their own language with their counterparts in other languages and seeing how they are alike and how they differ. Let us take the word "mother" as an illustration. The teacher may suggest that in German the word is "mutter" and in

5Marion Edman, "We'd Better Mind the P's and Cues," The English Journal, XXXV (June, 1946), pp. 351-2.
Scotch it is "mither." Then he may ask if the Latin, French, or Spanish students can give the word in those languages. Added to the list would be the Latin "mēter," French "mère," and Spanish "madre." By suggesting that perhaps those who were acquainted with other languages could add to the list, students of different nationalities may add the Italian, Polish, Russian, and other words. These students would tend to feel that people were interested in them and their language and that they were able to make worthwhile contributions to the class discussion. Marjorie B. Smiley believes that such a unit of work with words would aid in gaining an understanding of the following concepts:

Appreciation of a second language as a help, not a hindrance; appreciation of the beauty of other languages; appreciation of the difficulty of earning a living without command of the language of the country; appreciation of the difficulty of English; realization that errors in accent and spelling may be caused by knowing another language.6

In the study of words and their meanings with school pupils, another interesting observation comes to light. Not only do words have different meanings for different people, but some words form unreal images or become stereotypes. "By 'stereotype' is meant a frequently repeated

picture, more or less rigid, of a group of people. Students form "pictures-in-the-head" which cause them to believe in such generalizations as: The Irish are witty, red-headed, and pugnacious; Negroes are lazy, stupid, and troublesome; Japanese are tricky and sly; foreigners are "shawled figures" with "queer ways;" and Jews are money-mad store owners who talk with their hands.

Most people acquire some stereotypes early in life. Usually they are learned unconsciously through the derogatory attitudes of others which are communicated by a casual comment, a certain tone of voice, or a shrug of the shoulders. Many stereotypes are perpetuated by books, magazines, the radio, and newspapers.

Teachers should be aware of these "pictures-in-the-head" that pupils have acquired and realize that they are constantly accumulating more of them as they read, listen to the radio, and associate with others. Stereotypes tend to limit experiences. For example, a pupil who believes that red-headed people generally have bad tempers may be very much surprised to find that the new neighbor boy with fiery hair is an extremely easy-going, good-natured, even-tempered person. The danger of the stereotype lies in the tendency to give "sanction to a general

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7 Margaret M. Heaton, "Stereotypes and Real People," The English Journal, XXXV (June, 1948), p. 327.
treatment of a group as a whole and thus frequently prevents the desire or effort to treat individuals as individuals.8

One way to attack this problem is to have pupils bring to class examples of stereotypes which they have used or heard. Among them would be such ideas as: fat people are jolly; an only child is generally spoiled; step-mothers are cruel; and farmers are uncouth. Then through class discussion, exchange of experiences, and the naming of exceptions to these beliefs, students would come to see that stereotypes have little or no correspondence to people as they really are.

Marion Edman suggests:

Whenever a stereotyped character appears in literature, be it a farmer, a spinster, or a member of any minority, the teacher will do well to take time to apply the technique of "Do you know intimately ten of these people?" Descriptions should be given of the individuals intimately known, so that comparisons may be made with the stereotype. If the class does not know ten individuals, the teacher should point out that no generalizations should ever be made on the basis of knowing one or two or even five or six individual persons.

Even this is not a true test or basis for making generalizations. Although we knew a hundred such people we

8 Ibid., p. 328.
9 Edman, op. cit., p. 353.
must recognize that they are still individuals with their likes and dislikes and separate individual characteristics. Besides, they change from time to time and from year to year depending upon their various life experiences. Farmer (1) is not farmer (2), (34), or (97); Mexican (Ohio) is not Mexican (Mexico); Joe Schlonsky (New York, 1942) is not Joe Schlonsky (Chicago, 1946). Seeing people as individuals who do not always remain the same should automatically prevent students from reacting to stereotyped class names.

It has already been mentioned that stereotypes are perpetuated by books, magazines, the radio, and newspapers. In 1944 the Writers' War Board and its Committee to Combat Race Hatred decided that the writers of the United States were unconsciously fostering and encouraging group prejudice by their continuous employment of "stock characters." As a result of this decision Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research was commissioned to make a study of the treatment given to white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxons in comparison to the treatment accorded all other elements of the American population. For their research the members of the Bureau selected short stories from eight nationally circulated magazines, novels, plays from the legitimate stage, motion pictures, comic cartoon books, radio programs, newsreels, and advertising copy.
The investigation showed that popular light fiction, short stories in magazines, presented racial stereotypes more often, more intensely, and more offensively than any other medium of entertainment or communication analyzed. The stage was the most liberal of all the media examined not only in avoiding racial stereotypes, but also in working toward new and more generous concepts. Next to the stage, the novel treated minorities with the most fairness. Although the motion picture was found to present minorities disparagingly, some improvement was shown in very recent pictures in comparison with those that are not too far distant. Radio programs ranged from harmless to sympathetic presentations with a few unjustly discriminating stereotypes. The comic cartoon books had already ceased to use objectionable racial stereotypes. With a few exceptions, newsreels in the North were found to be generally fair to minorities. However, in the South about sixty per cent of the press was considered anti-Negro. Advertising copy ranked next to the worst offender, the short story, in picturing the white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon stereotype. 10

Together, teachers and pupils need to analyze the falsity of stereotypes and see how they make us regard some people as inferior. Students will soon see that the desirable characteristics of human beings are usually linked with white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxons while the undesirable qualities are assigned to Negroes, Italians, or Japanese. The hero or heroine is never named "Cohen" but "Smith" or "Jones" or a similar "old-stock" American name. Leading characters very seldom attend either Catholic Mass or Jewish Temple. A colored man never appears on advertising copy except perhaps as a colored servant in a whiskey or mint julep advertisement to suggest the Old South. These stereotypes are constantly before us and they are dangerous because they tend to distort the feelings of the majority toward the minority by making it easy to assume that certain good things in life such as comfortable homes, nutritious food, attractive clothes, and pleasant recreation are not for all people.

It is difficult to dislodge stereotypes because our pupils have a profound respect for the printed word. They feel that whatever they read is true because "the book says so." Students are inclined to recognize that stereotypes of their own particular race or group are false and misleading, but they accept stereotypes of other groups. Critical thinking is necessary if students are to meet
adequately the problem of stereotypes and learn that the basic needs and abilities of all human beings are the same regardless of race, nationality, religion, or socio-economic status.

Since pupils readily accept the printed word, one of our best methods of ridding them of stereotypes is to guide their reading activities carefully. If teachers and librarians will compile a reading list consisting of fiction, biography, and autobiography with the idea in mind of breaking stereotypes, much can be done to show that a Greek is not just the man with the foreign accent who has a candy store and a Chinese is not always a laundryman. "Reading is an indispensable means of acquiring facts about the racial, religious, ethnic, and socio-economic sub-groups which make up America."11

The high-school reading list, then, should recommend books which will tend to build understanding among the various groups in the school. Instead of such books as Gone With the Wind by Margaret Mitchell which pictures the plantation Negro as content with his lot, devoted to his white folks, unintelligent, and lacking initiative, we need to list books which contribute to intergroup under-

standing. A few suggestions of books which tend to break
the stereotypes follow:

_Negro-white relationships_

Bontemps, Arna, _We Have Tomorrow_
Buckmaster, Henrietta, _Deep River_
Embree, Edwin, _Thirteen Against the Odds_
Fast, Howard, _Freedom Road_
Meiers, Earl, _Big Ben_

_Oriental-Caucasian relationships_

Glick, Carl, _Shake Hands with the Dragon_
Glick, Carl, _Three Times I Bow_
Sugimoto, Etsu, _Daughter of the Samurai_

_Indian-white relationships_

Fast, Howard, _Last Frontier_
LeFarge, Oliver, _Laughing Boy_
Means, Fenton C., _Teresita of the Valley_

_Catholic-Protestant relationships_

Cronin, A. J., _The Keys of the Kingdom_
Marshall, Bruce, _The World, The Flesh, and_
Father Smith

_Jewish-Gentile relationships_

Ferber, Edna, _A Peculiar Treasure_
Halsey, Margaret, _Some of My Best Friends are_
Soldiers
Stern, E. G., _My Mother and I_

_Labor-Management relationships_

Davenport, Marcia, _The Valley of Decision_
Llwellyn, Richard, _How Green Was My Valley_
Steinbeck, John, _In Dubious Battle_

_Immigrant-American relationships_

Bonis, A. W. and McLellan, M. B., _Within Our Gates_
Cather, Willa, _My Antonia_
Forbes, Kathryn, _Mama's Bank Account_
Rolvaag, Ole, *Giants in the Earth*
Saroyan, William, *My Name is Aram*
Vardoulakis, Mary, *Gold in the Streets*

Let us take two of these books and examine them to see what they do to break stereotypes. First, we will look at *The Keys of the Kingdom* by A. J. Cronin. The book is the story of Francis Chisholm, a lovable Scottish Catholic priest, his youth at Tweedsie, and his study for the priesthood at Holywell and in Spain. After working in several difficult parishes, Father Chisholm was sent to a mission in the interior of China where he struggled against famine, pestilence, flood, bandits, and civil war to help humanity for over thirty years. Finally he returned to his native Scotland.

A Catholic priest often becomes a stereotyped character. He may be thought of as a sheltered, devoted, saintly individual who is ever ready to say prayers and be of help to his parishioners but perhaps rather intolerant of other beliefs. He is studious, quiet, and dignified but has seldom found it necessary to fight against hardships and disaster.

Father Chisholm is not pictured in this way. He attempts to be "all things to all men" and teaches that toleration is the highest virtue and humility comes next. He would quote a saying of Confucius almost as readily as one of Christ. In his mission work in China he was will-
ing to co-operate with a Protestant mission in their efforts to help the poor Chinese. Whether the reader shares the faith of Father Chisholm or follows another religious belief, he finds himself kindly sympathetic toward this truly good man. For these reasons The Keys of the Kingdom does tend to break the stereotyped priest.

Now let us look at The Valley of Decision by Marcia Davenport. A stereotyped character emerges when we mention an industrialist, capitalist, or manufacturer. Often we think of him as one who exploits labor for his own personal wealth and gain. Many times a factory owner is just another name for an individual who is unfair, unjust, and unsympathetic toward his workers. He does not understand the men who labor in the mill nor the conditions under which they work and live because he is too far removed from their actual environment. His chief interest in them is for the benefits he derives from their efforts in his factory.

In The Valley of Decision the industrialist, William Scott, owner of the Scott Iron Works in Pittsburgh, is pictured, not for his desire to exploit labor, but for his fairness to his workers and his ability to understand them and their problems. Unlike John Anthony, the capitalist in John Galsworthy's three-act play entitled Strife, who is pictured as the domineering tyrant that closes his
eyes to the suffering, starvation, and even death of the wives and children of his workingmen, William Scott is willing to see his men and their families as real people like himself.

Through the pages of this book the reader becomes better acquainted with Irish steel-workers, Slovaks, and "hunkies" as live individuals from the mills of Europe. Besides, the intelligent attitude of the novel toward the various elements in our middle-class society gives us a different picture of some of our stereotypes. Especially is this true when Mary Rafferty, the Irish maid, becomes the closest friend and mainstay of the Scott family.

In reading and discussing the meaning of expressions in literature, pupils can be led to see the way language works. They can become familiar with group names and stereotypes and see how they are often the cause of confusion and misunderstandings. Particularly in the study of literature does the teacher have at hand a means of providing emotional experiences which show how it feels to be unjustly rejected from a group and how it feels to belong. Emphasis can easily be placed upon people, what they are like, and how they feel when certain words are used in reference to them. The English teacher can help the student, no difference what the class is reading, to picture to himself the life of other people as they them-
selves experience it.

The Little Red School House on East 16th Street in
New York City recognizes the importance of creating better
human relationships among different races and nationali-
ties not only through literature but also by other means.
Agnes De Lima explains:

We wish to go beyond tolerance of another
race; we want to learn to understand and appre-
ciate the contribution which this race is making
to our American life. We want to rid ourselves
of the tawdry stereotype to be found in the or-
dinary work of fiction, movie or radio script,
where the Negro is portrayed as a clown, a lacka-
daisical, shiftless good-for-nothing, or the
abjectly devoted menial.

Harlem is our great opportunity for this
study. The children take many trips to the
Schomburg Collection of books by and about the
Negro in the 35th Street library. Here, in the
finest collection of its type, the children carry
on their research. Not a small part of their
education is contact with the splendid staff of
librarians. The entire group may visit the li-
brary and hear a reading of poetry of American
Negroes by a Negro librarian and poet. This same
librarian read her poems at one of our Commence-
ment exercises. Other Negro workers, writers,
and researchers have come to the school and talked
to the children.

The study of other national groups is easy
in a big city. We are all immigrants and some-
times the children look back upon their own family
history. At other times they become interested
in studying some more remote and less well-known
group. One year we studied the Puerto Ricans in
New York. We visited grocery stores, music shops,
settlement houses, libraries, in the sections
where they live. We talked to everyone we met,
interviewed them, and wrote reports on what we
found.12

It is not necessary to live in New York to make use of the ideas for creating better group relationships proposed by this author. A visit to the school or city library to locate literary contributions by Negroes or various nationality groups might be a part of the English program in any school. Study of this material and analysis of it for its literary qualities may show that talent lies, not only among the authors ordinarily placed in our textbooks, but also among other races and nationalities.

Many schools have assembly programs which offer another opportunity for creating better intergroup understandings. Outside speakers are often asked to come in and speak to the student body as a whole. The program might, from time to time, be conducted by speakers other than white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxons. For example, Negro speakers, Jewish rabbis, Catholic priests, Mexican artists, or any other available race, nationality, religious, or socio-economic representative might be brought into the school as the speaker or entertainer. This would broaden the experiences of the students, acquaint them with different groups, and tend to create better relationships among them.

As far as the school community offers the opportunities, nationality groups should be studied and understood. Helen Smith, who married the Mexican Guadalupe
Toro Valdez, informs us that we have much to learn from the Mexicans and that they have many important contributions to make to American life besides manual labor. They have an eye for form and color and have already contributed to our art. Miquel Covarrubias gained international recognition as an artist by his maps of the Pacific Basin Area which were exhibited at the Golden Gate Exposition. Mexican music has a beauty not to be found in American music. Their language is expressive and melodicous. Helen Smith de Valdez says:

But principally, I think, the Mexicans can teach us how to live, rather than how to utilize time as we dash from this busyness to that nervous occupation. They seem to have a grasp of the fundamentals and essentials for living that we lack, or refuse to recognize. They care less about time, money, or how much they do; and more about friendship, hospitality, pride in the creation of something colorful, dramatic and beautiful....

Various race and nationality groups that are present in any given community afford an opportunity for the enrichment of the school program if teachers will only take advantage of what they have to offer. Therefore, the attitude of the teacher and his place in the community are important factors in the education of our youth. One young teacher who went into a small city found a group of students that were being transported from a rural area

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13Louis Adamic, From Many Lands, p. 278.
to be very timid and backward about participating in the
different school activities. Other pupils criticized
them and declared that was the way that particular nation-
ality group acted. Immediately the teacher began to learn
about the music, art, and folklore of these people and to
find out the names of some of their outstanding leaders.
Whenever the opportunity arose, this information was woven
into the regular classroom work. Gradually the minority
group gained confidence in themselves and other groups
began to respect them. Later the pupils with the Finnish
background were no longer "Finns" or "outsiders" but they
became an integral part of the life of the school.

Although schools and the influences surrounding them
differ in varying degrees, all have many possibilities
and opportunities for helping to create better human re-
lationships. It is the responsibility of teachers and
administrators to recognize the elements in the environ-
ment which may be helpful in developing more co-operation
and better understanding and to make use of them.

Writing activities in the English class can be an
excellent means of increasing understanding of others.
Many times students will express their thoughts and feel-
ings more freely by writing than by speaking. Besides,
it usually gives more time for serious thinking and for
choosing words which best express the pupils' ideas. The
teacher may wish to have pupils write on topics pertaining to the essential characteristics of the American way of life as: "What is Democracy?" "The Kind of World I Want," or "What America Means to Me." These topics and similar ones may lead to the study of word meanings, abstractions, emotive and referential language, and other aspects of semantics which would help pupils to understand better themselves, their associates, and their country.

Editorial writing affords another opportunity for intergroup understanding. After pupils have become acquainted with the peculiarities of our language, they may wish to express themselves and to show others how words often fail to serve adequately because of the ways in which they are interpreted. Through the writing of editorials to be published in the school newspaper, they can be given an opportunity to inform others about the misunderstandings and disagreements among various groups which are the result of the words we use and their effect upon different individuals. They may wish to urge other people to avoid the use and misuse of certain expressions which are popular in the school but which have caused tensions among the pupils of different races, nationalities, religious, or socio-economic groups.

Original plays which show the common needs of all
people can be a powerful means of promoting better group relationships. When the plays are cast, pupils should be encouraged to play parts which represent groups other than their own. White, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon students should take parts of Negro or Jewish characters and vice versa. The story is told of one girl who said that it had never occurred to her how Negroes felt when they were not permitted to enter hotels, restaurants, and recreation centers until she played the part of a Negro singer who was refused a seat in a popular dining room.

Another writing experience which helps students to understand peoples of different races, nationalities, and religions is that of the student letter exchange. For a small fee pupils can secure the names of boys and girls from many parts of the world - Japanese, Chinese, French, Swiss, Hawaiian, and others who are anxious to write to Americans. By corresponding with these people and exchanging pictures, our students come to understand the customs and beliefs of other races and nationalities and to realize that they themselves are strange to these groups. They find it necessary to explain their own customs and beliefs in order to have others like them. This experience tends to create a better understanding both nationally and internationally.

Attitude tests and scales are very helpful to teachers
engaged in intercultural education. In this instance the problem is not one of constructing new tests, for there are many such tests readily obtainable and easily administered. The teacher needs only to select the measuring instruments which best suit his purposes. The Grice-Remmers scale measures attitudes toward any racial or nationality group and it has the important advantage over some of the others in that it can readily be adapted to specific local needs.

The use of attitude tests and scales raises several questions concerning high schools located in communities where the groups are relatively homogeneous. Would there be a need for a program of intercultural education in a rural high school in which the students are white and a great majority are of old-stock American parentage, Protestant, and of a middle socio-economic group as in the writer's own school? What would be the attitude of these pupils toward people of different races and nationalities? They have associated with other races only to pass them on the street in a neighboring town. They have had little acquaintance with people of different nationality groups except perhaps as customers in stores owned by Jewish people and as observers of the Mexicans who work on the railroad which passes through the village. These students have possibly had casual acquaintances with
people of Italian parentage. Would their attitude toward these groups be favorable or unfavorable?

To measure the attitude of these pupils toward different races and nationalities, Form A of H. H. Grice's "Scale for Measuring Attitude Toward Races and Nationalities" was given to a group of twenty-five high-school seniors in the school described above. They were told that the test was being given as a part of a study of attitudes toward races and nationalities and that the score would in no way affect their grade in any course. The races and nationalities which the students wrote at the head of the columns were: Negro, Yellow, Italian, Mexican, and Jews. These were selected because they were the races and nationalities with which the pupils were best acquainted. The following is a copy of the test:

A SCALE FOR MEASURING ATTITUDE TOWARD RACES AND NATIONALITIES

H. H. Grice

Form A

Edited by: H. H. Remmers

Please fill in the blanks below. (You may leave the space for your name blank if you wish.)

Name

Boy    Girl (encircle one)  Date

Age when school started this year  Year in high school or college

What occupation would you best like to follow?

Your race  Your nationality
Directions: Following is a list of statements about races and nationalities. Place a plus sign (+) before each statement with which you agree with reference to the race or nationality listed at the left of the statements. The person in charge will tell you the race or nationality to write in at the head of the columns to the left of the statements. Your score will in no way affect your grade in any course.

1. Show a high rate of efficiency in anything they attempt.
2. Can be depended upon as being honest.
3. Are mentally strong.
4. Are fine people.
5. Are very patriotic.
6. Are far above my own group.
7. Are noted for their industry.
8. Some of our best citizens are descendants from this group.
9. Are a tactful group of people.
10. Deserve much consideration from the rest of the world.
11. I would be willing to trust these people.
12. Should be permitted to inter-marry with any other group.
13. Command the respect of any group.
14. Are generous to others.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Are quick to apprehend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Should be permitted to enter this country as immigrants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Are good mixers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Are a God-fearing group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Have an air of dignity about them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Are highly emotional.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Take an exceptional pride in themselves.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Are superstitious.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Are unimaginitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>So far as I am concerned this group can stay in their native country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Do not impress me favorably.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Are frivolous.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Are not in sympathy with these people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>I am not in sympathy with their means.</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Tend to lower the standards of living.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Are teetotal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Would likely prove disloyal to our government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Are despised by the better groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Note:** The table above is partially visible due to the orientation of the image. The text seems to be discussing characteristics or traits associated with a particular group labeled as 'Race.'
<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36. Have many undesirable traits.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>37. Belong to a low social level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>38. Have nothing about them that I can admire.</td>
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<tr>
<td>39. Should not be permitted to associate with other groups.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>40. Should not be permitted to enter this country.</td>
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<tr>
<td>41. All members of this group should be deported from this country.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Are mentally defective</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>43. Respect only brute force.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. I hate anyone belonging to this group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Are our worst citizens.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Are inferior in every way to the rest of the world.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Copyrighted by Purdue Research Foundation 1934
Directions for Scoring. The median scale value of the statements marked with a plus is the attitude score. If an odd number of statements is thus endorsed, the scale value of the middle item of those endorsed gives the score. For example, if nine statements are endorsed of which the fifth one is item 10, the score for the pupil is 8.9, the scale value of item 10. If an even number of items is endorsed, the pupil's score is the scale value half-way between the two middle items. Example: If ten items are endorsed of which items 7 and 12 are the fifth and sixth in order, the pupil's score will be the scale value of item 12 plus the difference between 8.7 (scale value for item 12) and 9.3 (scale value for item 7), divided by 2, or 9.0.

A high scale value means a favorable attitude, and a low scale value means an unfavorable attitude.
The scores ranked as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negro</th>
<th>Yellow</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Mexican</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>* 9.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>* 9.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>* 9.0</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 8.8</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
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<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>* 8.4</td>
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<td>* 8.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>* 7.9</td>
<td>* 8.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
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<td>M 7.7</td>
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<td>7.7</td>
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<td>* 8.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>* 3.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>* 8.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>* 7.9</td>
<td>* 3.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 6.1</td>
<td>* 6.8</td>
<td>* 7.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>* 3.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>* 7.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>* 5.8</td>
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<td>* 3.1</td>
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<td>4.4</td>
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<td>* 5.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<td>* 2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>* 2.3</td>
<td>* 1.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*boys

M median score
The most favorable score was given to the Yellow race (a scale value of 9.8), while the least favorable score was given to the Mexicans (a scale value of 1.4). The most favorable score for the class as a whole was given to the Yellow race and the Italian people (a scale value of 8.3 for each). Next was the Jewish people (a scale value of 8.0); the Negroes ranked third (a scale value of 7.7); and the Mexicans received the lowest score (a scale value of 5.3).

It is interesting to note the difference in the ways the boys and girls rated these people:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Negro</th>
<th>Yellow</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Mexican</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.0</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H = highest
M = median
L = lowest

The girls gave the Negroes, Italians, and Jews a median scale value of from 1.0 to 3.0 higher than the boys, while the boys rated the Mexicans 2.0 higher than the girls. There was the least amount of difference in their attitude toward the Yellow race.
The median score on the test is 4.5 while the median scores for the boys and girls together in this particular group ranked from 5.3 to 8.3. For the boys alone the median scale values were between 4.9 and 8.2 while for the girls they were from 4.6 to 8.4. None of the median scores fell below the median score on the test. This high score value shows that the pupils in this group had a more favorable attitude toward these races and nationalities than most groups. This would indicate that although a need for some intercultural training is shown, the need is probably not as great in a rural district of this sort as it is in a city district where there is more personal contact and conflict between different races, nationalities, religious, and socio-economic groups.

However, teachers should not get the false impression that high score values on attitude tests and scales relieve them of all responsibility for intercultural education. Each classroom, each teaching situation is unique, and no general rule can be established to cover all specific groups. Marion Edman warns:

Teachers are often prone to rationalize by saying, "My community is homogeneous and peaceful. We have no problems," as though those were not the very communities where ignorance of other peoples, snobbery, suspicion, fear, and isolationism are the best breeding-places for national discord and disunity and for international war.14

14 Edman, op. cit., p. 349.
Also, many of these students will leave this community and spend their adult lives elsewhere. The people with whom they are then associated may not be the homogeneous, peaceful group to which they were accustomed in their home town but a very heterogeneous one instead. Pupils need training in intergroup relationships to help them meet new situations and to adjust themselves properly to other groups. If students have a knowledge of different races and nationalities, and recognize the contributions they have made and are able to make to our American culture, their attitude toward these groups will tend to be more sympathetically understanding. If they realize that words and the way we use them are the causes of many disagreements, they will be better able to avoid friction and tensions by intelligent word usage. Besides, they will be more tolerant of those who are of a different race, nationality, religious, or socio-economic group because they will have learned that many of their beliefs and attitudes were simply prejudices.

The use of attitude tests and scales does give the teacher the information necessary for a forthright and direct attack on those forces of prejudice which make for all sorts of social misunderstandings, disagreements, and tensions. From the results the teacher can see the main causes of conflicts and make specific plans to over-
come them. These statistics are extremely helpful in a program of intercultural education because they reveal attitudes among students which might not have been in evidence otherwise.

Marjorie B. Smiley states:

Many teachers feel that education for better human relations can be carried on almost entirely within the regular framework of English studies. These teachers believe that this can be accomplished (1) by refocusing literature, speech, and composition so as to bring to attention the need for better human relations; (2) by relating the problems in regular readings to contemporary problems of a similar nature; (3) by collateral readings; and (4) by expanding the scope of a course without changing its basic subject matter. 15

From the discussion in this chapter of methods for relieving intergroup tensions through the study of semantics in high-school English classes, it is evident that teachers should make use of the normal English activities for training in intercultural relations. Students should be taught to think clearly about group problems in American life. Through the study of words and their multiple meanings they should develop the ability not only to understand themselves but also to understand better all those with whom they are associated. Pupils should learn to appreciate the contributions of peoples of all races, nationalities, religions, and socio-economic

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15 Smiley, op. cit., p. 348.
groups by speaking, listening, reading, and writing about them.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Words, which are our chief means of communication, may be used for good or for evil, for or against the general welfare, for creating closer human relationships or building prejudices. They may be employed to bring about a better understanding among peoples of different races, nationalities, religious, and socio-economic groups or to accentuate misunderstanding. Many times they fail to serve their purpose by affecting the hearer or reader in ways which were not intended by the user.

Man's actions, thoughts, and feelings are closely related to the words he uses. In connection with national and international problems as well as conflicts in our own personal lives, words have a great influence. They are dangerous because they have different meanings for different peoples and are often misused and misinterpreted. At a time when we need to think seriously about national and international peace and understanding, we must give more thought to semantics, the study of the meanings of words.

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It is in the classroom, on the school playground, and in the social activities of the school that the characters and mental habits of our students, who will be our future leaders, are formed. In order to understand better those with whom they associate, our pupils need instruction in the regular English program to acquaint them with the nature of the words we use. They should become familiar with the causes of bigotry, prejudice, and tensions among our different racial, nationality, religious, and social groups and recognize the effect of all these on the progress of the human race.

A knowledge of the principles of semantics is a necessity for the pupils in our high schools if they are to be able to cope with national, international, and personal problems intelligently. They need to understand what is meant by abstractions and how these words often cause misunderstandings and disagreements because they are mistaken for one particular thing when they may mean any number of different things depending upon how they are used, how they are interpreted, and who is interpreting them. Emotive and referential language should be understood by students in order that they may read and listen more thoughtfully. Then, too, a knowledge of metaphorical language is necessary to pre-
vent readers and listeners from giving a literal interpretation to everything that is read or heard.

Until we have acquainted our students with the peculiarities of the language we use, we have not fulfilled our obligations as educators. If our national unity is to be preserved and maintained, pupils of different races, nationalities, religious, and socio-economic levels must be able to get along together and to understand each other. If we cannot have full cooperation nationally, we certainly cannot expect to attain it internationally.

"Teaching how language works is not a matter of formulas which, once applied, are forever effective."¹ We have tried for a long time to teach certain rules of grammar which we expected to become functional once they were memorized and illustrated through workbook exercises. Observation proves that this method is almost futile.

Similarly, we cannot expect to teach in a few lessons the ways to use language to promote intergroup understandings, and to prevent its potential strengthening of our prejudices and ignorance. Language is much too closely associated with our daily living, much too complicated; and the influences outside the school are much too strong for any sudden or easy competence to be developed.²

² Ibid., p. 327.
Instruction for better human relations is not something to be taken up one month and dropped the next. It must be continuous and approached both incidentally and directly as the occasions demand. Since life consists of constant interaction among the various groups in our population, new problems arise at different times and they must be met when they occur.

There are many classroom procedures which are effective in teaching for intergroup understanding. Through the study of words which cause prejudices, disagreements, and misunderstandings, much can be accomplished in the way of bringing groups into closer relationships. Critical thinking about stereotypes, an analysis of their distortion and falsity, and actual study of them as presented in literature, in movies, and on the radio helps the student to see how they are unlike the realities they are supposed to represent. Fiction, drama, poetry, biography, and many other kinds of literature serve to develop understanding of the problems and predicaments of real people and create a sympathetic understanding of different groups in our midst. Various writing activities and the presentation of plays which realistically depict characters of different races, nationalities, religions, and social groups can be a helpful means of developing intergroup understanding. The use of attitude
tests and scales is one means of attacking the problem of intercultural education directly. Through these we can find whether the attitudes toward different groups are favorable or unfavorable and plan classroom procedures accordingly.

Intercultural education requires constant attention to what is happening in our classrooms, in our school activities, in our community, and in our country that affects favorably or adversely progress toward better living together. It is necessary to find specific means which can be used successfully in our schools to relieve the various group tensions which arise. Furthermore, we should encourage continuous and co-operative planning so that our procedures are in keeping with local needs and possibilities. No program can be successful unless teachers feel keenly their responsibilities and work intelligently and courageously to achieve their purposes. "Intercultural education is at bottom the effort to make prevail among us the truly democratic treatment of all minority groups." 3

The attitude of the teacher himself is important in training for the right kind of human relationships. Set-

ting a good example is probably the teacher's most effective method of instruction. For any teacher to state that he can accomplish very little with those "Italians," "Negroes," or "foreigners," is to imply that he is prejudiced and recognizes these pupils not as individuals but as stereotyped groups. He has not learned the meanings of abstractions himself and therefore needs to question his own word usage before he can hope to explore meanings in an English class.

To fulfill our obligations to ourselves, our pupils, and our country, we, as teachers of English, must develop ways and means of building correct understandings and proper attitudes among the various races, nationalities, religious, and socio-economic groups that make up our population. When we study carefully the role of semantics in intercultural education, we agree with Charles K. Cummings who says that "schools generally must accept the challenge of the fourth R -- the R of group or human relationships." ⁴

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