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Word Clearing Series 59RA

CLEARING WORDS

(Ref: HCOB 7 Sep 74 Word Clearing Series 54  
SUPERLITERACY AND THE  
CLEARED WORD  
HCOB 17 Jul 79 I Word Clearing Series 64  
THE MISUNDERSTOOD WORD,  
DEFINED)

In research concerning word clearing, study and training done with various groups over the recent past months, it has become all too obvious that a misunderstood word remains misunderstood and will later hang a person up unless he clears the meaning of the word in the context of the materials being read or studied and also clears it in all of its various uses in general communication.

When a word has several different definitions, one cannot limit his understanding of the word to one definition only and call the word "understood". One must be able to understand the word when, at a later date, it is used in a different way.

HOW TO CLEAR A WORD

To clear a word one looks it up in a good dictionary. Dictionaries recommended are The Oxford English Dictionary or the Shorter Oxford Dictionary and Funk and Wagnalls Standard English Dictionary.

The first step is to look rapidly over the definitions to find the one which applies to the context in which the word was misunderstood. One reads the definition and uses it in sentences until one has a clear concept of that meaning of the word. This could require ten or more sentences.

Then one clears each of the other definitions of that word, using each in sentences until one has a conceptual understanding of each definition.

The next thing to do is to clear the derivation - which is the explanation of where the word came from originally. This will help gain a basic understanding of the word.

Don't clear the technical or specialized definitions (math, biology, etc.) or obsolete (no longer used) or archaic (ancient and no longer in general use) definitions unless the word is being used that way in the context where it was misunderstood.

Most dictionaries give the idioms of a word. An idiom is a phrase or expression whose meaning cannot be understood from the ordinary meanings of the words. For example, "give in" is an English idiom meaning "yield". Quite a few words in English have idiomatic uses and these are usually given in a dictionary after the definitions of the word itself. These idioms have to be cleared.

One must also clear any other information given about the word, such as notes on its usage, synonyms, etc. so as to have a full understanding of the word.

If one encounters a misunderstood word or symbol in the definition of a word being cleared, one must clear it right away using this same procedure and then return to the definition one was clearing. (Dictionary symbols and abbreviations are usually given in the front of the dictionary.)

#### EXAMPLE

You are reading the sentence "He used to clean chimneys for a living" and you're not sure what "chimneys" means.

You find it in the dictionary and look through the definitions for the one that applies. It says "A flue for the smoke or gases from a fire".

You're not sure what "flue" means so you look that up: it says "A channel or passage for smoke, air or gasses of combustion". That fits and makes sense so you use it in some sentences until you have a clear concept of it.

"Flue" in this dictionary has other definitions, each of which you would clear and use in sentences.

Look up the derivation of the word "flue".

Now go back to "chimney". The definition "A flue for the smoke or gases from a fire", now makes sense so you use it in sentences until you have a concept of it.

You then clear the other definitions. One dictionary has an obsolete definition and a geological definition. You would skip both of these as they aren't in common usage.

Now clear up the derivation of the word. One finds in the derivation that it originally came from the Greek word "kaminos", which means "furnace".

If the word had any synonym studies, usage notes or idioms, they would all be cleared too.

That would be the end of clearing "chimney".

#### CONTEXT UNKNOWN

If you don't know the context of the word, as in Word Clearing Methods 1, 5 (when done from a list), 6 or 8, you should start with the first definition and clear all definitions, derivation, idioms, etc. as covered above.

#### "WORD CHAINS"

If you find yourself spending a lot of time clearing words within definitions of words, you should get a simpler dictionary. A good dictionary will enable you to clear a word without having to look up a lot of other ones in the process.

CLEARED WORDS

A CLEARED WORD IS ONE WHICH HAS BEEN CLEARED TO THE POINT OF FULL CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING BY CLEARING EACH OF THE COMMON MEANINGS OF THAT WORD PLUS ANY TECHNICAL OR SPECIALIZED MEANINGS OF THAT WORD THAT PERTAIN TO THE SUBJECT BEING HANDLED.

That's what a cleared word is. It is a word that is understood. In metered word clearing this would be accompanied by a Floating Needle and Very Good Indicators. There can be more than one F/N per word. Clearing a word must end in an F/N and VGIs. Off the meter this would be accompanied by Very Good Indicators.

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The above is the way a word should be cleared.

When words are understood, communication can take place and with communication any given subject can be understood.

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